

Interpreting Ibn ‘Arabī

Interpreting Ibn ‘Arabī: Philosophy, Theology, and Exegesis in Later Islam offers a comprehensive and critical examination of one of Islam’s most enigmatic and influential thinkers. Through close engagement with major controversies surrounding Ibn ‘Arabī’s ideas—from the doctrine of the Oneness of Being to his vision of sainthood and Qur’ānic interpretation—this volume traces the rich and contested legacy of his thought across the Islamic intellectual tradition.

Addressing the most debated aspects of Ibn ‘Arabī’s teachings, this book surveys the major contests around the fixed entities, Divine Power, human freedom, and the nature of the Perfect Man. It delves into accusations of pantheism and theological transgression, and explores the strategies employed by the Shaykh al-Akbar’s followers to clarify, defend, or reinterpret his views. It also explores Ibn ‘Arabī’s provocative Qur’ānic hermeneutics, which includes perspectives on mercy, the problem of idolatry, and the fate of unbelievers, situating the Shaykh’s teachings within broader Sufi, philosophical, and theological currents. Finally, it reveals how Ibn ‘Arabī challenged dominant rationalist frameworks and expanded the boundaries of Islamic knowledge by restoring to imagination a central epistemological role.

This book is an essential resource for scholars of Islamic philosophy, theology, Sufism, Qur’ānic studies, and the intellectual history of the Muslim world, shedding new light on the interpretive debates that have shaped Ibn ‘Arabī’s enduring legacy.

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Philosophy, Theology, and Exegesis in
Later Islam

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Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2026
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

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British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-041-09127-1 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-1-041-09130-1 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-1-003-64862-8 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003648628

Typeset in Times New Roman
by Newgen Publishing UK

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