



## Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's Seal of Absolute *walāya*: A Shī'ī Response to Ibn 'Arabī

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### ABSTRACT

In Ibn 'Arabī's (d. 638/1240) highly developed theory of *walāya* ('sainthood' or 'friendship with God'), Jesus is conceived of as the 'Seal of Absolute *walāya*' whereas Ibn 'Arabī is the 'Seal of Restricted *walāya*'. After explaining how Ibn 'Arabī understands these two designations, we shall move on to Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī's (d. ca. 787/1385) critique of Ibn 'Arabī's hagiology. Although Āmulī was one of Ibn 'Arabī's most prominent Shī'ī admirers, he was opposed to the identification of Jesus as *walāya*'s Absolute Seal and Ibn 'Arabī himself as its Restricted Seal. Instead, Āmulī contends, these titles can only apply to 'Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (the first Shī'ī Imam) and the Mahdī (the twelfth Shī'ī Imam) respectively. In order to demonstrate his point, Āmulī deploys his arguments from three different perspectives, namely those of transmission (*naql*), the intellect (*'aql*), and unveiling (*kashf*). Since Āmulī's understanding of the Seal of Restricted *walāya* turns out in many ways to be a natural corollary to his identification of the Seal of Absolute *walāya*, this article will only be concerned with Āmulī's explication of the latter. It is hoped that this investigation will help shed greater light on a key feature of Āmulī's Imamology, which is inextricably tied to his simultaneous critical reading of, and commitment to, Ibn 'Arabī.

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## Introduction

The work of one of the most important figures of philosophical Sufism,<sup>1</sup> Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. ca. 787/1385),<sup>2</sup> has largely been neglected in modern Western scholarship. In Iran, however, the situation is quite different as a steady stream of Persian monographs dedicated to Āmulī's life and thought have been appearing over the past twenty years.<sup>3</sup> In Arabic, we have a handful of studies, the most noteworthy being the 800-page tome by Khanjar Ḥamiyya.<sup>4</sup> Yet these works on Āmulī vary significantly in accuracy, scope, and depth. This explains why there are still so many key aspects of Āmulī's thought about which we have only a cursory knowledge, such as his role as a philosophical/mystical Qur'anic exegete.<sup>5</sup> Another topic of enduring (because unresolved) investigation that is particularly worthy of our consideration is Āmulī's engagement with Ibn 'Arabī (d. 638/1240).

Like so many other post-Ibn 'Arabī authors, Āmulī was haunted by the Shaykh's dominating intellectual and spiritual presence which held sway over much of learned

discourse in Islamic civilization (from North Africa to parts of China) for over five centuries. While the thought of Ibn ‘Arabī and the work of his followers after him helped solve a number of age-old philosophical and theological dilemmas, they also presented a new set of obstacles to subsequent generations of thinkers. In the case of Āmulī, one of the greatest challenges that Ibn ‘Arabī presented to him was his highly developed doctrine of *walāya*. To be sure, many individuals after Ibn ‘Arabī had to come to terms with his complex understanding of *walāya* and its relationship to *nubuwwa* or prophecy. But, like some other major Twelver Shī‘ī philosophers and mystics after him,<sup>6</sup> Āmulī also had to square Ibn Arabī’s treatment of *walāya* with his belief in the Imams, the repositories and embodiments of *walāya*.<sup>7</sup>

Although there are several discussions on Āmulī’s understanding of *walāya* (especially with reference to Ibn ‘Arabī) in the secondary literature, we lack a thorough and coherent presentation of its main features. While Henry Corbin gives us the gist of Āmulī’s argument, Ḥamiyya’s treatment of this problem is by far the most extensive,<sup>8</sup> but in so many ways it gets lost in the details. This is undoubtedly because Ḥamiyya’s learned study is largely based on Āmulī’s introduction to his *Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ* (The Text of Texts), a lengthy commentary on Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (The Ringstones of Wisdom), which Āmulī wrote towards the end of his life.<sup>9</sup> As Corbin notes, Āmulī’s discussion on *walāya* in the *Naṣṣ* is an augmented version of his argument as presented in his profound and early work of philosophical Sufism, the *Jāmi‘ al-asrār* (The Sum of Mysteries).<sup>10</sup> A comparison of the relevant sections in both texts reveals that the substance of Āmulī’s argument remains the same, although in the *Naṣṣ* he adds many more proof texts to support the points he makes in the *Jāmi‘*, which already contains an abundant amount of textual materials.

In what follows I shall therefore investigate Āmulī’s most extensive engagement with Ibn ‘Arabī on the question of *walāya* as enshrined in the *Jāmi‘*. By focusing on this problem, the hope is to shed greater light on a key feature of Āmulī’s Imamology, which is inextricably tied to his simultaneous critical reading of, and commitment to, Ibn ‘Arabī.

## The problem

At the heart of Āmulī’s response to Ibn ‘Arabī on the question of *walāya* is the issue of the identity of the ‘Seal’ (*khātam*) of *walāya*. The notion of a ‘Seal’ naturally calls to mind Q 33.40, which says that the Prophet Muḥammad is the ‘Seal of the Prophets’ (*khātam al-nabiyyīn*). In the early history of Sufism, the great master al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. ca. 300/910) gave the first doctrinal formulation of the notion of *walāya* (which has its roots in the Qur’an), and wrote about a certain ‘Seal of the *awliyā*’ (*khātam al-awliyā*).<sup>11</sup> Yet al-Tirmidhī did not develop this concept in any particular manner. Rather, he left it to posterity to solve his highly enigmatic questions pertaining to the identity of the Seal.<sup>12</sup>

It seems that Ibn ‘Arabī was the first to take up this challenge, answering al-Tirmidhī point-by-point in a separate treatise and then reworking this treatise into Chapter 73 of his magnum opus *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* (The Meccan Revelations).<sup>13</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī’s doctrine of the Seal of *walāya* is certainly one of the most difficult aspects of his thought. For now, it should suffice to say that his unique contribution here lies in his two-tiered

distinction of the Seal of *walāya*: there is an Absolute or General Seal (also known as the Universal Seal), and then there is a Restricted or Specific Seal (also known as the Muḥammadan Seal). The Absolute Seal is Jesus, whereas the Restricted Seal is none other than Ibn ‘Arabī himself.<sup>14</sup>

Like many of Ibn ‘Arabī’s Sunnī followers, Āmulī, who has the utmost reverence for Ibn ‘Arabī,<sup>15</sup> whole-heartedly embraces the notion of there being two Seals of *walāya*. Where Āmulī feels that Ibn ‘Arabī errs, however, is in his identification of these Seals. As a Shī‘ī, Āmulī maintains that the Seals of Absolute and Restricted *walāya* can be none other than Imam ‘Alī<sup>16</sup> and the Mahdī (the Twelfth Shī‘ī Imam), respectively.

Tackling this particular problem in the context of his more general discussion on *walāya*,<sup>17</sup> Āmulī outlines the problem and his method of resolving it as follows:

Some of the masters, including the perfect Shaykh Muḥyī al-Dīn b. al-‘Arabī and one of his followers, Sharaf al-Dīn al-Qayṣarī [d. 751/1350], uphold the position that the Seal of *awliyā* in an absolute sense is Jesus, the son of Mary, and that the Seal of *awliyā* in a restricted sense is Muḥyī al-Dīn b. al-‘Arabī. It is said that Ibn ‘Arabī himself also expressed this idea in some of his books.

The other group upholds the position that the Seal of *awliyā* in an absolute sense is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib. This group includes the perfect Shaykh Sa‘d al-Dīn Ḥamū‘ī [d. 649/1252] and one of his followers, Kamāl al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Razzāq [al-Kāshānī] [d. ca. 730/1330]. And this group upholds the position that the Seal of *awliyā* in a restricted sense is the Mahdī.<sup>18</sup> That then is what the two aforementioned Shaykhs agree upon, and this impoverished one is with them.

Therefore, we wish to affirm this notion by way of transmission, the intellect, and unveiling; and, in so doing, to support the position of the latter group while likewise disproving the position of the former group (that is, by way of transmission, the intellect, and unveiling). We shall also adhere to the former group’s statements because they often point to the falsity of their own position . . . .<sup>19</sup>

Āmulī will thus broach the question of the identity of the Seal of *walāya* in two separate sections, the first dedicated to the Seal of Absolute *walāya* and the second to the Seal of Restricted *walāya*. Although his method of explicating the problem by way of transmission (*naql*), the intellect (*‘aql*), and unveiling (*kashf*) is consistent in each of these sections, the argument in the first section is by far the more detailed and coherent of the two. This is because Āmulī’s understanding of the Seal of Restricted *walāya* turns out in many ways to be a natural corollary to his identification of the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. My analysis will, therefore, only be concerned with Āmulī’s explication of the latter.

### The Seal of Absolute *walāya*

Āmulī first ventures to discuss the Seal of *walāya* in an absolute sense, providing a lengthy quotation from Chapter 24 of Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Futūḥāt*.<sup>20</sup> In this chapter, Ibn ‘Arabī argues that, during his second coming or descent from heaven (*nuzūl*), Jesus, the Seal of Absolute *walāya*, will be under the sacred Law (*sharī‘a*) established by the Prophet Muḥammad. Ibn ‘Arabī insists that it is from the perspective of Jesus being a follower of the Prophet that he will be the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. His coming will entail that *ijtihād* in all matters of the Law will cease, as he will be the sole interpreter of the Law. He will be aware of the Prophet’s Law by virtue of an angel, who will

inspire him so that he will know how to rule by the Law as the Prophet would rule by it had he been present. Alternatively, Jesus will be able to behold the Spirit (*rūḥ*) of the Prophet so that he can be informed directly by him as to what it is that God has established for him with respect to ruling over his community.

The rest of the quotation from the *Futūḥāt* reveals that Jesus is the best of the Prophet's community. Although himself a prophet, Jesus is also a *walī* belonging to the Muslim community and will have two resurrections: one, under the general banner (*liwāʿ*) of prophecy and messengerhood with his followers behind him (i.e. the Christian community), just as the other messengers and prophets will be raised up with their respective communities behind them; and the other with the rest of the *awliyāʿ* in the Muslim community under the specific banner of the Prophet. The rest of the *awliyāʿ*, from the time of Adam to the end of creation, will follow Jesus, who himself will be behind the Prophet.

Āmulī follows up with two quotations from Chapter 73 of the *Futūḥāt*, where, it will be recalled, Ibn ʿArabī provides his answers to each of al-Tirmidhī's questions. But in both instances Āmulī's quotations are taken from al-Qayṣarī's commentary upon the *Fuṣūṣ*. With respect to the first quotation from the *Futūḥāt*, we learn of Ibn ʿArabī's basic position concerning the double nature of the Seal of *walāya*,<sup>21</sup> while in the second,<sup>22</sup> Ibn ʿArabī provides us with the logic for why there needs to be a Seal to end the cycle of humanity: just as God sealed the revealed religions with the coming of the Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, and there are no religions or prophets after him, so too is there a Seal of General *walāya*, which began with Adam and was sealed with Jesus. Ibn ʿArabī here glosses the well-known qur'anic verse in which Adam and Jesus are likened to each other: "The Seal is similar to the beginning: "Truly the likeness of Jesus in the sight of God is that of Adam" [Q 3.59].<sup>23</sup> So He seals with the like of what He began."

Finally, Āmulī provides us with a pertinent passage from al-Qayṣarī's own discussion, where he sets out some definitions that help guide the rest of the inquiry:

*Walāya* is divided into 'Absolute' and 'Restricted',<sup>24</sup> namely general and specific. For, with respect to itself, *walāya* is a divine quality in an absolute sense; but with respect to its dependence on the prophets and *awliyāʿ*, it is restricted. That which is restricted is supported by that which is absolute, and that which is absolute is the outward aspect of that which is restricted. Thus, the *walāyāt* of all of the prophets and *awliyāʿ* are parts of Absolute *walāya*, just as the prophetic functions of the prophets are parts of Absolute prophecy.<sup>25</sup>

Having carefully presented the key texts from Ibn ʿArabī and al-Qayṣarī that support the position on the Seal of Absolute *walāya* with which he will take issue, Āmulī summarizes the upshot of the point of these quoted passages, namely to 'affirm that the seal of *awliyāʿ* in an absolute sense is Jesus, not anyone else'. Then, Āmulī restates the three-fold modes of knowing that he will employ to put Ibn ʿArabī's claim to the test: transmission, the intellect, and unveiling.<sup>26</sup>

## Transmission

Āmulī begins this section<sup>27</sup> by saying that no transmitted report has come down that would indicate that Jesus is the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. Rather, Āmulī argues, the reports that we do have state that Jesus will be a follower of the Mahdī, and that the latter will be one of ʿAlī's male descendants. Then Āmulī produces a long string of

Qur'anic verses, sayings of the Prophet, and sayings of 'Alī to show that, based on transmission alone, it is indeed 'Alī who is the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. Although he tells us that the evidence in this regard is almost innumerable, Āmulī gives some of the most salient scriptural passages that help support his argument.

The first and most telling text Āmulī presents is what in Shi'ism is called the 'verse of *walāya*': 'Your walī is only God, and His Messenger, and those who believe, who perform the prayer and give the alms while bowing down' (Q 5.55). Āmulī avers that the part of this verse that speaks of giving alms 'while bowing down' is well-known amongst the Qur'anic commentators to have been revealed concerning 'Alī.<sup>28</sup> We are told that, while performing the bow or genuflexion (*rukū'*) in the ritual prayer, 'Alī offered the ring on his finger to a man seeking charity.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, this interpretation is to be found in the commentaries of al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923), al-Zamakhsharī (d. 538/1144), al-Bayḍāwī (d. 685/1286), and others, although they tend to read this reference to 'Alī as being a *walī* to indicate his friendship with, or protection of, the believers. Yet Shi'ī commentators, such as al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067) and al-Ṭabrisī (d. 548/1153), take the meaning of *walī* in this verse to also indicate something else, namely 'Alī as the rightful spiritual and political leader of the Muslim community after the Prophet's death.

While telling us that the last part of this verse is a widely-accepted reference to 'Alī, Āmulī does not highlight the clear difference in understanding between Sunnī and Shi'ī commentators on the *interpretation* of the term *walī* itself as it figures in this verse. He clearly would not agree with the common Sunnī interpretation of this verse. This is because, as Āmulī argues, God would not single out 'Alī as a *walī* in this verse if it did not have a specific meaning beyond some general application. That the term *walī* has a general application in terms of its meaning is clear. Yet, according to the Qur'anic exegetical tradition, in Q 5.55 God makes this general reference specific, and even particularizes it to a *certain* person. This is evidence enough of 'Alī's special status. In the following passage, Āmulī provides us with his argument, and also connects 'Alī's widespread spiritual influence amongst the Sufi orders as proof of his being the Seal of *walāya*:

It is also well known that this sense of *walāya* does not depart from its general scope until someone who can make it specific does so. So 'Alī is the Absolute *walī* and the Seal of the *awliyā'* – all of them – because no *walī* comes after him except that he is upon his station and rank. That is, no *walī* comes after him except that he displays something of him, and is one of his representatives. This is why the initiatory cloak of every Sufi Shaykh is only ascribed to him,<sup>30</sup> and their paths only trace back to his representatives.<sup>31</sup>

Next, Āmulī presents some sayings of the Prophet and 'Alī that again point up 'Alī's exalted rank. Amongst the traditions that Āmulī quotes in this context, one is a statement of the Prophet that reads, 'Alī was sent with every prophet secretly (*sirr<sup>am</sup>*), but with me, openly (*jahr<sup>am</sup>*).<sup>32</sup> Āmulī glosses this saying on the tongue of the Prophet:

Its meaning is that the Absolute *walāya* that was specified for 'Alī secretly flowed in every messenger, just as the prophecy that was specified for me openly flowed in them, until I openly appeared in the world of the visible; and 'Alī, likewise, appeared with me.<sup>33</sup>

Āmulī continues to explain what is meant by this, again in the words of the Prophet:

The Absolute *walāya* that is specified for 'Alī is that about which he reported in his statement, 'I was a *walī* while Adam was between water and clay.' The Absolute prophecy that

is specified for me is that about which I have reported in my statement, ‘I was a prophet while Adam was between water and clay.’<sup>34</sup>

The latter saying, ‘I was a prophet while Adam was between water and clay’, commonly figures in discussions on the doctrine of the Muḥammadan Reality. This teaching highlights the primordial nature of the Prophet, which is to say that the reality of the Prophet has always been there and percolates through the generations of the prophets until it finally becomes manifest in the physical person of Muḥammad.<sup>35</sup> In Āmulī’s *Jāmi‘*, however, this saying is recast in terms of ‘Alī’s *walāya*. Just as the Prophet, in his reality of being a prophet, was there before the first prophet (namely Adam), ‘Alī was likewise there as a *walī* before the first *walī* (namely Adam). This would be a surprising text on its own since it is rather uncommon in Islamic literature. But Āmulī tells us that the report in both its meaning (*ma‘nā*) and linguistic form (*lafẓ*) is actually from Ibn ‘Arabī, but in reference to Jesus and not ‘Alī.<sup>36</sup> We thus have Ibn ‘Arabī and Āmulī laying claim to this particular tradition because, for each of them, it clearly identifies the Seal of *walāya* (i.e. the *walī* who is there first but then comes last), just as the version of the tradition in which the Prophet is figured is meant to identify the Seal of the Prophets (i.e. the prophet who is there first but then comes last).

Āmulī assures his readers that the truth of the matter concerning the identity of the *walī* in the tradition in question will soon become clear to them. By this he means that he will adduce other traditions to demonstrate how it is that ‘Alī is more knowledgeable of God than Jesus. This is predicated on the view that the Seal of Absolute *walāya* should be both more knowledgeable and more eminent than everyone other than the Prophet.<sup>37</sup> Amongst the arguments that Āmulī puts forth to prove that this best describes ‘Alī and not Jesus, two are particularly noteworthy:

(1) The Qur’an is greater than the Gospels and the Prophet is greater than Jesus. Therefore, since ‘Alī has knowledge of the Qur’an and the secrets of the Prophet, he is more knowledgeable than Jesus;<sup>38</sup> (2) The Prophet told ‘Alī, ‘Your self is my self, your blood my blood, and your flesh my flesh.’ Since the Prophet is more eminent than all of the other prophets and ‘Alī is equated by the Prophet with himself in this tradition, ‘Alī is, equally, like the Prophet in being more eminent than all of the other prophets.<sup>39</sup>

## Intellect

When speaking of his assessment of the true identity of the Seal of Absolute *walāya* being based on the intellect (*‘aql*), Āmulī has in mind something other than a full-out rational argument. Rather, he presents certain propositions, mostly scriptural in nature, and then proceeds to what he feels anyone with a sound intellect (*al-‘aql al-ṣaḥīḥ*)<sup>40</sup> should be able to deduce from the evidence. As with the previous section, I shall confine my presentation of Āmulī’s position by focusing on the main thrust of his arguments.

Āmulī begins his query, partly quoting Ibn ‘Arabī, with an important point, namely that the Muḥammadan Reality has two dimensions – outward and inward, which correspond to ‘prophecy’ and *walāya*, respectively:

It is well-known that the Shaykh regards Absolute prophecy and Absolute *walāya* as two specified qualities of the Muḥammadan Reality, for the Muḥammadan Reality has two aspects – an outward aspect, which is specified by prophecy, and an inward aspect, which is specified by *walāya*. And the Shaykh mentions that this *walāya* is acquired by the Seal

through a true inheritance, as in his statement, ‘With respect to his *walāya*, the relationship of the Seal of the Messengers with the Seal of [Absolute] *walāya* is like the relationship of the prophets and messengers with him. For the Seal of the Messengers is the *walī* and the Messenger-Prophet, while the Seal of *awliyā*’ [in an absolute sense] is the *walī*-inheritor, the one who takes from the source and who witnesses the levels of existence, all the while being one of the perfections of the Seal of the Messengers, Muḥammad.’<sup>41</sup>

There is some ambiguity in Ibn ‘Arabī’s words, ‘With respect to his *walāya*, the relationship of the Seal of the Messengers (*khātam al-rusul*) with the Seal of *walāya* (*khatm al-walāya*) is like the relationship of the prophets and messengers with him.’ Āmulī will return to this particular point later on in his discussion, and I shall thus follow his lead and remain silent on this statement until it resurfaces later. But what is clear from Āmulī’s words is that the Muḥammadan Reality contains the entire scope of *walāya*, whose outward nature manifests itself in the form of prophecy, and whose inward nature manifests itself in the form of *walāya* proper. Thus, the outward form of prophecy and the inward nature of *walāya* are both present in the Prophet.<sup>42</sup> When his physical person leaves the world, prophecy is sealed with him. But *walāya*, as the inner dimension of the Muḥammadan Reality, continues in both an absolute and restricted sense (the latter being reserved for the Mahdī, as already noted).

Given that the Seal of Absolute *walāya* is a manifestation of the inward dimension of the Muḥammadan Reality, our authors are quick to point out that he is nevertheless still an heir to the Prophet, and thus inferior to him. This is because, to restate, the Prophet contains in his person both the outward and inward aspects of the Muḥammadan Reality, whereas the *walī*, who is his heir, only contains in his person a lesser degree of its inward dimension.

On these details Āmulī and Ibn ‘Arabī stand in agreement. Where they disagree is of course on the *identity* of the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. Āmulī offers his most pointed argument in this important passage, where he states the only two ways in which Jesus could actually be the Seal of Absolute *walāya*:

It can either be with respect to his spiritual relationship with the Prophet, or with respect to his formal relationship with him. According to both propositions, ‘Alī has more right and is more fitting, since his spiritual relationship with the Prophet is known to everyone, and is known to be more abundant than that of Jesus. Likewise is the case with ‘Alī’s formal relationship with the Prophet.’<sup>43</sup>

Yet the person with the greatest formal relationship to the Prophet would not, by virtue of this fact alone, be eligible to be identified as the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. Thus, although Āmulī presents two possibilities on how Jesus could be identified as the Seal of Absolute *walāya*, it seems quite clear that what is really being implied is that the only person who can be identified as the Seal of Absolute *walāya* is the one who has *both* the greatest spiritual and formal relationship to the Prophet, and that can be none other than ‘Alī.

Āmulī naturally spends less time explicating why ‘Alī shares such a close formal bond with the Prophet. Amongst the evidence Āmulī garners in order to establish what he describes as ‘more apparent than the sun’<sup>44</sup> is ‘Alī’s close familial relationship with the Prophet. Furthermore, ‘Alī was the heir to the Prophet’s knowledge, the ‘treasure-keeper of his secret’, his appointed representative, and the Imam of his community.’<sup>45</sup>

With respect to ‘Alī’s superior spiritual relationship to the Prophet, Āmulī produces several arguments to support his claim. These arguments testify to ‘Alī’s special rank, which belongs neither to Jesus nor to any of the other prophets and messengers.<sup>46</sup> The first of these is a version of a famous Shī‘ī Hadith in which the Prophet says, ‘God created my soul and ‘Alī’s soul before creating other human beings, as He so willed.’ Then the Prophet states that his soul and ‘Alī’s soul were passed on, from pure womb to pure womb, untainted with the defilement of associating partners with God (*danas al-shirk*) and submersion in the life of ignorance (*ghamr al-jāhiliyya*), until they became manifest in the loins of their respective fathers. The tradition ends with the Prophet’s well-known words, ‘‘Alī is from me and I am from him. His self is my self, and obedience to him is obedience to me. He who angers him does not love me, and he who loves him does not anger me.’<sup>47</sup> To be sure, shortly after quoting this Hadith Āmulī provides us with another that is almost identical, but with the emphasis now on the Prophet and ‘Alī being created from the same light (*nūr*), which stood before God for fourteen thousand years before God created Adam.<sup>48</sup>

Āmulī further argues that this special spiritual relationship that ‘Alī has with the Prophet is confirmed by Ibn ‘Arabī himself in Chapter 6 of the *Futūḥāt*. In the relevant part of this chapter,<sup>49</sup> Ibn ‘Arabī engages in a detailed explanation of the way in which God created the universe through the Primordial Dust (*habā*), also known as Universal Hyle (*al-hayūlī al-kullī*) or the Cloud (*‘amā*).<sup>50</sup> Within the Primordial Dust, all things receive the light of God’s self-disclosure (*tajallī*) in accordance with their readiness (*istīdād*). The most receptive to God’s light is the Reality of Muḥammad (*ḥaqīqat Muḥammad*), also known as the First Intellect (*al-‘aql al-awwal*). Although the relationship between the Primordial Dust and the Reality of the Prophet is complex in Ibn ‘Arabī’s thought, the main point to come away with is that Āmulī would like to demonstrate how, by Ibn ‘Arabī’s own confession, ‘Alī is the nearest of all beings to the reality of the Prophet, the first of God’s creation. To illustrate his position, Āmulī continues with his quotation from Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Futūḥāt*:

Muḥammad is the master of the cosmos – all of it – and the first to emerge in existence. His existence was from that Divine Light, the Primordial Dust, and from the Universal Reality. In the Primordial Dust, his entity and the entity of the cosmos came to exist. And the nearest of men to him and the secrets of all of the prophets is ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib.<sup>51</sup>

Āmulī then draws the ‘natural’ conclusion with respect to ‘Alī in this lengthy but telling passage:

This is a definitive statement and a clear proof concerning his being the Seal of Absolute *walāya*, since it affirms that the Muḥammadan Reality has two aspects: an outward aspect and an inward one. The inward aspect is tied to the *walī*, who is the Seal, the one who is the closest of men to the Prophet and is ‘one of his perfections’.<sup>52</sup> For other than ‘Alī, none has this proximity, nor this specificity. This is especially the case since allusions have been related from the Prophet that indicate this, such as his statements, ‘I and ‘Alī are from one light’ and ‘I and ‘Alī are from one tree’, and other aforementioned allusions like these that indicate that the two of them are from one light and from one reality. Likewise is this the case with ‘Alī’s statements, ‘I am the dot under the *bā*’; ‘I am the first and the last, the manifest and the hidden’;<sup>53</sup> ‘I am the face of God, and I am next to God’<sup>54</sup> ... All of this indicates that the reality of ‘Alī and the reality of the Prophet are one, which is the point of the current discussion.<sup>55</sup>

Why Āmulī sees such definitive evidence in a text by Ibn ‘Arabī that the author himself does not see will become clear in the following section.

## Unveiling

This last section in Āmulī’s argument is in many ways a continuation of the previous section on the intellect. That is to say Āmulī proceeds to outline his argument from several different angles, while also drawing on some earlier points and elaborating upon them. There is no doubt that Āmulī is also the most polemical in this section, and even calls into question Ibn ‘Arabī’s claim that the *Fuṣūṣ* was given to him by the Prophet in a dream.<sup>56</sup>

With respect to the *kashf* or unveiling that Āmulī adduces as proof for the identity of ‘Alī as the Seal of Absolute *walāya*, it is important to note that he is not concerned with giving us an account of his unveilings that would confirm this position. Rather, he seems to want to say that his perspective is itself based on *kashf*. This is all the more likely given the fact that, as we have seen, Āmulī is not entirely impartial in his interpretations of the textual evidence to be found in the Qur’an, Hadith, and even Ibn ‘Arabī’s own writings. That is to say, the reason there are so many instances in which Āmulī sees a given text as clear-cut evidence for his understanding that ‘Alī is the Seal of Absolute *walāya* is not because of some unequivocal proof that can be verified by all, but, rather, because of Āmulī’s own *kashf* into the matter.

But Āmulī even goes so far as to explicitly say that it is not only his *kashf* that has revealed the truth of the situation. Rather, Ibn ‘Arabī’s *kashf* also testifies to the same reality:

The unveiling of the Shaykh and his aforementioned masters is that Jesus has more right and is more fitting to be the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. Our unveiling and the unveiling of other masters is that ‘Alī has more right and is more fitting for this rank. Along with this, if you were to reflect, you would come to recognize that the unveiling of the Shaykh also bears witness to this.<sup>57</sup>

To support his point, Āmulī revisits one of the key texts from Ibn ‘Arabī’s *Fuṣūṣ*, which I have had occasion to quote earlier. The main thrust of this passage, it will be recalled, is that there is a fundamental distinction between the Seal of the Messengers and the Seal of *walāya*, and that the latter inherits the inward reality of the former. Āmulī proceeds through what looks like a paradox to show how Ibn ‘Arabī’s *kashf* supports his own *kashf* on the same question. Ibn ‘Arabī’s statement, ‘With respect to his *walāya*, the relationship of the Seal of the Messengers with the Seal of *walāya* is like the relationship of the prophets and messengers with him’, is glossed by Āmulī as meaning that the *dependency* that the prophets and messengers have upon the Seal of the Messengers for their prophecy and messengerhood is the same kind of dependency that the Seal of the Messengers has upon the Seal of *walāya* for his own prophecy and messengerhood.<sup>58</sup>

This interpretation given by Āmulī is indeed in keeping with what Ibn ‘Arabī says in this section of the *Fuṣūṣ*, even though Āmulī does not quote the entire section.<sup>59</sup> On the face of it, these statements would seem to imply that the Seal of *walāya* is above the Seal of the Messengers, and this indeed is how they were taken by some of Ibn ‘Arabī’s most important medieval detractors, such as Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328).<sup>60</sup> Commenting on this very passage from the *Fuṣūṣ* (and a cluster of other associated texts from the

*Futūḥāt*), the late Michel Chodkiewicz notes that, with respect to the Seal of the Messengers, the dependency in question is not ‘with regard to another being but to the subordination within himself of the visible aspect to the hidden aspect’, which is to say, ‘of the *nubuwwa*, which is an attribute of created being and comes to an end, to the *walāya*, which is a divine attribute and exists to eternity’.<sup>61</sup> As we shall see, this observation is very much in keeping with the points that Āmulī will also make within the context of his own Imamology.

Āmulī says that Ibn ‘Arabī’s statements in the *Fuṣūṣ* can only be correct if we posit that the reality of both the Seal of the Messengers and the Seal of *walāya* are one, but with an outward and inward aspect, which would belong to the Seal of the Messengers and the Seal of *walāya* respectively. For if the inner reality of these Seals were not conceived as being one and the same, it would mean that prophecy and *walāya* are two separate things. If this were the case, then Ibn ‘Arabī’s words would entail that Jesus in fact has preponderance (*tarjih*) over the Prophet, which is not permissible.<sup>62</sup> The same would apply to the case of ‘Alī.<sup>63</sup> Nevertheless, Āmulī maintains that such a description as we find in this passage from the *Fuṣūṣ* under discussion applies more fully to ‘Alī primarily because Jesus is not ‘one of the perfections of the Seal of the Messengers’, whereas ‘Alī is.<sup>64</sup> This must be taken to mean that, as Āmulī sees it, Jesus is not a *walī*-inheritor, and thus cannot be counted as being one of the Prophet’s perfections as such, since the perfection of the Prophet relates directly to his inward nature, which is *walāya* (i.e. the inward dimension of the Muḥammadan Reality). Jesus, for Āmulī, would correspond to being a perfection of the Prophet’s outward nature (i.e. the outward dimension of the Muḥammadan Reality) insofar as they are both prophets.

Āmulī also tells us that the Seal of *walāya* receives his knowledge of God without the need of an intermediary (*wāsiṭa*), which corroborates Ibn ‘Arabī’s statement that the Seal of *walāya* ‘takes from the source (*aṣl*)’<sup>65</sup> and ‘sees the matter as it truly is’.<sup>66</sup> Reflecting on Ibn ‘Arabī’s statement that the Seal of *walāya* ‘sees the matter as it truly is’, Āmulī insists that this too cannot pertain to Jesus.<sup>67</sup> Rather, this can only be ‘the rank of the Pole of poles (*quṭb al-aqṭāb*) and no one else, for it is the special privilege of our Prophet and those of the *awliyā*’ who stand in his station, like the Commander of the Faithful (*amīr al-mu’minīn*) and his offspring’.<sup>68</sup> Yet Āmulī introduces a problematic distinction here. Surely he does not wish to suggest that the Prophet is the Pole of poles, since he is above that station. But he does seem to want to say that ‘Alī, alongside being the Seal of *walāya*, is also the Pole of poles. Āmulī is even more explicit on this point several pages later, where he refers to ‘Alī as the ‘Pole of poles and the perfect ones (*quṭb al-aqṭāb wal-kummal*)’.<sup>69</sup> However, such an identification is very problematic because the functions of the Seal of *walāya* and the Pole of poles in Ibn ‘Arabī’s hagiology clearly belong to different people, without any room for confusion between their respective offices.<sup>70</sup>

As for the Seal of the Messengers, he takes his knowledge from the same source, but through an intermediary, namely Gabriel, the Angel of revelation.<sup>71</sup> To explain the apparent problem, Āmulī introduces another text from al-Qayṣarī’s commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ*:

The Seal of the Messengers only looks at the Real from the rank of his own self, not from the rank of someone else. Thus, no deficiency is entailed. It is like the treasure-keeper who, at the command of the sultan, gives something from the treasury to both a peasant and the sultan, and the sultan takes it from him just as the peasant would. Thus, there is no deficiency.<sup>72</sup>

Not surprisingly, Āmulī even sees in this explanation an indication of ‘Alī’s exalted rank as the Seal of Absolute *walāya*:

The treasure is the divine realities hidden within universal prophecy, and which are specified for our Prophet. The treasure-keeper is the one who stands in the station of the Prophet’s inward nature, which is universal *walāya*. And that would be ‘Alī, since their realities are one.<sup>73</sup>

Al-Qayṣarī also maintains that, since the Seal of Absolute *walāya* is ‘the one who is the locus of manifestation for the inward All-Comprehensive Name (*ism jāmi‘*)’, he is in fact higher than the angel of revelation, which explains why he does not need the medium of the angel to communicate divine knowledge.<sup>74</sup> Agreeing that this point made by al-Qayṣarī is also correct, Āmulī follows up on it in this manner:

However, there is a fine point here: The angel is an intermediary between God and the prophets in the world of forms and the station of humanness. If this were not the case, the angel would be in the world of reality and the station of *walāya*. But there is no angel there, not even Gabriel. As the Prophet said, ‘I have a moment with God in which neither proximate angel nor sent prophet are permitted’;<sup>75</sup> and in Gabriel’s words, ‘If I were to come one inch closer, I would burn to ashes!’<sup>76</sup>

The difference here has to do with the embodied form of the prophets. Put differently, it is because of the outward form of the Muḥammadan Reality that there needs to be an outward intermediary for the revelation. But with respect to the inward reality of Muḥammad, there need not be a intermediary because of the inward nature of the receptacle. This again calls to mind the distinction Āmulī makes (following Ibn ‘Arabī) between the outward and inward aspects of the Muḥammadan Reality, with the former corresponding to prophecy and the latter to *walāya*. To be sure, Āmulī offers a way of approach, while also reiterating his stance on ‘Alī as the inward nature of the Prophet and thus the Seal of Absolute *walāya*:

The etiquette here is to say that the inward nature of this Prophet, which is the station of *walāya*, takes the effusion from God without any intermediary other than himself. And God then effuses [this knowledge through the medium of Gabriel] to his outward form, which is the station of prophecy. However, the station of his *walāya* in the world of manifestation is specified for the Seal of [Absolute] *walāya*, the one who is created from the Prophet’s special light, who is his spirit and reality. As he said, ‘I and ‘Alī are from one light.’ In accordance with this position, this station does not apply to Jesus.<sup>77</sup>

### Closing remark

It is my hope that the foregoing discussion has been able to display the underlying logic behind Ḥaydar Āmulī’s response to Ibn ‘Arabī on the question of the Seal of Absolute *walāya*. What is quite remarkable is the etiquette or *adab* that Āmulī the Shī‘ī displays towards his illustrious Sunnī predecessor, even after vehemently disagreeing with him. Like a true gentleman, at the end of his discussion on the question of *walāya*, Āmulī offers his humble apology:

If the Shaykh is perfect in relation to others on another occasion, on this occasion he is deficient in relation to others. But this does not detract from the perfection of the one who is perfect, because the perfect one does not have to be perfect on every level, just as Ibn ‘Arabī himself has indicated<sup>78</sup> ... Nevertheless, these [statements of ours] and the like are bad etiquette from us towards him, for he is the Shaykh of the Tribe and the

head of the Folk. So we seek pardon concerning what we have said: ‘The plea for pardon before noble men is accepted.’<sup>79</sup>

## Notes

1. For a working definition of this term, see Mohammed Rustom, ‘Philosophical Sufism’, in *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Richard Taylor and Luis Xavier López-Farjeat (New York: Routledge, 2016), 399–411.
2. Some exceptions being Peter Antes, *Zur Theologie der Schī‘a* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 1971); Henry Corbin, *En islam iranien: Aspects spirituels et philosophiques*, 4 vols (Paris: Gallimard, 1971–2), 3: 149–213; Hermann Landolt, ‘Ḥaydar-i Āmulī et les deux *mi‘rajs*’, *Studia Islamica* 91 (2000): 91–106; Mohammad Amin Mansouri, ‘Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī’s Critique of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Ontology: A Preliminary Inquiry’, *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society* 68 (2020): in press; Robert Wisnovsky, ‘One Aspect of the Akbarian Turn in Shī‘ī Theology’, in *Sufism and Theology*, ed. Ayman Shihadeh (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 49–62; Eliza Tasbihi, ‘Visionary Perceptions through Cosmographical Diagrams: Mystical Knowledge from Ḥaydar Āmulī’s (d. 787/1385) *Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*’, *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn ‘Arabi Society* 69 (2021): forthcoming.
3. One noteworthy study is Ismā‘il Lārījānī, *Musāfirī-yi gharīb* (Tehran: Shirkat-i Chāp wa-Nashr-i Bayn al-Milal, 2011).
4. Khanjar Ḥamiyya, *al-‘Irfān al-shī‘ī: Dirāsa fī al-ḥayāt al-rūhiyya wa-al-fikriyya li-Ḥaydar Āmulī* (Beirut: Dār al-Hādī, 2004).
5. This is a major lacuna that will soon be filled by Nicholas Boylston. For starters, see his article, ‘Quranic Exegesis at the Meeting between Twelver Shī‘ism and Sufism: Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī’s *al-Muḥīṭ al-a‘zam* (The Greatest Ocean)’, *Journal of Qur’anic Studies* (forthcoming).
6. See, in particular, Sajjad Rizvi, “‘Seeking the Face of God’: The Safawid *Ḥikmat* Tradition’s Conceptualization of *Walāya Takwīniyya*”, in *The Study of Shī‘i Islam: History, Theology and Law*, ed. Farhad Daftary and Gurdofarid Miskinzoda (London: I. B. Tauris, 2014), 391–410.
7. In this article, I refrain from translating *walāya*, given the nuanced ways in which it features as a technical expression in both Sufism and Shī‘ism. In Sufism, *walāya* refers to ‘sainthood’ or ‘friendship’ with God, and is the goal of the spiritual life. In Shī‘ism, *walāya* primarily designates the sanctity and spiritual authority of the Imams, who are infallible (*ma‘ṣūm*) and divinely designated (*mansūṣ*) to fulfil their charge as the rightful heirs of the Prophet. Thus, while in Sufism anyone can become a *walī*, the function of *walāya* in Shī‘ism is only open to the Prophets and the Imams. At the same time, *walāya* also plays an important religious, communal and social role in Shī‘ī life and thought; for the manner in which *walāya* allowed the early Shī‘ī community to develop its sense of self-identity, see Maria Dakake, *The Charismatic Community: Shī‘ite Identity in Early Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007). Of course, there is a great degree of overlap between Sufism and Shī‘ism by virtue of *walāya*’s initiatory and sanctifying function. For the relationship between Sufism and Shī‘ism in this regard (and in general), see Corbin, *En islam iranien*, 3:149–355 and Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Sufi Essays* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1972), 104–20. One may also profitably consult the various papers in Denis Hermann and Mathieu Terrier, eds, *Shī‘i Islam and Sufism: Classical Views and Modern Perspectives* (London: I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2020).
8. Ḥamiyya, *al-‘Irfān al-shī‘ī*, 419–70.
9. See Corbin, *En islam iranien*, 3: 177. For the discussion in question, see Ḥaydar Āmulī, *al-Muqaddimāt min Kitāb Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ*, ed. Henry Corbin and Osman Yahia (Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien, 1975), 182–260, §§ 411–586. A complete listing of works by Āmulī, both authentic and attributed, can be found in Ḥamiyya, *al-‘Irfān al-shī‘ī*, 91–151.

10. Āmulī, 'Jāmi' *al-asrār wa-manba' al-anwār*, in Āmulī, *La philosophie shī'ite*, ed. Henry Corbin and Osman Yahia (Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien, 1969), 1–617 (pp. 379–448, §§ 755–903). Mukhtar Ali has translated the entire *Jāmi'* into English, and it should appear in print before long.
11. See the new study by Aiyub Palmer, *Sainthood and Authority in Early Islam: Al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī's Theory of wilāya and the Reenvisioning of the Sunnī Caliphate* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).
12. Al-Tirmidhī's questionnaire appears in his *Kitāb Khatm al-awliyā'*, ed. Osman Yahia (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1965), 142–326.
13. See Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*, 4 vols (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1968), 2: 40–128. Various aspects of Ibn 'Arabī's reply can be found throughout Michel Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī*, trans. Liadain Sherrard (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993). See also the translations in William Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al-'Arabī's Cosmology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 16, 49–50, 98–9, 190–1, 255–6, 317–18 and Gerald Elmore, *Islamic Sainthood in the Fullness of Time: Ibn al-'Arabī's Book of the Fabulous Gryphon* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 593–601.
14. The most comprehensive study of Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine of the Seal(s) of *walāya* is Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*. See also Elmore, *Islamic Sainthood*, 131–62.
15. See the discussion in Āmulī, *Muqaddimāt*, 64–154, as well as the passage from his *Jāmi'* quoted at the end of the present article.
16. For an excellent monograph on 'Alī, see Reza Shah-Kazemi, *Justice and Remembrance: Introducing the Spirituality of Imam 'Alī* (London: I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2006).
17. An extensive discussion of the entire problem of the Seal of *walāya* in Āmulī can be found in Ḥamiyya, *al-'Irfān al-shī'i*, 377–492.
18. These two cases require further investigation in light of the observations made in Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 144, n. 44 (concerning Kāshānī) and Jamal Elias, 'The Sufi Lords of Bahrabad: Sa'd al-Din and Sadr al-Din Hamuwayi', *Iranian Studies* 27, nos 1–4 (1994): 53–75, pp. 71–2 (concerning Ḥamū'i).
19. Āmulī, *Jāmi'*, 395–6, §§ 791–2.
20. *Ibid.*, 396–8, §§ 793–6; quoting Ibn 'Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, 1: 184–5. See also Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 120–1, which discusses another part of this passage from the *Futūḥāt*.
21. Āmulī, *Jāmi'*, 398–9, §§ 797–8; quoting al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. Ḥasanzādah Āmulī, 2 vols (Qum: Bustān-i Kitāb, 2002), 1: 246, who in turn is quoting Ibn 'Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, 2: 49. The passage is translated in Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 117–18. Why Āmulī does not directly quote the texts from the *Futūḥāt* here is unclear. He may simply not have had this particular part of the work with him. Or, he may have provided al-Qayṣarī's quotations from the text to demonstrate his earlier observation that Ibn 'Arabī has some followers who accept his position on the respective identities of the Seals of *walāya*.
22. Āmulī, *Jāmi'*, 399, § 799; quoting al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ*, 1:270–1, who is in turn quoting Ibn 'Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, 2: 50.
23. All translations of qur'anic verses are taken from Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Caner Dagli, Maria Dakake, Joseph Lumbard, and Mohammed Rustom, eds, *The Study Quran: A New Translation and Commentary* (New York: HarperOne, 2015). The only modification here is in the following quotation from the Qur'an, where I have retained the Arabic word *walī* when quoting the translation.
24. That is, *muṭlaqa* and *muqayyada* respectively.
25. Āmulī, *Jāmi'*, 399–400, § 800; quoting al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ*, 1: 250.
26. Āmulī, *Jāmi'*, 400, § 802.
27. *Ibid.*, 400–6, §§ 802–13.
28. *Ibid.*, 406, § 802.

29. This point, and the rest of the information in this paragraph, are derived from the commentary on Q 5.55 in Nasr et al., *Study Quran*.
30. The well-known exception to this rule is the Naqshbandiyya order, which traces one of its lines of descent back to the first Sunnī Caliph Abū Bakr (d. 13/634). The other two lines of transmission amongst the Naqshbandiyya, like every other Sufi order, trace their lineage back to ‘Alī. See Itzhak Weismann, *The Naqshbandiyya: Orthodoxy and Activism in a Worldwide Sufi Tradition* (London: Routledge, 2007), 23–4. For Āmulī’s extended version of this argument, where he provides the names of many important Sufi figures who have some form of connection to ‘Alī, see *Naṣṣ*, 216–23, § 491–505.
31. Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 401, § 803.
32. *Ibid.*, § 804.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*
35. For an inquiry into the Muḥammadan Reality, see Rustom, ‘The Cosmology of the Muḥammadan Reality’, *Ishrāq: Islamic Philosophy Yearbook* 4 (2013): 540–5. The most detailed study of the closely related doctrine of the Muḥammadan Light (*nūr Muḥammadī*) can be found in Khalil Andani, ‘Metaphysics of Muhammad: The Nur Muhammad from Imam Ja‘far al-Sadiq (d. 148/765) to Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (d. 672/1274)’, *Journal of Sufi Studies* 8, no. 2 (2019): 99–175.
36. Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 401, § 804. Ibn ‘Arabī is in favour of the meaning, but does not call it a tradition; see *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. A. E. ‘Afifī (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyya, 1946), 64. The passage from the *Fuṣūṣ* can be found in translation (and in context) in Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 124.
37. Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 402, § 806.
38. *Ibid.*, 403, § 807.
39. *Ibid.*, § 808.
40. See Āmulī’s comments in *ibid.*, 412, § 827.
41. *Ibid.*, 407, § 814. The quotation from Ibn ‘Arabī can be found in *Fuṣūṣ*, 64. This is part of a lengthy passage that is translated and discussed in Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 122–5. I follow Chodkiewicz (p. 124) in rendering *ḥasana min ḥasanāt* as ‘one of the perfections’.
42. See also Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 417, § 837.
43. *Ibid.*, 407–8, § 815.
44. *Ibid.*, 412, § 825.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*, 409, § 817.
47. *Ibid.*, 408, § 816. Note here again the Prophet’s referring to ‘Alī as his ‘self’.
48. *Ibid.*, 409, § 818. For a discussion of this tradition, see Mohammad Ali Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shi‘ism*, trans. David Streight (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 40–1.
49. Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 409–11, §§ 820–1; discussing Ibn ‘Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, 1: 119.
50. For a helpful outline of Ibn ‘Arabī’s sophisticated cosmology, see Chittick, *Self-Disclosure of God*, xxix–xxxv.
51. Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 410–1, § 821; quoting Ibn ‘Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, 1: 119.
52. It will be recalled that we encountered this phrase earlier, in Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ*, 46.
53. Cf. Q 57.3.
54. This is part of ‘Alī’s famous and provocative *khuṭbat al-bayān*, for which, see Amir-Moezzi, *The Spirituality of Shi‘i Islam*, trans. Hafiz Karmali, David Bachrach, Amy Jacobs, and David Streight (London: I. B. Tauris in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, 2011), 126–31, and Shah-Kazemi, *Justice and Remembrance*, 187–9.
55. Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 411, §§ 822–3. In the corresponding section in *Nuṣūṣ*, 203, § 456, Āmulī replaces the *khuṭbat al-bayān* with ‘Alī’s other famous (and similar) sermon, the *khuṭbat al-iftikhāriyya*.
56. See Āmulī, *Jāmi’*, 419–20, § 841.
57. *Ibid.*, 413, § 828.

58. *Ibid.*, 413, § 829; glossing Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ*, 61–4.
59. For a translation of the relevant passage, see Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 123–4.
60. See Alexander Knysch, *Ibn ‘Arabi and the Later Islamic Tradition: The Making of a Polemical Image in Medieval Islam* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), chapter 4.
61. Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 125. It can be noted here that the reason *nubuwwa* ceases and *walāya* remains forever is because *walī* is a divine name, whereas *nabī* is not. See Q 42.9 and 28.
62. Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 414, § 830.
63. *Ibid.*, § 831.
64. *Ibid.*, 414, § 830.
65. *Ibid.*, 413, § 829; glossing Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ*, 61–4.
66. Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 414, § 829; glossing Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ*, 61–4.
67. Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 415, § 833.
68. *Ibid.* To support this reading, Āmulī draws on several well-known sayings from the Prophet and ‘Alī, seeking to illustrate that the latter indeed ‘sees the matter as it truly is’. For example, he quotes ‘Alī as saying, ‘Were the veil to be lifted, I would not increase in certainty’, and ‘Ask me about anything under the Divine Throne, for I know the pathways of the heavens better than the pathways of the earth!’
69. *Ibid.*, 419, § 841.
70. See the remarks in Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 137 and 144, n. 45. Where the problem arises, of course, is in Āmulī’s selective and at times incorrect reading of Ibn ‘Arabī’s hagiology. We have seen several other instances of this in the present article. Amongst other such occurrences, particularly noteworthy is the discussion in *Jāmi‘*, 422, § 846.
71. This is clearly the implication of the text of the *Fuṣūṣ* (pp. 61–4) quoted in Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 414, § 829.
72. *Ibid.*, 416, § 835; quoting al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ*, 1: 243.
73. Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 417, § 835.
74. *Ibid.*, § 836; quoting al-Qayṣarī, *Sharḥ*, 1: 244.
75. See Chittick, *Divine Love: Islamic Literature and the Path to God* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013), 374.
76. Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 417, § 835. This saying of Gabriel is, of course, from the night of the Prophet’s ascension (*mi‘rāj*).
77. *Ibid.*, 417–8, § 837. The last part literally reads, ‘there is no entry-point for Jesus into this station’.
78. See Ibn ‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ*, 63. The passage in which this phrase occurs is translated in Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 113.
79. Āmulī, *Jāmi‘*, 447–8, § 902.

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