

Routledge Studies in Islamic Philosophy

PHILOSOPHICAL SUFISM

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL OF
IBN AL-'ARABĪ**

Mukhtar H. Ali



Mukhtar Ali's *Philosophical Sufism* is his second major contribution to analyzing the intersection between the two disciplines, written in a clear and accessible language and deserving a wide readership. Having supervised his dissertation some years ago, I am gratified to see that he has emerged as a prominent scholar in this field of Islamic Studies.

Hamid Algar, *Professor Emeritus of Persian and Islamic Studies,
University of California, Berkeley*

Exceptionally clear and clearly exceptional, *Philosophical Sufism* presents us with an analytically rigorous and spiritually sensitive explication of the main doctrines of the school of Ibn al-'Arabī, which dominated spiritual and intellectual life in the pre-modern and early modern Islamic world for well over six hundred years. As such, this book recommends itself to not only intellectual historians and professional philosophers, but also those who would like to bring the riches of the Sufi metaphysical tradition to bear upon the impoverished scene of contemporary Islamic thought.

Mohammed Rustom, *author of Inrushes of the Heart:
The Sufi Philosophy of 'Ayn al-Qudāt*

Philosophical Sufism is a very welcome addition to Islamic studies. Mukhtar Ali's balanced presentation of the intersections of philosophy and Sufism manages to maintain a balance that is wide-ranging, yet structured; accessible, yet profound. Lucidly written, with careful treatments of the key authors and texts of this important intellectual phenomenon, *Philosophical Sufism* will be invaluable for both researchers and instructors.

Cyrus Ali Zargar, *author of The Polished Mirror: Storytelling and the Pursuit
of Virtue in Islamic Philosophy and Sufism*

Philosophical Sufism offers a highly accessible account of Islamic mysticism in the language of ratiocination. Undergraduates and adepts alike will benefit from the overview of Sufi themes and scholarly literature. Its pedagogical value lies in the clarity of discussion, the author's effortless style and firm grasp of the topics. An indispensable contribution that bridges the gap between Islamic philosophy and mysticism.

Harun Rasiah, *Associate Professor of Ethnic Studies,
California State University*

With skillful erudition, Mukhtar Ali distills the central philosophical tenets of the school of Ibn al-'Arabī, systematically covering ontology, epistemology, teleology, human vicegerency, the nature of imagination, and the relation between the macrocosm and microcosm. As one of very few introductory texts on the subject, it will prove invaluable particularly to students.

Atif Khalil, *author of Repentance and the Return to God:
Tawba in Early Sufism*



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Philosophical Sufism

Analyzing the intersection between Sufism and philosophy, this volume is a sweeping examination of the mystical philosophy of Muḥyī-l-Dīn Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 637/1240), one of the most influential and original thinkers of the Islamic world. This book systematically covers Ibn al-‘Arabī’s ontology, theology, epistemology, teleology, spiritual anthropology and eschatology.

Although philosophy uses deductive reasoning to discover the fundamental nature of existence and Sufism relies on spiritual experience, it was not until the school of Ibn al-‘Arabī that philosophy and Sufism converged into a single framework by elaborating spiritual doctrines in precise philosophical language. Contextualizing the historical development of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s school, the work draws from the earliest commentators of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s oeuvre, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274), ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī (d. ca. 730/1330) and Dawūd al-Qayṣarī (d. 751/1350), but also draws from the medieval heirs of his doctrines Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787/1385), the pivotal intellectual and mystical figure of Persia who recast philosophical Sufism within the framework of Twelver Shī‘ism and ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492), the key figure in the dissemination of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s ideas in the Persianate world as well as the Ottoman Empire, India, China and East Asia via Central Asia.

Lucidly written and comprehensive in scope, with careful treatments of the key authors, *Philosophical Sufism* is a highly accessible introductory text for students and researchers interested in Islam, philosophy, religion and the Middle East.

Mukhtar H. Ali is a Research Fellow at the Warburg Institute, School of Advanced Studies, University of London. He specializes in Sufism, Islamic philosophy and ethics, and has published widely in various peer-reviewed venues. He has also translated several works in classical and contemporary Islamic metaphysics, which include *The Principles of Correspondences* (2013) and *The New Creation* (2018) and *The Horizons of Being: The Metaphysics of Ibn al-‘Arabī in the Muqaddimat al-Qayṣarī* (2020).

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Philosophical Sufism

An Introduction to the School of
Ibn al-‘Arabī

Mukhtar H. Ali

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A Note on Names and Transliteration

For the sake of simplification, I have not used the definite article *al-* when referring to someone by his surname (*nisba*), for example Qūnawī, and not al-Qūnawī. Arabic and Persian words, proper names and book titles have been transliterated according to the standards set by the *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*. Translations of the Qur'ān are my own, unless stated otherwise.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Introduction

The spiritual teachings of the Qur'ān have always played a central role in the life of Muslims who aspired to refine their character through God-consciousness, devotions and contemplation. There was an implicit understanding that true knowledge was attained through self-purification and the illumination of the heart.¹ On this basis, one would model himself upon the perfect character of the Prophet and thus attain nearness to God. While these ideals are explicit in the Qur'ān and hadith, and since Islamic spirituality encompasses both an inward and outward dimension, spiritual masters over time identified the true nature of the soul and the detailed path to God. The trajectory of spiritual development of the soul was called “wayfaring” (*sulūk*), which is the spiritual movement through states and stations to reach the ultimate truth, reality or the divine presence.² Towards the end of the second/eighth century certain identifiable teachings and practices became codified in manuals of spirituality. Historically, this came to be called Sufism, which was not a separate sect of Islam, but a methodology underlying religious devotions and an inner quest to understand and attain reality. Sufism, furthermore, developed over time as a cultural phenomenon with the formation of orders, specific practices, rites of initiation and various types of esoteric knowledge.

The nascent intellectual climate of Islam ushered in new branches of knowledge through the translation of Greek works, and philosophy, among other disciplines, entered the Muslim mindset. In the Islamic context, Greek philosophy could be characterized by two distinct trends, one that followed the methodology of Plato (428–347 BCE), who had a predilection for mysticism and the other Aristotle (384–322 BCE), whose philosophy was characterized by logic and discursive reasoning. These influences also played into the epistemological divide that was already fomenting in Islamic culture, namely, the divergence between reason and intuition. Those who inclined towards esotericism held that true knowledge can only be attained by spiritual experience, inspiration and unveiling.³ Whereas those who inclined towards the exoteric, such as the legalists, theologians and philosophers, relied upon either textual evidence, rational proofs or a combination of both. Others attempted to reconcile the esoteric with the exoteric, claiming that

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they are two sides of the same coin, or three realities expressed as *sharī'a* (law), *ṭarīqa* (way) and *ḥaqīqa* (reality). Based on a certain narration from the Prophet, thinkers such as Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787/1385), divided religious life into these three levels:⁴

Know that *sharī'a* is a term denoting the divine path, which contains principles and branches, permissions (*rukhas*) and resolutions (*'azā'im*), the good and the excellent. *Ṭarīqa* is the way of maximum precaution, its superlative and firmest aspect. Whatever path leads man to tread the firmest, most superlative path is called *ṭarīqa*, whether it concerns speech, action, quality or state. As for *ḥaqīqa*, it is the affirmation of something through the experience of unveiling, witnessing or a state. That is why it is said that *sharī'a* is that you worship Him, *ṭarīqa* is that you attain His presence and *ḥaqīqa* is that you witness Him. It is also said that *sharī'a* is that you fulfil His commands, *ṭarīqa* is that you uphold His commands and *ḥaqīqa* is that you subsist through them.⁵

Historically, Sufism and philosophy have had divergent epistemologies. Philosophy uses deductive reasoning to discover the fundamental nature of existence, whereas mysticism relies primarily on spiritual experience. However, philosophy in its original sense as “the love of wisdom” can be applied more generally to denote any intellectual activity that posits an ontology and epistemology in an attempt to discover the true nature of things. We can say that “intellectual” is not limited to the faculty of reason alone but includes spiritual modalities of perception related to the heart or spirit.⁶ In this sense, mysticism can be considered a branch of philosophy. Even within Sufism, there have been various methodologies, some that have incorporated reason and some that have relied on spiritual insight or intuition alone. It was not until the school of Ibn al-‘Arabī that philosophy and Sufism converged into a single framework where the school of philosophical Sufism came into being. What we find in this school is the elaboration of spiritual doctrines in precise philosophical terminology. In other words, the Sufism of Ibn al-‘Arabī is not only a way of conduct or personal wayfaring, but it embodies an entire cosmology and philosophical worldview. We will return to the specifics of this school momentarily.

An Overview of the Philosophical Schools

To better understand the nature and significance of philosophical Sufism, one must begin with an overview of the main philosophical movements that emerged in the Islamic world. Broadly speaking, these are the schools of scholastic theology (*kalām*), Peripateticism (*mashā'*),⁷ Illuminationism (*ishrāq*), Transcendent Philosophy (*al-Ḥikmat al-muta'āliya*)⁸ and Sufism (*taṣawwuf*).⁹ Caner Dagli in his *Ibn al-‘Arabī and Islamic Intellectual Culture* has meticulously provided an account of the theoretical and historical

background leading up to the school of Ibn al-‘Arabī, highlighting the interaction between theology, philosophy and Sufism.

As early as the eighth century, the school of scholastic theology, or *kalām*, refers to the speech, argument or dialectic used to establish correct doctrinal views and defense of the tenets of the religion established by the Qur’ān and *sunna*.¹⁰ It was called “*kalām*” possibly because many theological works began with, “*al-kalāmu fī kadha*” (the doctrine is as follows), or from the word itself, which means “to speak”; namely, to speak about that which one must not discuss, such as the Essence of God and His attributes. The name may also have been derived from the very first issue that was discussed in this discipline, which was whether the speech of God is eternal or created. Scholastic theology provided answers to the most important metaphysical questions such as the existence of God but also debated issues concerning the divine attributes, God’s relation to creation, and freewill and determinism. However, many theological arguments did not always have a sound methodological basis, often resorting to religious and doctrinal presuppositions. For this reason, the proponents of this school were criticized for being entangled in numerous fallacies and polemics. The theologians generally did not hold the Sufis in a positive light, nor did they depend on unveiling to discover truth; rather, they relied solely on scriptural evidence from the Qur’ān and hadith. Nevertheless, some theologians accepted unveiling as an epistemological method, particularly, the towering figure, Abū Ḥāmid al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), who became a devotee of Sufism towards the end of his life.¹¹ The most important theologians were Abū-l-Ḥasan al-‘Ash‘arī (d. 324/936), Abū Maṣṣūr al-Māturīdī (d. 333/944), ‘Abd al-Jabbār b. Aḥmad (d. 416/1025), Abū-l-Ḥusayn al-Baṣrī (d. 478/1085), Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 607/1210), Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274), Ḥasan b. Yūsuf (‘Allāma) Ḥillī (d. 726/1325) and ‘Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī (d. 756/1355).

In the Islamic world, the Peripatetic school is attributed to the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who systematically established its most fundamental arguments. It was named “peripatetic” based on Aristotle’s habit of lecturing while walking (*mashyī*), or perhaps because premises lead to their conclusions in a systematic and logical manner, like walking from point A to point B. Ya‘qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī (d. ca. 256/870) was the first Peripatetic philosopher in the Islamic tradition. The other key figures include Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī (d. 339/950),¹² the “second teacher” after Aristotle, and ‘Alī Ibn Sīnā (d. 428/1037), known as Avicenna in the West, who is arguably the most influential philosopher of Islam, and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, the Persian polymath who was a follower of Ibn Sīnā.

The salient feature of this school is the claim that truth can be ascertained through rational argumentation and deductive reasoning, and that it is not possible for man to arrive at truth without the aid of deductive reasoning. The second feature of this school is the attention paid to metaphysical concerns. The Peripatetics did not rely on unveiling to arrive at truth, rather they used deductive reasoning and logic. From the point of view of mysticism,

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which asserts that truth and reality is known through unveiling and witnessing, this methodology is held in a negative light.

The scholars of law also criticized the Peripatetics for not adhering to the tenets of the Law (*sharī'a*) and acknowledging its sanctity. Peripatetic philosophy held that truth is obtained by rational thought alone, which essentially undermined the basis of jurisprudential principles that were derived directly from revelation and prophetic sayings. The philosopher was considered a heretic and disbeliever on account of his strict adherence to reason and intellectual proofs.

However, not every Peripatetic philosopher rejected unveiling as a means of arriving at truth, and many were, in fact, compelled to accept unveiling. One clear example is Ibn Sīnā, who in the ninth section of his *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* (Remarks and Admonitions) skillfully discusses the stations of the Sufis and describes various modalities of perception and types of esoteric knowledge.¹³ Furthermore, it was not only Aristotle who exerted an influence in the Islamic world, but Neoplatonic emanationist motifs and Pythagorean natural philosophy were promoted by thinkers such as the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (Brethren of Purity), an erudite secret society living in fourth/tenth century Baṣra.¹⁴ Their encyclopaedic work, *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* assimilated Hermetic, Platonic, Aristotelean, Neopythagorean, Buddhist, Manichean and Zoroastrian teachings into four main branches of learning according to the following divisions: Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Sciences of the Soul, and Intellect and Theology. Whether or not mediated by the *Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*, Pythagorean and Platonic ideas were profoundly influential in the development of the schools of Illuminationism and philosophical Sufism.

The school of Illumination was pioneered by Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191) whose main proponent in the Greek tradition was Plato followed by Plotinus. The central idea of this school is that truth is known through divine illumination or unveiling (*kashf*) after the soul has become purified. This path of arriving at truth is not restricted to self-purification and divine illumination, but intellectual reasoning, reinforced by logic and analytical deduction. Arguments put forth by the theologians were also incorporated in this school insofar as they reflected the teachings of the Qur'ān and *Sunna*. Although this school was anti-Peripatetic, it was still a fusion of reason, revelation and divine illumination. Many of the other schools, including philosophical Sufism, drew from this school and Mullā Ṣadrā described it in his commentary on Suhrawardī's central work, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* (The Philosophy of Illumination) as "the apple of the eye of the gnostics and the people of witnessing."¹⁵ Key figures include Quṭb al-Dīn Shirāzī (d. 709/1309), Jalal al-Dīn Dawānī (d. 908/1502) and Ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsā'ī (d. after 906/1501).

The school of Transcendent Philosophy was founded by Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 1050/1640), popularly known as Mullā Ṣadrā, the monumental figure of philosophy in Safavid Iran.¹⁶ Ṣadrā's most famous work, *al-Ḥikmat*

al-muta'aliya fi-l-asfār al-'aqliyya al-arba'a (The Transcendent Philosophy Concerning the Four Intellectual Journeys), is a compendium of traditional philosophy that synthesizes rational and mystical approaches, and includes ontology, natural philosophy, theology, eschatology and soteriology.¹⁷ The main feature of this school is that it combines three epistemic modalities: reason, revelation and inspiration. It can be said that Mullā Ṣadra's methodology is a veritable synthesis of all prior Islamic learning up until his day, amalgamating the works of Aristotelian Peripatetic philosophy represented by Ibn Sīnā, the School of Illumination of Suhrawardī, scholastic theology and the philosophical Sufism of Ibn al-'Arabī.¹⁸

As for Sufism, the salient feature of this school is that witnessing and unveiling is the only way for the human being to arrive at truth. The term Sufī originates from the Arabic word *taṣawwuf*, which means the wearing of wool, perhaps referring to the woolen garments worn by the early ascetics.¹⁹ In Arabic, the terms *'irfān*, *ma'rifa* or *'ilm* are frequently used to denote this discipline. Sufism traces its origin back to the Prophet himself but its pioneers were Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), Rābi'a al-'Adawiya (d. 185/801), Dhū-l-Nūn al-Miṣrī (d. 246/860), Abū Bakr al-Shiblī (d. 334/946), Abu-l-Qāsim al-Junayd (d. 298/910), Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī (d. 234/848 or 261/875), Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896), al-Ḥusayn b. Maṣṣūr al-Ḥallāj (d. 309/922), 'Alī b. 'Uthmān Huǧwīrī (465/1072), 'Ayn al-Quḍāt Hamadanī (d. 525/1130) and Ibn al-Fāriḍ (d. 632/1234).²⁰ Other famous Sufī masters who can be described as being on the "path of love" (*madhhab-i ishq*) include Aḥmad Ghazālī (d. 520/1126), Farīd al-Dīn 'Attar (d. 618/1221), Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273) and Shams al-Dīn Ḥāfiẓ (d. 792/1390).

However, the culminating figure of Sufism who developed the most profound and original mystical worldview is the greatest Shaykh (*al-Shaykh al-Akbar*), Muḥyī-l-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī (d. 638/1240). His magnum opus, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*, is 560 chapters, covering virtually every sphere of Islamic knowledge, and his most influential work, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (The Gemstones of Wisdom) has been the subject of over one hundred commentaries. Ibn al-'Arabī's Sufism is epistemologically at odds with philosophy despite their shared terminology. He considered philosophy as counterproductive to attaining reality:

None of the scholars and philosophers have discovered the knowledge of the soul and its reality except the men of God, namely, the Messengers and the Sufis. As for the rationalists and speculative thinkers from among the theologians and ancients, none have discovered the soul, its essence and its reality. Reasoning will never yield this knowledge. Thus, whoever seeks it by way of reasoning does so in vain. "They are those whose efforts in the life of this world are misguided while they suppose that they are doing good" (18:104). He who seeks the matter by other than its path will not achieve its realization.²¹

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In this statement, Ibn al-‘Arabī is referring not only to the knowledge of the soul but also to the nature of existence. There are, however, two views within this school, one that relies entirely on unveiling and one that accepts both unveiling and reasoning. The second method was employed by the earliest commentators of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s works, such as Qūnawī, Jandī, Kāshānī and Qayṣarī. However, the Sufis never considered reason as a means for arriving at truth but relied on unveiling and witnessing through purification of the heart and the soul. This purification was enough to reach the goal, but the texts of philosophical Sufism were intended to explain spiritual experience in philosophical language. Since philosophy is the closest discipline to Sufism, the earliest commentators attempted to reconcile knowledge gained from spiritual experience in philosophical terminology; it was not an attempt to arrive at the truth by means of reason alone.

The School of Ibn al-‘Arabī²²

Philosophical Sufism here refers to the school of Ibn al-‘Arabī. Mohammed Rustom writes that it is called philosophical Sufism because:

The central concern of the school of Ibn al-‘Arabī is with Being or *wujūd*, which is also the central concern of Islamic philosophy. Members of the school of Ibn al-‘Arabī did not invent an entirely new philosophical vocabulary to explain their teachings. Many of the technical terms and concepts with which they were working had been bequeathed from the well-developed traditions of Islamic philosophy and theology.²³

Given that Ibn al-‘Arabī neither established a specific *madhab* or *ṭarīqa*, William Chittick notes that the term “school of Ibn al-‘Arabī” has been coined by Western scholars.²⁴ Most of the commentary on his works is both an attempt to unravel his teachings and elaborate upon the author’s own insights and unveilings. In other words, we are investigating two aspects of the Greatest Master (*al-Shaykh al-Akbar*), his own writings and the writings of those who were in some way affiliated or influenced by him. James Morris remarks that “Ibn al-‘Arabī’s writings were only the starting point for the most diverse developments, in which reference to subsequent interpreters quickly became at least as important as the study of the Shaykh himself.”²⁵ This is because his works are a type of unfolding, a spiritual seed planted in the hearts of the gnostics. To see the fruits of those writings, one must wait for it to appear on the branch. These spiritual secrets are scattered throughout time and reveal themselves in the various forms and writings of the commentators, who were themselves great luminaries of the Islamic mystical tradition. Thus, the focus of the present work is the metaphysics of Ibn al-‘Arabī as expressed in his own writings and those of his commentators.

Even though Ibn al-‘Arabī wrote prolifically in classical Arabic, much of his writings are too complex even for native speakers. They are the

expressions of his visions and describe spiritual realities that are beyond the scope of ordinary understanding. Thus, a large part of grasping his ideas is mediated through the writings of his students and commentators, most of whom were Sufis and the people of spiritual insight. The students of his inner circle wrote the most authoritative commentaries. In this regard, his earliest and closest disciple, Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274) is key to the whole tradition.²⁶ Others in the lineage after Qūnawī were his students Mu'ayyid al-Dīn al-Jandī (d. ca. 700/1300), 'Afīf al-Dīn al-Tilmisānī (d. 690/1291), Sa'īd al-Dīn al-Farghānī (d. ca. 699/1300) and Fakhr al-Dīn al-'Irāqī (d. 688/1289). Jandī's student was 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī (d. ca. 730/1330) and Kāshānī's student was Dawūd al-Qayṣarī (d. 751/1350).

Other prominent Sufis and proponents of his doctrines are the following, mentioned in chronological order: Sa'īd al-Dīn al-Ḥammūya (d. 650/1252–53), 'Azīz al-Dīn al-Nasafī (d. ca. 661/1262), Maḥmūd Shabistarī (d. 741/1340), Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī (d. 787/1385), 'Abd al-Karīm al-Jilī (d. ca. 832/1428), Shams al-Dīn al-Fanārī (d. 834/1431), Ṣā'in al-Dīn Ibn Turka Iṣfahānī (d. 830/1437), 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492), Shams al-Dīn Lāhījī (d. 912/1507), Ḥamza Fanṣūrī (d. 933/1527), Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1050/1640), Ismā'īl Hakkī Bursawī, (d. 1137/1725) and 'Abd al-Ghanī Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731).²⁷

'Azīz al-Dīn al-Nasafī, one of the most important Sufis of the medieval period and author of *Maqṣad-i aqṣā*, integrated the writings of Ibn al-'Arabī and Najm al-Dīn Kubrā. He was a disciple of Sa'īd al-Dīn al-Ḥammūya (d. 650/1252–53), a friend of Qunawī and also disciple of the founder of the Kubrāwī order.²⁸

Maḥmūd Shabistarī is the greatest Persian poet associated with the school of philosophical Sufism. A masterpiece of Persian poetry, his *Gulshan-i rāz* (The Garden of Mystery) forms the basis of Lāhījī's 800-page commentary entitled *Maḥfātīḥ al-i jāz fī sharḥ gulshan-i rāz* (Keys of Wonder Commenting on the *Gulshan-i rāz*).²⁹ Lāhījī's opus is the most complete work on philosophical Sufism in the Persian language.³⁰

Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī, the pivotal intellectual and mystical figure of Persia was among the medieval heirs of Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings, recasting philosophical Sufism within the framework of Twelver Shī'ism. Āmulī can be credited for the rapprochement between early Sufism, which was primarily a Sunni phenomenon and Shī'ism. In his most famous work, *Jāmi' al-asrār wa manba' al-anwār* (The Compendium of Mysteries and Source of Lights),³¹ he demonstrates that the essential reality of Sufism and Shī'ism are the same, and that Ibn 'Arabī's teachings are the esoteric interpretations of Shī'ī doctrine. His work is an indispensable manual for Shī'ī mysticism (*'irfān*) that coalesces the three epistemic modalities, reason (*'aql*), revelation (*naql*) and unveiling (*kashf*). Furthermore, it discusses some of the main doctrinal issues concerning divine unity, the nature of Prophethood, sainthood, unveiling and the various levels of Islam. Given that it covers both ontology and epistemology, *Jāmi' al-asrār* is a sourcebook for Shī'ī *'irfān*. Āmulī wrote one of

the longest commentaries on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* entitled *Naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (The Text of Texts Commenting on the *Fuṣūṣ*).³² He also wrote a Qur'ānic commentary in seven volumes entitled *al-Muḥīṭ al-a'ẓam* (The Supreme Ocean).³³

'Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī was a descendant of the Sufi saint 'Abd al-Qādir Jī lānī (d. 561/1166), the eponymous founder of the Qādiriyya order. A visionary and Sufi saint, he wrote a seminal work summarizing the doctrines of Ibn al-'Arabī entitled *al-Insān al-kāmil fī ma'rīfat al-awākhir wa-l-awā'il* (The Perfect Human Concerning the Knowledge of Ends and Beginnings).³⁴ James Morris remarks that Jīlī is “undoubtedly both the most original thinker and the most remarkable and independent mystical writer”³⁵ among the followers of Ibn al-'Arabī.

Shams al-Dīn al-Fanārī was the first Ottoman jurist to become *Shaykh al-Islam* and a key contributor to the intellectual life of the nascent Ottoman state.³⁶ He wrote *Miṣbāḥ al-uns* (Lantern of Intimacy), a commentary on Qūnāwī's *Miftāḥ al-ghayb* (The Key to the Unseen) which is generally considered the most advanced text studied in philosophical Sufism. Chittick notes, “In the *madrasahs* of Iran, the *Miftāḥ* has been considered the most advanced work on metaphysics, and along with its commentary by Fanārī, was taught after the *Fuṣūṣ*.”³⁷ Seyyed Hossein Nasr states that it is the “premier text for the teaching of theoretical gnosis especially in Turkey and Persia.”³⁸

Ibn Turka Iṣfahānī was an Illuminationist interpreter of Peripatetic philosophy and a commentator on Ibn al-'Arabī's writings. His *Tamhīd al-qawā'id* (Establishing the Principles)³⁹ is among the essential texts of philosophical Sufism. He also wrote a commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* synthesizing the various philosophical schools.

In his integration of Illuminationist theosophy with Peripatetic thought and philosophical mysticism, he is perhaps the most important figure in Islamic philosophy after Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, figuring as the key link in the chain [of philosophical thought stretching] between Mullā Ṣadrā, Suhrawardī and Ibn Sīnā.⁴⁰

'Abd al-Rahmān Jāmī was a key figure in the dissemination of Ibn al-'Arabī's ideas in the Persianate world as well as the Ottoman Empire, India, China and East Asia via Central Asia. Jāmī enabled the widespread reception of Ibn al-'Arabī's ideas beyond the central Islamic lands. Two of his works were translated into Chinese, *Ashī'at al-lama'āt* (Rays from the “Flashes”)⁴¹ and *Lawa'ih* (Gleaming Lights).⁴² Sachiko Murata writes, “The fact that Jāmī is the author of two of the four Islamic works translated into Chinese certainly suggests that it was difficult to study Islam in Chinese without being exposed to Ibn al-'Arabī.”⁴³ His first prose work was *Naqd al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ naqsh al-fuṣūṣ* (Critical Texts Commenting on the *Naqsh al-Fuṣūṣ*), which is a commentary on Ibn al-'Arabī's own ten-page distillation of the *Fuṣūṣ*

al-ḥikam, entitled *Naqsh al-fuṣūṣ*. Jāmī wrote *Naqd al-nuṣūṣ* in both Arabic and Persian intending a wider audience unlike his *Sharḥ al-fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, which is a detailed commentary of the *Fuṣūṣ* itself. His works also include *Sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (Commentary on the Bezels of Wisdom), *Lawā'ih* (Gleaming Lights), *Lawāmi'* (Sparks of Inspiration) and *Ashi'at al-lama'at* (Rays from the “Flashes”). Professor Hamid Algar notes, “It is a significant measure of his lifelong devotion to Ibn al-‘Arabī that his final, as well as his earliest, work in prose was devoted to the analysis of *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.”⁴⁴ Jāmī also influenced the Malay world through mystic poet Ḥamza Faṣṣūrī’s translation and adaptation of his *Lawā'ih*.⁴⁵

‘Abd al-Ghanī Nābulusī, the eminent Sufi saint of Ottoman Syria, is the author of *Jawāhir al-nuṣūṣ fī ḥall kalimāt al-Fuṣūṣ* (Precious Texts in Resolving the Words of the *Fuṣūṣ*). The most popular and “widely read commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ* in the Arab world was written by the prolific Sufi author al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī.”⁴⁶ In an autobiographical account of his devotion to Ibn al-‘Arabī, Nābulusī reports:

It is well-known that I draw upon the Shaykh’s words in all my states and that his books, in accord with the Qur’an, the Sunnah, and the consensus of the pious forefathers, are the pillar of my belief. In my turn I affirm his speech to others. For I was raised suckling at his two breasts from the time I was a child who knew nothing. I am his suckling child, son of the Shaykh al-Akbar, and he is my father.⁴⁷

Ismā‘il Hakkī Bursawī was an eminent Ottoman scholar and mystic who translated and commented on the *Fuṣūṣ* in Ottoman Turkish. His Qur’ānic exegesis, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (The Spirit of Elucidation) combines the teachings of Ibn al-‘Arabī with the earlier Sufi commentaries such as Aḥmad Sam‘ānī’s *Rawḥ al-arwāḥ*.

In the following sections, we will identify Ibn al-‘Arabī’s immediate circle and the formative figures of the early generations upon whose edifice the whole tradition relies. More than mere commentators, Qūnawī, Jandī, Kāshānī and Qayṣārī can be considered the architects of this school, each having studied the texts with his predecessor, or having “received” them by word and spiritual transmission.⁴⁸

Ibn al-‘Arabī

‘Muḥyī-l-Dīn Ibn al-‘Arabī, one of Islam’s most influential thinkers and prolific writers, is referred to as the Greatest Master, *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*. He brought the esoteric dimension of Islam to new heights and created a comprehensive system of mystical thought that has permeated Islamic disciplines for the past seven hundred years. He was born in the Andalusian city of Murcia in southern Spain in 560/1165 and died in 638/1240 in Damascus. The name “Ibn al-‘Arabī” refers to a pure Arab ancestry from the lineage of

legendary Arabian poet, Ḥātim al-Ṭā'ī. He received his education in the traditional Islamic disciplines in the city of Seville, the cultural capital and crossroads between the Islamic world and Europe where he remained for some 30 years before migrating to the East. Claude Addas has written the definitive biography,⁴⁹ so this brief section focuses on a single aspect which distinguishes him from his followers.

While we consider the school of Ibn al-ʿArabī as philosophical Sufism, truth be told, there is very little philosophy proper in his works. Ibn al-ʿArabī was a visionary not a philosopher, and his writings originate from spiritual experience, not deductive reasoning. So, in applying the term “philosophy” to his writings, it should not be understood as discursive or analytical philosophy like that of Aristotle or Ibn Sīnā. In this sense, philosophy is diametrically opposed to Sufism, so the term philosophical Sufism is an inherent contradiction. But in another sense, if philosophy means the logic, elaboration and description of a metaphysical system studied separately from its epistemic origins, then it is the only way to describe his Sufism. He describes realities attained through spiritual experience in a language that resembles philosophy or theology, redefining terms as he creates a whole new metaphysical framework. Ibn al-ʿArabī says:

In what I have written, I have never had a set purpose, as other writers. Flashes of divine inspiration used to come upon me and almost overwhelm me, so that I could only put them from my mind by committing to paper what they revealed to me. If my works evince any form of composition, that form was unintentional. Some works I wrote at the command of God, sent to me in sleep or through a mystical revelation ... My heart clings to the door of the divine presence, waiting mindfully for what comes when the door is opened. My heart is poor and needy, empty of every knowledge. When something appears to the heart from behind that curtain, the heart hurries to obey and sets it down in keeping with the prescribed limits.⁵⁰

Ibn al-ʿArabī, in spite of his commitment to inspired knowledge, was conversant with the writings of the theologians and philosophers, specifically, al-Ghazālī, al-Kindī, al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. He was also acquainted with the works of other Sufis such as ʿAbdallāh al-Anṣārī (d. 481/1089), Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Sulamī (d. 412/1021), Abū-l-Qāsim Qushayrī (d. 465/1072), Ḥārith Muḥāsibī (d. 243/857), Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī (d. 298/910) and Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. 386/996).⁵¹ He was also familiar with other literary forms, stating:

I have included in this book which I have entitled *Kitāb muḥāḍarāt al-abrār wa musamarat al-akhyār* (The Conference of the Pious and the Conversation of the Perfect), all kinds of literary forms, such as sermons, proverbs, unusual stories, chronicles of the past, a history of ancient Prophets, peace be upon them, records of both Arab and non-Arab

kings, noble virtues, marvelous occurrences, prophetic narrations concerning the beginning of this affair and the origination of the world.⁵²

Ibn al-‘Arabī’s attitude towards philosophy was not entirely negative, since “not all knowledge of the philosopher is invalid”⁵³ but it was not sufficient to gain certitude of the inward, hidden realities behind the veil of phenomenal existence. In other words, the heart’s perception is through spiritual insight (*baṣīra*), and the intellect’s perception is through reflection. In the *Futūḥāt* he says:

Is there something that cannot be obtained through unveiling (*kashf*) and spiritual experience (*wujūd*)? We say there is nothing and reject analytical reasoning all together because it causes confusion (*talbīs*) and untruthfulness. There is nothing that is not possible to know through unveiling and spiritual experience. Preoccupation with rational thought is a veil (*hijāb*). Others may reject [this position], but none of the people of God’s Way denies it; only the rationalists and speculative thinkers (*ahl al-naẓar wa-l-istidlāl*) and the exoteric scholars who have no taste for spiritual states deny it. If any of them did experience such spiritual states like those of the divine sage Plato, then this is something extremely rare; those individuals are comparable to the men of unveiling (*kashf*) and spiritual experience (*wujūd*).⁵⁴

Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī and his Students⁵⁵

Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī is considered to be the greatest expositor of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s works and the foremost of his students. Ibn al-‘Arabī and Qūnawī’s father, Majd al-Dīn Ishāq⁵⁶ were friends, and Ibn al-‘Arabī married his widow, becoming Qūnawī’s stepfather. Many referred to Qūnawī as *al-Shaykh al-Kabīr*, the Grand Master, after Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, the Greatest Master.⁵⁷ While still in his mid-twenties he was granted permission (*ijāza*) to transmit all of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s writings, having had the *Futūḥāt al-Makkiya*, as he states, “recited to me from beginning to end” a year earlier.⁵⁸ Qūnawī was the first to give structure to his master’s teachings, systematizing and popularizing them through philosophical language. Jāmī says about Qūnawī, “It is impossible to understand Ibn al-‘Arabī’s teachings concerning the oneness of Being in a manner consistent with both intellect and sacred Law without studying Qūnawī’s works.”⁵⁹ The school of philosophical Sufism is largely a product of Qūnawī’s recasting of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s doctrines into the language of philosophy in order to reach a larger audience. However, it should not be imagined that Qūnawī promoted analytical reasoning over intuition as a means of arriving at truth. His aim was to describe the realities witnessed by direct experience through the shared terminology of philosophy. Qūnawī says:

Among the Greeks, the earlier sages or philosophers (*hukamā'*) based their teachings primarily upon the unveilings or openings (*fath*) that they received as a result of spiritual practice, but after Aristotle, philosophy limited itself to those things that can be discerned by the intellect.

In the first chapter, I will point out the level of rationality so that those of you who come across this and other works by the people of the Way should realize that if there was sufficiency and healing in rational proofs and dialectics, neither the prophets, messengers or their inheritors—the saints, who uphold and convey divine proofs—would have turned away from them.⁶⁰

With respect to the historical characteristics that emerged from Qūnawī's writings, James Morris stresses some salient features of this development. The first is that Ibn al-ʿArabī's teachings were maintained through the actual study of his texts, particularly, his famous work, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.⁶¹ over which more than one-hundred commentaries have been written. Second, in the intellectual milieu in which Qūnawī was writing, there were deep intersections between philosophy, theology and Sufism.⁶² We have in Qūnawī's own handwriting his personal copy of a set of glosses on Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* (Philosophy of Illumination), as well as a set of glosses on Ibn Sīnā's *Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* (Remarks and Admonitions) by the ʿAshʿarī theologian and philosopher, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.⁶³

Qūnawī's interactions were not limited to the intellectual and literary domain, but he disseminated Ibn al-ʿArabī's teachings through the initiatic spiritual transmission characteristic of Sufism, and through other personal or collegial relationships. Among his contacts were Persian mystical poet, Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, Awḥad al-Dīn Kirmānī (d. 635/1238), the *shaykh* of the Suhrawardīyya order, Saʿd al-Dīn Ḥammūya and Najm al-Dīn al-Rāzī (d. 654/1256),⁶⁴ *shaykhs* of the Kubrawīyya order and Avicennan philosopher and Shīʿī theologian, Naṣīr Ḍīn al-Tūṣī (d. 673/1274) and his disciple, Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d. 710/1311). Qūnawī, having been initiated into the Suhrawardī order, spent around 15 years with Kirmānī, one of Ibn al-ʿArabī's close companions. Qūnawī used to say, "I have drunk milk from the breasts of two mothers," referring to both Ibn al-ʿArabī and Kirmānī.

The role of the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* as Ibn al-ʿArabī's decisive work and vehicle through which his ideas spread cannot be overemphasized. Because of its importance, Ibn al-ʿArabī found it necessary to write a condensed version of the *Fuṣūṣ* entitled *Naqsh al-Fuṣūṣ* (Engraving of the *Fuṣūṣ*). In the *Fuṣūṣ* commentarial tradition, Qūnawī's *al-Fukūk fī asrār mustanadāt ḥikam al-Fuṣūṣ* (The Unravelling of the Mysteries Behind the Wisdoms of the *Fuṣūṣ*) is the first commentary after Ibn al-ʿArabī's own *Naqsh al-Fuṣūṣ*.⁶⁵ The *Fukūk* is an explanation of the chapter headings of the *Fuṣūṣ* rather than an exhaustive commentary, a task that would be undertaken by his student Muʿayyid al-Dīn al-Jandī. Qūnawī describes Ibn al-ʿArabī's most celebrated work in the following:

The *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* is one of the most precious distillations of our master's works ... one of the seals of his writings and one of his last inspirations, flowing from the Muḥammadan station and wellspring of the Essence and comprehensive Singularity. It came from the quintessence of the spiritual taste (*dhawq*) of our Prophet—peace be upon him—with regard to knowledge of God, and intimates the origin of the tastes specific to the saints (*awliyā'*) and prophets mentioned therein, guiding each perceptive person to their quintessence ... and the spiritual perfection of each.

There is no doubt that an awareness of the mysteries contained in a book of this stature whose source of knowledge is that Prophetic station ... is dependent upon realizing the spiritual inheritance of him who has tasted all of that, having opened and unveiled for him.⁶⁶

The *Fukūk* was Qūnawī's last complete work, only to be followed by *Sharḥ al-aḥādīth al-arba'īniyya* (Commentary on Forty Hadiths), which contains a commentary on only twenty-nine hadith. Other works include *I'jāz al-bayān fī ta'wīl umm al-Qur'ān* (The Inimitability of Expression in the Hermeneutics of the Mother of the Qur'ān), *Risālat al-nuṣūṣ fī taḥqīq al-ṭawr al-makhṣūṣ* (The Treatise of Texts in the Verification of the Distinguished Degree) and *al-Risāla al-murshidiyya* (The Epistle of Spiritual Guidance).

Among his earliest students was 'Aḥf al-Dīn al-Tilmisānī (d. 690/1291) who had the manuscript of the *Futūḥāt* recited to him by Qūnawī. Tilmisānī was also a student of Ibn al-'Arabī and later became Qūnawī's closest companion after the Shaykh's death. He is the author of *Sharḥ asmā' al-ḥusnā* (Commentary on the Divine Names), commentaries on the *Fuṣūṣ* and 'Abd al-Jabbār al-Niffārī (d. 350/961) classic, *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* (The Book of Standings).⁶⁷ He also wrote a commentary on 'Abdallah Anṣārī's *Manāzil al-sā'irīn* (The Stations of the Wayfarers), the consummate manual of spiritual wayfaring.⁶⁸ Both Tilmisānī and Kāshānī wrote commentaries on this work, attesting to the fact that the earliest circle of students was as immersed in spiritual wayfaring as they were in intellectual pursuits and philosophical expositions. Sufism is first and foremost a spiritual path, then an academic discipline that lends itself to philosophical meditations as evidenced by the writings of its founders. Contrasting Ibn al-'Arabī with Qūnawī, Tilmisānī says, "My first *shaykh* was a philosophizing spiritualist (*mutarawḥīn muta-falsif*) and my second was a spiritualizing philosopher (*faylasūf mutarawḥīn*)."⁶⁹ Qūnawī's style was decidedly philosophical, reinforced by the fact that he held a philosophical correspondence with Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, the foremost Peripatetic philosopher of the time and the reviver of Ibn Sīnā's works through his commentary on the *Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*.⁷⁰

Qūnawī's circle also included Sa'ad al-Din Farḡhānī⁷¹ who attended his lectures on Ibn al-Fārīd's poem, *Tā'iyyah* or *Naẓm al-sulūk* (Poem of the Way). 'Umar b. al-Fārīd (d. 632/1235) was one of the greatest Sufi poets of the Arabic language. He was a contemporary of Ibn al-'Arabī who lived in

Cairo. Chittick notes that Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *Tā'iyyah* and Ibn al-'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ* symbolize two tendencies within Sufism: the ecstatic and poetical and the philosophical and intellectual.⁷² Farḡhānī was inspired to write a commentary on it in Persian entitled *Mashāriq al-darārī* (The Rising of Radiant Stars) to which Qūnawī wrote a foreword. Then he rewrote this work in Arabic as *Muntahā-l-madārik* (The Furthest Perceptions). Remarking on its prolegomenon (*muqaddima*),⁷³ Jāmī says, "It is the clearest treatise on esoteric science ever written."⁷⁴ The other important student is Persian poet Fakhr al-Dīn 'Iraqī, the author of *Lama'āt* (Divine Flashes), a sublime work of Persian literature inspired by Qūnawī's lectures and the subject of Jāmī's commentary *Ashī'at al-lama'āt* (Rays from the *Flashes*).⁷⁵ 'Iraqī was also a devotee of Jalal al-Dīn Rūmī while in Konya, attending his music and poetry sessions, and about whom he said, "No one ever understood him as he should have been understood. He came into this world a stranger and left it a stranger!"⁷⁶

Mu'ayyid al-Dīn al-Jandī

Mu'ayyid al-Dīn al-Jandī, the foremost of Qūnawī's students was the first to author a full-length commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. Born in the town of Jand in Khurasān, he departed his hometown to become a disciple of Qūnawī for a period of ten years. Jandī's brief autobiographical account shows the reverence with which he held his master and the types of spiritual exertions he performed on the path:

Wherefore, having relinquished all my worldly ties, I crossed the sea with the intention of performing the pilgrimage, until finally God provided me with the companionship of Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Yūsuf, who was the perfect man of his age, the pole of poles of the time, and the *khalīfa* of the seal of Muḥammadan sainthood. For ten years in his service, I spent most of my time in spiritual retreats, forty-day vigils and disciplines, until finally the true spiritual opening and the unequivocal good tidings were achieved through the blessed influence of the Shaykh – may God be pleased with him.⁷⁷

After his master's death, Jandī went to Baghdad and assumed the role of his successor. Jandī wrote in both Arabic and Persian and eight of his works have survived. He claims to have received the meaning of the *Fuṣūṣ* from Qūnawī by way of instantaneous spiritual transmission, in the same way that Qūnawī had received it from Ibn al-'Arabī.⁷⁸ He says:

Shaykh Ṣadr al-Dīn – may God sanctify his secret – elucidated for me the opening (*khuṭba*) of the *Fuṣūṣ*, and while he was doing so the signs of an arrival from the Unseen (*al-ghayb*) appeared upon him, the effect of which then pervaded me both inwardly and outwardly ... At that

moment he exercised a mysterious influence within me, by virtue of his theurgy (*taṣarruf*), such that God thereby granted me an immediate understanding of all that is contained within the entire book, simply through this elucidation of the *khuṭba*. Realising that this was the case, the Shaykh told me that he too had asked his master – the author of the *Fuṣūṣ*, may God be pleased with him – to expound to him its secrets, and that while he was explaining to him the *khuṭba* he exerted a wondrous influence within him, by virtue of his theurgy, such that he thereby grasped all that the book contained.⁷⁹

Jandī's commentary is replete with philosophical expositions and less concerned with explaining terminology, a task which would be undertaken by his illustrious student, 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī. He also wrote *Nafhat al-rūh wa tuḥfat al-futūḥ* (The Breeze of the Spirit and the Gift of Openings) on practical wayfaring.⁸⁰

'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī⁸¹

'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī, one of the most prolific scholars of this tradition, was a student of Jandī and teacher of Qayṣarī. Not much is known about his early life, although we do know that before meeting Jandī he studied with two Sufi masters, one of Twelver Shī'a affiliation, 'Abdallah al-'Alawī (d. 685/1285) and a Sunni Sufi of the Suhrawardiyya, 'Abd al-Ṣamad Natanzī (d. 699/1299).⁸²

He left an indelible imprint on the school Ibn al-'Arabī with his *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-ṣūfiyya* (Sufi Terminology),⁸³ which he later expanded as *Laṭā'if al-a'lām fi ishārāt ahl al-ilhām* (Subtleties of Nomenclature in the Allusions of the People of Inspiration). An essential contribution to the field of lexicography,⁸⁴ it defined technical terms of Sufism and systematized Ibn al-'Arabī's metaphysics. Ibn al-'Arabī was the first to pen a work on Sufi terminology in his *Kitāb iṣṭilāḥ al-ṣūfiyya*.⁸⁵ Thereafter, Kāshānī wrote his work for "the scholars of the traditional and intellectual sciences [who] did not recognize" the technical terms of Sufism.⁸⁶ Morris notes that Kāshānī wrote on Sufism principally for mystically inclined intellectuals and scholars trained in the Avicennan philosophical tradition. By adopting a philosophical approach, Kāshānī made his dictionary an intellectual commentary on Sufi vocabulary for non-Sufis.⁸⁷ Following in Kāshānī's footsteps, 'Alī b. Muḥammad Sharīf al-Jurjānī's (d. 816/1413) *Kitāb al-ta'rifāt*, was the most important work in this genre.

Kāshānī also wrote an important Sufi exegesis of the Qur'ān, *al-Ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān*, published as *Tafsīr Ibn al-'Arabī*. The salient aspect of this esoteric reading of the Qur'ān is the correspondence between the outward and the inward, or the signs on the "horizons" and in the "souls."⁸⁸ For every external reality in the macrocosm, there is a corresponding reality in the human microcosm. Kāshānī's concern with matters of wayfaring is evident in

his *Ta'wīlāt* but came to full fruition in his commentary on Anṣārī's *Manāzil al-sā'irīn*. This is because without wayfaring and attaining spiritual insight one will hardly grasp the realities being discussed. So long as they remain as concepts, they are veils for true understanding. He also composed a work on praxis and spiritual chivalry entitled *Tuḥfat al-ikhwān fī khaṣā'is al-fityān* (A Gift for the Brethren on the Characteristics of the Chivalrous).⁸⁹

His commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, written thirty or forty years after Jandī's, owes much to Jandī and Qūnawī's commentaries, yet unlike his teacher's, this work emphasizes terminology. Thus, it is one of the most systematic, precise and foundational texts in the *Fuṣūṣ* commentarial tradition.

Dāwūd al-Qayṣarī

Dāwūd al-Qayṣarī's writings are some of the clearest and most precise expositions of Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings and the school of philosophical Sufism. Qayṣarī was born in the central Anatolian town of Kayseri (Qayṣariyya), present-day Turkey, around 660/1260 and died in 751/1350. Qayṣarī's early education was in Kayseri and after having spent several years in Egypt, he returned to Asia Minor and studied at the Tokat-Niksar Nizāmiyyah school under Muḥammad b. Sartak al-Marāghī, a student of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. He was proficient in Avicennan philosophy, having studied Hellenistic philosophy and mathematics. In Sufism, he was a disciple of 'Abd al-Razzāq Kāshānī in Kāshān, with whom he studied *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, his spiritual preceptor on the path (*ṭarīqa*).⁹⁰

Zayn al-Dīn Muḥammad 'Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Munāwī (d. 1031/1621) mentions him in his *Irgḥām awliyā' al-shayṭān bi dhikr manāqib awliyā' al-Raḥmān* as follows:

[Dāwūd al-Qayṣarī was] the scholar given to religious devotion (*al-'ālim al-'ābid*), the ascetic Sufi who used to partake in spiritual struggle (*al-zāhid al-ṣūfī al-mujāhid*). He studied the religious disciplines in his hometown and then went to Egypt and studied the three religious disciplines with the scholars versed in them. He studied intensely and became accomplished in the intellectual disciplines (*wa bara'a fī-l-funūn al-'aqliyya*). Then he occupied himself with Sufism, excelling in and mastering it and devoting himself to writing about it. He commented upon the *Fuṣūṣ* and attached an introduction to it in which he finely explains the principles of Sufism. Sulṭān Awrkhān b. 'Uthmān [Orkhān Ghāzī] built a religious school for him in the town of Iznik, which was the first one built in the Ottoman Empire. He died in the eighth century [AH].⁹¹

In 1336, Sultan Orkhān Ghāzī (d. 761/1360) appointed Qayṣarī to direct the first Ottoman school system, a post he served until his death in 1350.⁹²

Because of this academic and political appointment, he was instrumental in the dissemination of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s teachings throughout the Ottoman Empire. He also had an impact on the Ottoman scholar, Ḥamza Fanārī (d. 834/1431). In his *History of the Ottoman Empire*, Stanford Shaw notes, “The transition between the older Arab traditions and those developed under the Ottomans was provided by Davud-i Kayserī (d. 1350) and Molla Fanārī (d. 1431).”⁹³

With respect to the *Fuṣūṣ* commentarial tradition, Qayṣarī’s commentary, *Sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, whose complete title is *Maṭla‘ khuṣūṣ al-kilam fī sharḥ ma‘ānī fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.⁹⁴ represents the third in a direct line going back to Ibn al-‘Arabī through Kāshānī, Jandī and Qūnawī, synthesizing the views of his predecessors. Chittick notes that Qayṣarī’s commentary seems to have been the most influential in the eastern lands of Islam from the fourteenth century onwards.⁹⁵ The late Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī (d. 1426/2005), a famous Iranian scholar of philosophy and mysticism wrote a lengthy commentary on the *Muqaddima* alone entitled *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qayṣarī bar fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. He writes in his introduction, “We have compared Qayṣarī’s commentary with those of other commentators and found Qayṣarī’s to be the best in many respects, even if Kāshānī’s is more profound.”⁹⁶ The highlight of this commentary is that the *Muqaddima* stands on its own as an independent work and has thus become the subject of careful study. If the *Futūḥāt* contains the entirety of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s metaphysics which is distilled in the *Fuṣūṣ*, then Qayṣarī’s *Muqaddima* can be read not just as a précis of the *Fuṣūṣ* but as a summary of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s doctrine. Āshtiyānī maintains that the *Muqaddima* is the best of Qayṣarī’s writings.⁹⁷ For this reason, the *Muqaddima* has become a seminal text studied in the traditional learning centers as well as in private circles.

In the opening paragraph of the *Muqaddima*, Qayṣarī acknowledges that he experienced visionary states. He also relates that while he was studying the *Fuṣūṣ* with Kāshānī, he became the recipient of divine assistance. He says in the preface:

God had granted me an understanding of meanings possessing brilliant luminosity and inspired me of significances containing lofty mysteries. He showed me in my inner secret a bearer of good tidings who would lead me to my gnosis of this book. I was singled out among my companions to have received knowledge and acquire meanings without prior reflection and learning. It was assistance from God, the Generous, and a grace from the merciful Lord because He affirms by His support whomever He wills from among His servants, forging success in the mystery of his origin and return.

On the importance of his role in the commentarial tradition, Tim Winter notes,

Qayṣarī is significant in that he extends certain shifts in the exegetic treatment of Ibn al-‘Arabī. Qūnawī had already sought to present the Andalusian master as a systematic thinker, incorporating peripatetic and *kalām* discussions of ontology, and Qayṣarī continues this, attempting to use *kalām* vocabulary where he could, and devoting particular attention to unravelling difficult cruxes which might confuse readers or distract them from contemplating the overall coherence of the system.⁹⁸

The Structure of This Study

An annotated translation of the *Muqaddima* has been published as a parallel Arabic–English text, *The Horizons of Being: The Metaphysics of Ibn al-‘Arabī in the Muqaddimat al-Qayṣarī*.⁹⁹ Even though it is an introductory text, it was written for a readership already well-versed in the philosophical and theological debates of the time. While the annotations attempt to define key terms and concepts of this school, the present work hopes to give a similar introduction to the subject in a more readable format, yet still addressing the main themes in Ibn al-‘Arabī’s oeuvre. In fact, the present work was first conceived as a commentary on my translation of the *Muqaddima* and later reworked into an independent text. So, if the reader, while comparing the two works, encounters some repetition of material or quotes, it is because both were born out of the same project, and thus it was appropriate to include them in both places.

Pedagogically speaking, it is not uncommon to revisit a text like the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* multiple times with the assistance of various commentaries, since each successive pass reveals new insights and different shades of meaning. This is why each generation of scholars, beginning with Qūnawī, attempted to write a commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ*, each work corresponding to new divine manifestations and personal insights. Qayṣarī’s definition of Sufism is as follows:

The subject of this discipline is the unitary Essence, eternal qualities, everlasting attributes, the emergence of multiplicity from God’s unitary Essence and its return to the Essence. Furthermore, it discusses the manifestation of the divine names, the methodology of wayfaring of God’s folk, their practices and disciplines, the outcome of their efforts, and the result of their actions. Thus, it can be said that the subject of this discipline is God, Almighty, and His relation to His creation.

The principles of this discipline consist of the divine names and attributes. They can be divided into three types, names of the Essence, names of the Attributes and names of the Acts. The names of the Essence are those that refer to the Essence of God since their governance is comprehensive, such that other names are subsumed under them. The Attributes of Life, Knowledge, Power, Will, Light, Oneness, Necessity, and others, fall under this category.

They are the names of the Essence because contemplating their unity with the Essence does not necessitate either contemplating the other names or creation. They refer to the degree of Singularity (*al-aḥadiyya*), which excludes any kind of multiplicity, and do not take into consideration their referents.

Some of the names of the Essence possess individuation (*al-ta'ayyun*) but are witnessed from behind a veil for the virtuous. While the foremost of the wayfarers and perfect gnostics witness them without any veils whatsoever. Some names of the Essence are not individuated and hidden in the Unseen, as mentioned by the Prophet, "O God, I ask you by the names which You have named Yourself, revealed in the Book and taught to Your servants, or have reserved for Yourself in the knowledge of the Unseen."¹⁰⁰

Since this work is largely based on the *Muqaddimat al-Qayṣarī* in sequence and content, it can be read as a commentary on its main themes. Besides the earliest masters mentioned above, this study will also invoke the writings of some key figures in the school of philosophical Sufism, particularly, Sayyid Ḥaydar Amulī and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī.

The first chapter discusses ontology: Being *qua* Being, privative and positive properties of Being, necessity, contingency and impossibility and the divine Being which the Sufis refer to as *al-Ḥaqq*. Since the doctrine of the "Oneness of Being" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) is attributed to the school of Ibn al-'Arabī, this chapter discusses divine unity, the divine attributes, transcendence and immanence, and the universal degrees of Being.

The second chapter explores the divine names, their divisions, positive and privative attributes, the names of Beauty and Majesty, the Mothers of the Names, the Keys of the Unseen and the names of the Essence, Attributes and Acts, the engendering of the names, the universal and the particular, and their dominion, governance and relationship with creation. These first two chapters are foundational insofar as Being and its manifestations are the primary concerns for the school of philosophical Sufism.

Divine knowledge is among the first manifestations, which is the subject of the third chapter. This chapter investigates the essences in the divine knowledge called the Permanent Archetypes (*al-a'yān al-thābita*), the presence of the divine Essence in all things and the appearance of the macrocosmic levels of manifestation beginning with the First Intellect, the Pen and the Tablets.

The fourth chapter explores some shared concepts between philosophy and Sufism on the origin of multiplicity. It also defines some key terms of this school, such as Expansive Being (*al-wujūd al-munbasit*), the First Engenderer (*al-ṣādir al-awwal*), the Outstretched Parchment (*al-riqq al-manshūr*) and the Breath of the Merciful (*al-naḥās al-raḥmānī*).

The fifth chapter describes the five Universal Worlds or five divine Presences (*al-ḥaḍarāt al-ilāhiyya al-khams*), which refer to the principal degrees of Being. Ibn al-'Arabī uses the term "presence" (*ḥaḍra*) to indicate that God is

present in every world. In this chapter we delve into one of the central concepts of his metaphysics, the Perfect Human (*al-insān al-kāmil*), the fifth and comprehensive degree that contains all of the divine names, representing the entirety of existence. This concurs with the Qur'ānic concept of vicegerency about which God says, "I am going to place a vicegerent on the earth" (2:30).

As we move further down the hierarchy of Being, in the sixth chapter, we find that the Imaginal World (*al-'ālam al-mithāl*) is an isthmus between the worlds of matter and Intellect and is the vastest of the worlds. This topic also concerns dreams, visions, spiritual intuition (*firāsa*), the Intermediary World (*barzakh*) and prepares the reader for the central topic on unveiling in the next chapter.

The seventh chapter investigates Sufi epistemology, unveiling and its types. Unveiling (*kashf*) technically signifies gaining awareness of that which is behind a curtain from among Unseen meanings and existential realities, through "finding" or witnessing, in meaning and in form.¹⁰¹ This chapter describes the differences between unveiling and revelation, unveiling of form and unveiling of meaning, and those that are categorized in accordance with the theophany of the divine names to which they refer.

The eighth chapter revisits the topic of human vicegerency, namely, the relationship between the Great Man (*al-insān al-kabīr*), the Small Man (*al-insān al-ṣaghīr*), the Great World (*al-'ālam al-kabīr*) and the Small World (*al-'ālam al-ṣaghīr*) to denote the macrocosm and microcosm, respectively. The human being is the mirror of God, the comprehensive isthmus between God and the World, and the very book of existence. This is because the human reality has particular manifestations in the world and summarized manifestations in the human world. Thus, "He who knows himself, knows his Lord."¹⁰²

The ninth chapter discusses the existential circle in greater detail, which connects the Arc of Ascent (*al-qaws al-su'ūdī*) and the Arc of Descent (*al-qaws al-nuzūlī*). The highest point on the circle is the First Intellect or the Muḥammadan Reality and the lowest point is the corporeal human frame. Since the Muḥammadan Reality is the manifestation of the name *Allah*, its governance also extends in every realm and in every period, so it possesses lordship over every manifestation. Just as the name *Allah* lords over the rest of the divine names, the Muḥammadan Reality lords over the forms of the worlds. This chapter also discusses the Pole (*al-quṭb*), who is the axis of existence around whom the governance of the world revolves.

The tenth chapter discusses the microcosm which is the Supreme Spirit, the first individuation in existence, possessing all the perfections of the Essence in the form of the names and attributes. In Sufi terminology, it is the first manifestation of all realities on the plane of Unity, also referred to as the First Intellect, the Muḥammadan Reality, or the Muḥammadan Light and the Pen, as mentioned in various hadith, "The first thing that God created was my light,"¹⁰³ and "The first thing that God created was the

Intellect,”¹⁰⁴ and “The first thing that God created was my spirit.”¹⁰⁵ This chapter gives one of the most compelling descriptions of the human spiritual constitution, defining the spirit (*rūh*), soul (*nafs*), heart (*qalb*), intellect (*‘aql*), breast (*ṣadr*), inner heart (*fu’ād*), mystery (*sirr*) and hidden (*khafī*).

The eleventh chapter discusses the realities of prophethood and sainthood (*wilāya*). Sainthood is the inner aspect of prophethood since *wilāya* is a universal reality of the divine Essence, the source of manifestation and the origin of individuation. The contrary properties of the names of Beauty and Majesty give rise to the multiplicity that is present in every realm. The origin of conflict is the necessity of each divine name to seek the realization of its intrinsic properties, governance and period. Thus, the true prophet is the eternal Pole of existence that guides and brings all things to their ontological perfection.

The twelfth chapter describes the Day of Resurrection through the governance of some divine names over others. It is the Spirit’s return, the true manifestation of divine unity and the removal of veils. Since all things possess form and meaning, or external form and inward reality, everything will appear in its true form. The Resurrection is thus characterized by the removal of the dense veil of corporeal matter, which is the lowest ontological realm.

Notes on Methodology and Translation

Philosophical Sufism has produced a vast and comprehensive body of work. William Chittick’s bibliographies in *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*¹⁰⁶ and *The Self-disclosure of God*.¹⁰⁷ as well as studies found in the *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi Society* attest to the voluminous scholarship on Ibn al-‘Arabī. Since it is impossible to encapsulate all the teachings in a single volume, this book introduces the foundational themes that one will encounter when reading Ibn al-‘Arabī and his commentators. Though the basis of the work is Qayṣarī’s *Muqaddima*, I have introduced several other key figures to give a broader perspective and a sense of the commentarial tradition. One must see the commentators as the fruits of a single tree, or different lamps lit from a single flame. This is because it is first a spiritual tradition, then an intellectual one. The spiritual aspect transcends time and place, as one might become a disciple of a master in the spiritual realms but separated from him by several centuries. The major figures mentioned in this book were all great scholars, if not sages and saints, and for that reason alone, their works deserve to be studied.

Translated terms are consistent with those in my edition of the *Muqaddimat al-Qayṣarī*. However, subtleties of the Arabic or Persian language are often lost in translation, becoming magnified when speaking about topics that are esoteric in nature, to which the Sufis refer as allusions (*ishārāt*), secrets (*asrār*) and realities (*ḥaqā’iq*). According to the Sufis, mastering language must be accompanied by spiritual literacy, which is the language of

gnosis and the heart. Experiencing spiritual states or witnessing realities from the Unseen without understanding will hardly lead a person on the path to God. Spiritual literacy, therefore, is being able to read and understand the signs in existence and in the soul to safely move forward on the spiritual journey. For the Sufi, this occurs under the aegis of divine guidance, training from the *shaykh* and fraternity with companions, but most of all, reflecting upon God's signs. Though these are practical matters of wayfaring and the focus of this volume is theory, they are mentioned here because practice informs theory and understanding. Thus, the knowledge and practice of Sufism are like the two wings of a bird.

There are certain terms which, if understood, are keys to the whole discipline, such as *zuhūr*, which means manifestation and *tajallī* which means disclosure and display, as in the Qur'ānic verse, "By the Sun, and its brightness, and the moon when it follows it, and by the day when it reveals it" (91:1–3) and "When his Lord revealed Himself to the mountain, He made it crumble" (7:143). The Arabic form of the word *yatajallā* denotes reflexivity and means self-disclosure.¹⁰⁸ The difference between *zuhūr* and *tajallī* is that the latter is a more immediate divine self-disclosure and *zuhūr* is a general and stable form of manifestation implicit in the structure of Being. The terms *mazhar* and *majlā* are "nouns of place" and thus denote the "loci" of manifestation and divine self-disclosure. Because the locus and the One who manifests in it are distinct concepts theoretically but refer to a single thing in reality, the term *mazhar* is translated as manifestation, in most cases, rather than as "locus of manifestation." I have translated *tajallī* as "theophany" throughout, as Chodkiewicz has done, although Chittick renders it as self-disclosure.

The term *tanazzul* refers to the descending degrees of divine manifestation. Related words are *inzāl* which indicates an instantaneous descent, and *tanzīl* which is gradual, particularly in the context of the Qur'ān's revelation. Manifestation is the key concept in Sufism, in the same way that causality is the key concept in science. For example, when Imam 'Alī says, "God is in all things but not mixed within them," the rational mind cannot grasp such a statement that requires one to embrace both sides of a contradiction. The concept, however, can be explained through the term *tajallī*, where something reveals itself in something else, like a mirror reflecting an image without physically containing it. The image is simultaneously in the mirror and not in the mirror. One who contemplates this metaphor will be able to grasp the subtleties of Ibn al-'Arabī's thought with respect to Being and its manifestations.

Thus, spiritual literacy at the highest level is reading the *majāli*, or self-disclosures of the divine names on the plane of the heart. The intellect then translates that into concepts and words, and through this interaction between the heart and intellect, one knows and understands. Thus, the true methodology in reading a Sufi text or *'irfān*¹⁰⁹ is the existential reading that occurs in the heart.

I have translated the term *ta'ayyun* as individuation, not entification as Chittick and others have done. *Ta'ayyun*, is derived from the Arabic word *'ayn*, which can mean thing, entity, identity, essence, quiddity, eye, spring, spy and self. *Ta'ayyun* is the particularization of the Essence in its descending degrees. In other words, the planes of Being are the successive particularizations and individuations of the Essence, even if the Essence *qua* Essence is absolute and undetermined. Thus, *ta'ayyun* is any type of specification or individuation, not only that of entities. There is some debate concerning the correct translation of the term *al-a'yān al-thābita*. Izutsu translates it as “Permanent Archetypes” and Chittick, in his earlier works, translated it as “immutable entities” then settled on the term “fixed entities.” These are all closely related ideas, but the term *thābita* refers to the permanence of realities in the divine knowledge. I have used the word “entity” to denote a thing that is either existent, individuated or formed, even if it can mean essence and quiddity. Ibn al-‘Arabī says,

The *a'yān* are essentially characterized by non-existence (*'adam*). Surely they are permanently subsistent (*thābita*), but they are permanently subsistent only in a state of non-existence; they have not even smelled the fragrance of existence. Thus, they remain eternally in that state despite the multiplicity of the forms which they manifest in the existing things.¹¹⁰

Qayṣarī comments, “The *a'yān al-thābita* are the forms of the divine names and that they are the realities of external entities. In the former, they are like bodies for spirits, and in the latter, they are like spirits for bodies.”¹¹¹ Since the *a'yān al-thābita* have a very specific signification in Ibn al-‘Arabī’s doctrine, I have chosen the term “Archetype” to distinguish it from essence (*dhāt*), reality (*ḥaqīqa*) and entity (*mawjūd*). Nevertheless, finding the perfect translation of this term is a matter of semantics since its true nature, according to Qayṣarī, is fathomed only by those who have attained the highest level of unveiling, “One who witnesses the Permanent Archetypes on the plane of divine knowledge possesses the highest station of all.”¹¹² Furthermore, “ultimate gnosis is the admission of inadequacy and deficiency, knowing that everything returns to Him and that He is the Omniscient, the Aware.”¹¹³

Notes

- 1 The Prophet said, “In the body there is piece of flesh which, if it is sound, the entire body is sound, and if it is corrupt, the entire body is corrupt. Truly, it is the heart!” Muḥammad Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. M.D. al-Bughā (Damascus, 1987), no. 52.
- 2 “A state (*ḥāl*) is that which enters upon the heart purely as a bestowal, without exertion or bringing it upon oneself, such as sorrow, fear, expansion, contraction, or tasting. It disappears when the attributes of the soul become manifest, whether or not it is followed by a similar state later. When it becomes

- permanent and thus a disposition (*malaka*), then it is called a station (*maqām*).” ‘Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-ṣūfiyya* (Cairo, 1992), 21.
- 3 “Unveiling is gaining awareness of matters concerning the Unseen and the verities of things that are customarily behind the veil.” ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-ta’rīfāt* (Beirut, 2003), 151.
 - 4 This triad was echoed by Ottoman scholar Ḥamza al-Fanārī (d. 834/1431), “The purpose of sharī‘a is to prepare Muslims for ṭarīqa, which in turn exists to lead them on to ḥaqīqa.” Ḥamza Fanārī, *Ayn al-a’yān tafṣīr al-Fātiḥa* (Istanbul, 1908), 27, cited in Tim Winter, “Ibn Kemāl on Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Hagiology” in *Sufism and Theology*, ed. A. Shihadeh (Edinburgh, 2007), 140.
 - 5 It is narrated from the Prophet, “*Sharī‘a* is my word, *ṭarīqa* my actions and *ḥaqīqa* my states; gnosis my capital, intelligence the source of my religion, love my foundation, yearning my mount, fear my friend, forbearance my weapon, knowledge my companion, reliance [on God] my cloak, contentment my treasure, truthfulness my abode, certainty my shelter, and poverty my honor, which sets me above all other Prophets and messengers.” Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Asrār al-sharī‘a wa anwār al-ṭarīqa*, ed. M. Bidārfar (Qum, 2003), 21; Ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsā’ī, *Awālī al-la’ālī*, ed. M. ‘Irāqī (Qum, 1985), 4:124.
 - 6 Intellect according to the Sufis includes concepts such as the Supreme Spirit, The Muḥammadan Reality, the Pen and other concepts, referring to the hadīth “The first thing God created was the Intellect.” A discussion of the Intellect appears in various chapters of this book.
 - 7 The term originates from the Greek word περιπατητικός (*peripatētikós*), which means “walking up and down.”
 - 8 See Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman, *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London, 1996); Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Amin Aminrazavi, *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia: From the School of Illumination to Philosophical Mysticism*, vol. 4 (London, 2012).
 - 9 Sufism is also known by the term ‘*irfān*’ which is derived from the Arabic *ma’rifā*, denoting deep understanding or esoteric knowledge. The term ‘*irfān*’ relates to the knowledge of God and the perception of divine realities, and is more precise than the term Sufism, which is often associated with certain historical and cultural phenomena. The terms *ma’rifā* and ‘*arīf*’ refer to esoteric knowledge or the gnosis of God, and the ‘*arīf*’ (pl. *urafā*) is the one who possesses *ma’rifā*. They are also referred to as God’s folk (*ahl Allah*) and the Group (*ṭā’ifa*).
 - 10 *Sunna* refers to the traditions and practices of the Prophet Muḥammad, whereas hadīth refers to the verbally transmitted recorded teachings, deeds and sayings.
 - 11 One of the most influential thinkers in Islamic history, Ghazālī brought Sufism into Sunni orthodoxy in his attempt to reconcile the esoteric and exoteric dimensions of Islam. He also leveled a major critique against Peripatetic philosophy in his *Tahāfut al-falāsifa* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers). His *Iḥyā’ ulūm al-dīn* (The Revival of the Sciences of Religion) still remains as the consummate work on ethics and religious life.
 - 12 Fārābī was a philosopher, polymath and practicing Sufi who contributed to virtually every discipline of Islamic learning. Nasr writes, “He was a practising Sufi and the spirit of Sufism runs throughout his works. He was also one of the foremost medieval theoreticians of music and some of his musical works have survived in the rites of Sufi brotherhoods, especially those in Anatolia, until modern times.” Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam* (Cambridge, 1987), 47.
 - 13 See Shams Inati, *Ibn Sīnā and Mysticism* (London, 1996); Henry Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital* (Princeton, 1960).
 - 14 See Nadel El-Bizri, *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity: The Ikhwan al-Safa’ and their Rasā’il* (Oxford, 2008); Ian Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists: An Introduction*

- to the Thought of the Brethren of Purity (*Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'*) (London, 2002); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* (Albany, 1993).
- 15 See Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, *Hikmat al-ishrāq*, trans. J. Walbridge and H. Ziai, *The Philosophy of Illumination* (Provo, 1999).
 - 16 He was later given the title *Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn*, the “foremost of the theologians.”
 - 17 See Ibrahim Kalin, “An Annotated Bibliography of the Works of Mullā Ṣadrā with a Brief Account of His Life,” *Islamic Studies* 42/ 1 (2003): 21–62; Sayeh Meisami, *Mulla Sadra* (London, 2013); Ibrahim Kalin, *Mullā Ṣadrā* (Oxford, 2014); Mohammed Rustom, *The Triumph of Mercy: Philosophy and Scripture in Mulla Sadra* (Albany, 2012); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī and his Transcendent Theosophy* (Tehran, 1997).
 - 18 Mullā Ṣadrā's school, popularized by his student Mullā Hādī Sabzawārī (d. 1289/1873) is still the dominant school of philosophy in Iran today.
 - 19 See Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill, 1975); See William Chittick, “Sufism” in *The Cambridge Handbook of Western Mysticism and Esotericism* (New York, 2016), 83; Reynold Nicholson, “A Historical Enquiry Concerning the Origin and Development of Sufism with a List of Definitions of the Terms ‘Sufi’ and ‘Taṣawwuf,’ Arranged Chronologically,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 38 (1906): 303–348.
 - 20 See Ahmet Karamustafa, *Sufism: The Formative Period* (Edinburgh, 2007).
 - 21 Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. A. ‘Affī (Beirut, 1980), 125.
 - 22 See William Chittick, “The School of Ibn al-‘Arabī” in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, eds. S.H. Nasr and O. Leaman (London, 1996); Caner Dagli, *Ibn al-‘Arabī and Islamic Intellectual Culture: From Mysticism to Philosophy* (London, 2016).
 - 23 Mohammed Rustom, “Philosophical Sufism” in *The Routledge Companion to Islamic Philosophy* (New York, 2016), 400.
 - 24 Chittick, “The School of Ibn al-‘Arabī,” 510.
 - 25 James Morris, “Ibn ‘Arabī and his Interpreters Part I: Recent French Translations,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106/3 (1986): 539–551.
 - 26 Chittick writes that initiatic chains that lead back to Ibn al-‘Arabī go through Qūnawī. See William Chittick, “‘The Central Point’: Qūnawī's role in the School of Ibn al-‘Arabī,” *Journal of the Ibn ‘Arabi Society* 35 (2004): 26.
 - 27 See William Chittick, “Ibn al-‘Arabī and after in the Arabic and Persian lands and beyond,” *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition (Leiden, 1998) 9:317–324.
 - 28 See Lloyd Ridgeon, *‘Azīz Nasafī* (London, 1998), 5; Lloyd Ridgeon, *Persian Metaphysics and Mysticism: Selected Works of ‘Azīz Nasafī* (London, 2002).
 - 29 For an English translation with Persian text and notes see E.H. Whinfield, *Gulshan i-rāz: The Mystic Rose Garden of Sa‘d al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shabistārī* (London, 1880).
 - 30 See Leonard Lewisohn, *Beyond Faith and Infidelity: The Sufi Poetry and Teachings of Mahmud Shabistari* (London, 1995).
 - 31 Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Jāmi‘ al-asrār wa manba‘ al-anwār*, eds. H. Corbin and O. Yahya, in *La Philosophie Shi‘ite* (Tehran, 1969).
 - 32 Ḥaydar Āmulī, *al-Muqaddimāt min kitāb Naṣṣ al-nuṣṣ fī sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, eds. H. Corbin and O. Yahya (Tehran, 1975).
 - 33 Ḥaydar Āmulī, *Tafsīr muḥīṭ al-a‘zam wa-l-baḥr al-khiḍam fī ta‘wīl kitāb Allah al-‘azīz al-muḥkam*, ed. M. Tabrizi (Qum, 2001).
 - 34 See chapter two on “The Perfect Man” in Nicholson, *Studies in Islamic Mysticism* (Cambridge, 1921).
 - 35 James Morris, “Ibn ‘Arabī and His Interpreters Part II: Influences and Interpretations” in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107/1 (1987): 108.

- 36 See Alan Godlas, “Molla Fanārī and the *Miṣbāḥ al-uns*: The Commentator and the Perfect Man” in *Uluslararası Molla Fenârî Sempozyumu: International Symposium on Molla Fanârî*, ed. T. Yucedogru et al. (Bursa, 2011), 31–46; Dagli, *Ibn al-‘Arabî and Islamic Intellectual Culture*, 139, n2.
- 37 William Chittick, “The Last Will and Testament of Ibn ‘Arabî’s Foremost Disciple, Şadr al-Dîn Qūnawî,” *Sophia Perennis* 4/1 (1978): 43–58.
- 38 Seyyed Hossein Nasr, “Theoretical Gnosis and Doctrinal Sufism and Their Significance Today,” *Transcendent Philosophy* VI (2005): 5.
- 39 In traditional learning circles, *Tamhîd al-qawā‘id* is studied after *Muqaddimat al-Qayṣarî* but before *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*. After the *Fuṣūṣ*, one studies Qūnawî’s *Miftāḥ al-ghayb* by way of Fanārî’s commentary, *Miṣbāḥ al-uns*, then finally Ibn al-‘Arabî’s *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*.
- 40 See Lewisohn, “Sufism and Theology in the Confessions of Šā‘in al-Dīn b. Turka Iṣfahānī” in A. Shihadeh, *Sufism and Theology* (Edinburgh, 2007), 63.
- 41 The Chinese scholar P’o Na-Chi’h translated *Rays from the “Flashes”* (*Ashī‘at al-lama ‘āt*) into Chinese under the title *Chao-yüan pi-chüeh* [The mysterious secret of the original display]. Sachiko Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light* (Albany, 2000), 33.
- 42 Neo-Confucian thinker, Liú Zhì (d. 1739) translated into Chinese Jāmī’s *Lawā‘ih*, which is a summary of Ibn ‘Arabî’s teachings. Liú Zhì incorporated other classic Sufi works such as Najm al-Dīn Razî’s *Mirṣād al-‘ibād*, ‘Aziz al-Dīn Nasafî’s *Maqṣad-i aqṣā* and Jāmī’s *Ashī‘at al-lama ‘āt*, which had already been translated before Liú Zhì penned his own translation of the *Lawā‘ih*. See Murata, *Chinese Gleams of Sufi Light*, 25. See also Sachiko Murata, *The First Islamic Classic in Chinese: Wang Daiyu’s Real Commentary on the True Teaching* (Albany, 2017); Sachiko Murata, William Chittick, and Tu Weiming, *The Sage Learning of Liu Zhi: Islamic Thought in Confucian Terms* (Cambridge, 2008).
- 43 Sachiko Murata, “The Unity of Existence: Ibn ‘Arabî and His School” held at Worcester College (Oxford, 2003).
- 44 Hamid Algar, “Jāmī and Ibn ‘Arabî: *Khātām al-Shu‘arā’* and *Khātām al-Awliyā’*,” *Ishraq: Islamic Philosophy Yearbook* 3 (2012): 150. See also Hamid Algar, *Jami* (New Delhi, 2014); Thibaut d’Hubert and Alexandre Papas, *Jāmī in Regional Contexts* (Leiden, 2018).
- 45 See Paul Wormser, “Placing Ḥamza Faṣṣūrî in Context: The Early History of Malay Language and Literature” in *Jami in Regional Contexts*, 367–377.
- 46 William Chittick, “Ibn ‘Arabî and his School” in *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations*, ed. S.H. Nasr (New York, 1997), 53.
- 47 Cited in Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Sufi Visionary of Ottoman Damascus: ‘Abd al-Ghanî al-Nābulusî*, 1641–1731 (New York, 2005), 19. See also Samer Akkach, *‘Abd al-Ghanî al-Nābulusî: Islam and the Enlightenment* (Oxford, 2007); Ahmad Sukkar, “‘Abd al-Ghanî al-Nābulusî of Damascus (d. 1143/1731), and the Mawlawî Sufi Tradition,” *Mawlana Rumi Review* 5/1 (2014): 136–170.
- 48 The following studies trace the internal development of this school, focusing on its formative figures: Dagli’s *Ibn al-‘Arabî and Islamic Intellectual Culture*; See also parts I and II of Morris, “Ibn ‘Arabî and His Interpreters,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society*; Chittick, “Ibn ‘Arabî and his School” in *Islamic Spirituality: Manifestations*.
- 49 See Claude Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulphur: The Life of Ibn al-‘Arabî*, trans. P. Kingsley (Cambridge, 1993).
- 50 A.A. Afifî, “Memorandum by Ibn ‘Arabî of His Own Works,” *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts* (Alexandria University) 8 (1954): 109–117, cited in R.W.J. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia: The “Rūḥ al-quds” and “al-Durrat al-fākhīrah” of Ibn ‘Arabî* (London, 1971), 48.
- 51 The preeminent Sufi author who wrote the encyclopedic manual of Sufi piety, *Qūt al-qulūb fî mu‘āmalat al-mahbūb wa waṣf tarīq al-murīd ilā maqām al-tawhīd*

- (Nourishment of the Hearts in Relations with the Beloved and a Description of the Path of the Aspirant to the Station of Divine Unity).
- 52 Ibn al-'Arabī, *Muḥādaraṭ al-abrār wa musāmarat al-akhyār* (Beirut, 2001), 7. See Addas, *Quest for the Red Sulfur*, 102, for details on Ibn al-'Arabī's theological and philosophical training.
- 53 Ibn al-'Arabī, *Futūḥāt al-Makkiya* (Beirut, 1997), 1:70 (I 32.28). Throughout, I have given two references for the *Futūḥāt*. The first refers to the four-volume edition printed by Dār al-Turāth al-Islamiyya (Beirut, 1997). The second reference in parenthesis refers to the 1911 Bulaq edition, reprinted by Dār Ṣādir (Beirut, 1968), used by Chittick and others. Volume, page number and line number are given for the Bulaq edition.
- 54 Ibn al-'Arabī, *Futūḥāt*, 2:512 (II 523.6).
- 55 For a study in English on the life and thought of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī see Richard Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man: Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī's Metaphysical Anthropology* (Leiden, 2014); See also Chittick, "Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, 7:753–755.
- 56 Majd al-Dīn was *Shaykh al-Islam*, the highest religious authority in the Seljuk Sultanate.
- 57 Nasr and Aminrazavi, *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, 4:414.
- 58 Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man*, 16–17.
- 59 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī, *Nafaḥāt al-uns*, ed. M. Tawḥīdīpūr (Tehran, 1957), 556.
- 60 Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī, *I'jāz al-bayān fī ta'wīl umm al-Qur'ān*, ed. J. Āshtiyānī (Qum, 2002), 18.
- 61 In the introduction to Ḥaydar Āmulī's *al-Muqaddama min kitāb naṣṣ al-nuṣūṣ*, Osman Yahya lists 195 commentaries from the 7th to the 11th centuries.
- 62 William Chittick, "Mysticism versus Philosophy in Earlier Islamic History: The al-Tūsī, al-Qūnawī Correspondence," *Religious Studies* 17 (1981): 87–104.
- 63 William Chittick, "The Last Will and Testament of Ibn al-'Arabī's Foremost Disciple and Some Notes on its Author," *Sophia Perennis* 4 (1978): 51. See William Chittick, "The Circle of Spiritual Ascent according to al-Qunawī" in *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought* (Albany, 1992), 183.
- 64 A student of the founder of the Kubrawī Sufi order, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā (d. 618/1221), Rāzī wrote one of the most influential 13th-century texts on Sufism entitled *Mirṣād al-'ibād min al-mabda' ilā l-ma'ād*, translated by Hamid Algar, *The Path of God's Bondsmen from Origin to Return* (Delmar, 1982). After the death of Kubrā, Rāzī became the disciple of Majd al-Dīn al-Baghdādī (d. 616/1219).
- 65 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī has written a commentary on this ten-page treatise entitled *Naqd al-nuṣūṣ fī sharḥ Naqsh al-Fuṣūṣ*, eds. W. Chittick and J. Ashtiyānī (Tehran, 2001).
- 66 Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī, *al-Fukūk fī mustanadāt ḥikam al-Fuṣūṣ*, ed. M. Khwājavi (Tehran, 1992), 180.
- 67 See A.J. Arberry, *The Mawāqif and Mukhāṭabaāt of Muhammad ibn 'Abdī'l-Jabbār al-Niffarī* (London, 1935).
- 68 *Manāzil al-sā'irīn* is a comprehensive spiritual manual that contains both theoretical aspects of Sufism as well as its practical dimension. It concisely describes each stage of progression that the wayfarer experiences towards attainment to God. Anṣārī organizes the text in ten sections, which are the mainstays of spiritual wayfaring, while each station subsumed therein is considered a branch. The ten sections begin with "preliminaries" (*al-bidāyāt*), followed by "doors" (*al-abwāb*), "interactions" (*al-mu'āmālāt*), "morals" (*al-akhlāq*), "roots" (*al-uṣūl*), "valleys" (*al-awdiya*), "states" (*al-ahwāl*), "saintly attributes" (*al-wālāyāt*), "realities" (*al-ḥaqā'iq*) and "ends" (*al-nihāyāt*). The stations were further divided into three degrees, that which pertained to the laypeople, the elect and the foremost of the elect.

- 69 Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū'at al-rasā'il wa-l-masā'il*, ed. M. Rashīd Riḍa (Beirut, 1983), 1:176, cited in Chittick, "The School of Ibn al-'Arabī," 513.
- 70 See William Chittick, "Mysticism vs Philosophy in Earlier Islamic History: The al-Ṭūsī, al-Qūnawī Correspondence," *Religious Studies* 17/1 (1981): 87–104.
- 71 See William Chittick, "Spectrums of Islamic Thought: Sa'īd Al-Dīn Farḡhānī on the Implications of Oneness and Manyness," in L. Lewisohn, *The Heritage of Sufism* (Oxford, 1999), 2: 203–217.
- 72 See William Chittick, "The Last Will and Testament of Ibn 'Arabī's Foremost Disciple, Sadr al-Dīn Qūnawī: Notes on Sadr al-Dīn Qūnawī," *Sophia Perennis* 4/1 (1978): 43–58.
- 73 Many of these larger works contain excellent prolegomena that are considered stand-alone treatises. The best example is Qayṣarī's *Muqaddima* to his commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, which is the basis of this study.
- 74 Jāmi, *Nafāḥāt*, 588, cited in Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man*, 20.
- 75 Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī, *Lama'āt*, ed. M. Khwājavi (Tehran, 1984), trans. W. Chittick and P. Wilson, *Fakhruddin 'Iraqi: Divine Flashes* (New York, 1982).
- 76 Badi' al-Zamān Furuzanfar, *Risala dar taḥqīq-i aḥwāl wa zindigani-yi Mawlana Jalaluddin Maḥmūd* (Tehran, 1954), 124, cited in Chittick and Wilson, *Fakhruddin 'Iraqi: Divine Flashes*, 43.
- 77 Mu'ayyid al-Dīn Jandī, *Nafḥat al-rūḥ wa tuḥfat al-futūḥ*, ed. N. Hiravī (Tehran, 1983), 142, cited in Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man*, 24.
- 78 Dagli, *Ibn al-'Arabī and Islamic Intellectual Culture*, 95.
- 79 Mu'ayyid al-Dīn al-Jandī, *Sharḥ fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. J. Āshtiyānī (Qum, 2003), 18, cited in Todd, *The Sufi Doctrine of Man*, 25.
- 80 See Cyrus Zargar, *Sufi Aesthetics: Beauty, Love and the Human Form in the Writings of Ibn 'Arabī and 'Iraqi* (Columbia, 2013), 22.
- 81 See Ismail Lala, *Knowing God: Ibn 'Arabī and 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Qāshānī's Metaphysics of the Divine* (Leiden, 2020); See also Morris, "Ibn 'Arabī and his Interpreters," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 106/3 (1986): 751.
- 82 Feras Hamza, Sajjad Rizvi and Toby Mayer, *An Anthology of Qur'anic Commentaries* (Oxford, 2008), 1:38.
- 83 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī, *Iṣṭilāḥāt al-ṣūfiyya* (Cairo, 1992).
- 84 Earliest Sufi dictionaries appeared as appendixes to Arabic treatises, Abū Naṣr Sarraj's (d. 378/988) *Kitāb al-Lum' fī-l-taṣawwuf* (Book of Glimmerings on Sufism), Rūzbihān Baqlī's (d. 606/1209) *Sharḥ-i Shaḥīyyāt* (Commentary on Ecstatic Sayings), Abū-l-Qāsim al-Qushayrī's *Risāla* (Epistle), 'Alī Hujwīrī (d. 465/1072). See Carl Ernst, "Mystical Language and the Teaching Context in the Early Sufi Lexicons" in *Mysticism and Language*, ed. S.T. Katz (Oxford, 1992), 182.
- 85 See Ibn al-'Arabī, "*Kitāb iṣṭilāḥ al-ṣūfiyya*" in *Rasā'il Ibn 'Arabī* (Beirut, 2001).
- 86 See Ernst, "Mystical Language and the Teaching Context in the Early Sufi Lexicons" 186.
- 87 James Morris, "Ibn 'Arabī and his Interpreters, Part II (Conclusion): Influences and Interpretations," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107 (1987): 101–106.
- 88 Referring to the verse, "We will show them Our signs on the horizons and in their souls and until it becomes evident that He is the Truth (*annahu-l-ḥaqq*)" Qur'ān 41:53.
- 89 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī, *Tuḥfat al-ikhwān fī khaṣā'is al-fityān*, ed. M. Dāmādī (Tehran, 1972). *Futuwwa* is the noun derived from *fatā* (pl. *fityān*) literally means "young man." When it is used figuratively, it denotes a host of human virtues and noble character traits, particularly, honor, chivalry, courage, generosity, service, altruism and hospitality. Qushayrī says in his *Risāla*, "*Fatā* is the one who breaks idols ... and the idol of each man is his ego." On the chapter on *Futuwwa* in his *Sharḥ Manāzil al-sā'irīn*, Kāshānī says, "*Futuwwa* is

- a term for the station of a pure heart devoid of attributes of the self. That purity is the guidance augmented after faith.”
- 90 ‘Abd-al-Husayn Zarrīnkūb, *Donbāla-yi justujū dar taṣawwuf-i Īrān* (Tehran, 1990), 132.
- 91 ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf Munāwī, *Irgḥām awliyā’ al-shayṭān bi dhikr manāqib awliyā’ al-Raḥmān (al-Ṭabaqāt al-sughrā)*, ed. M. al-Jādir, 4:284, cited in Mohammed Rustom, “Dāwūd Qaysarī: Notes on his Life, Influence and Reflections on the Muḥammadan Reality” in *Journal of the Ibn al-‘Arabī Society*, 38 (2005): 52.
- 92 Dagli, *Ibn al-‘Arabī and Islamic Intellectual Culture*, 119.
- 93 Stanford Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey* (Cambridge, 1976), 1:144.
- 94 Dāwūd al-Qaysarī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. H. Āmulī (Qum, 2002).
- 95 Chittick, “The School of Ibn al-‘Arabī,” 518.
- 96 Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī, *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qaysarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (Qum, 2001), 56.
- 97 See *Sharḥ al-Qaysarī ‘alā Tā’iyat Ibn al-Fāriḍ*. For articles in English, see Chittick, “The Five Divine Presences: From al-Qunawī to al-Qaysarī,” *The Muslim World* 72 (1982): 107–128; Ibrahim Kalin, “Dāwūd al-Qaysarī on Being as Truth and Reality” in *Knowledge is Light: Essays in Honor of Seyyed Hossein Nasr*, ed. Z. Morris (Chicago, 1999); Turan Koç, “All-Comprehensiveness According to Daud al-Qaysarī, and its Implications,” *Journal of the Ibn al-‘Arabī Society* 27 (2000): 53–62; Akiro Matsumoto, “Unity of Ontology and Epistemology in Qaysarī’s Philosophy” in *Consciousness and Reality: Studies in Memory of Toshihiko Izutsu*, ed. J. Āshtiyānī, H. Matsubara, T. Iwami and A. Matsumoto (Leiden, 1999), 367–386.
- 98 Winter, “Ibn Kemāl on Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Hagiology,” 138–139.
- 99 All references to Qaysarī’s *Muqaddima* are from the Arabic–English edition published as, Qaysarī, Dāwūd b. Maḥmūd, and Mukhtar H. Ali, *The Horizons of Being: The Metaphysics of Ibn al-‘Arabī in the Muqaddimat al-Qaysarī* (Leiden, 2020).
- 100 Āshtiyānī, *Sharḥ-i muqaddima-yi Qaysarī bar Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, 99.
- 101 Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-ta’rīfāt*, 193.
- 102 ‘Abd al-Wāḥid Āmidī, *Ghurar al-ḥikam wa durar al-kalim* (Tehran, 2000), no. 7946.
- 103 Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār li-durar akhbār al-a’immat al-aṭḥār* (Beirut, 1983), 1:97.
- 104 Muḥammad b. Ya’qūb Kulaynī, *al-Kāfi*, ed. ‘A. al-Ghaffārī (Tehran, 1983), 1: no. 1; Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Ibn Babawayh al-Ṣadūq, *al-Khiṣāl* (Beirut, 1995), 589, no. 13.
- 105 Majlisī, *Bihār al-anwār*, 1:97, no. 7, 8.
- 106 William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge: Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Metaphysics of Imagination* (Albany, 1989).
- 107 William Chittick, *The Self-Disclosure of God: Principles of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s Cosmology* (Albany, 1998).
- 108 See Ibn al-‘Arabī, *al-Tajalliyāt al-ilāhiyya* (Beirut, 2002).
- 109 Instead of Sufism, many modern authors have preferred to use the term ‘irfān, which is derived from the Arabic *ma’rifā*, denoting, deep understanding or esoteric knowledge, and the ‘arīf (pl. ‘urafā) is the one who possesses *ma’rifā*.
- 110 Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ ḥikam*, 63, cited in Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism: A Comparative Study of Key Philosophical Concepts* (Los Angeles, 1983), 161.
- 111 Qaysarī, *Muqaddima*, 103.
- 112 Qaysarī, *Muqaddima*, 169.
- 113 Qaysarī, *Muqaddima*, 109.