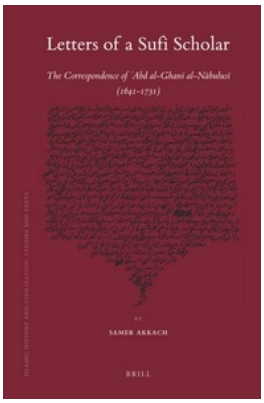

Letters of a Sufi Scholar

The Correspondence of `Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (1641-1731)

Samer Akkach, ***University of Adelaide***

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As a leading Muslim thinker, ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī of Damascus creatively engaged with the social, religious, and intellectual challenges that emerged during the early modern period in which he lived. Yet, at a time of high anti-mystical fervour, his Sufi-inspired views faced strong local antipathy. Through extensive correspondence, presented here for the first time, ‘Abd al-Ghanī projected his ideas and teachings beyond the parochial boundaries of Damascus, and was thus able to assert his authority at a wider regional level. The letters he himself selected, compiled, and titled shed fresh lights on the religious and intellectual exchanges among scholars in the eastern Ottoman provinces, revealing a dynamic and rigorous image of Islam, one that is profoundly inspired by humility, tolerance, and love.

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