

GERALD T. ELMORE

ISLAMIC SAINTHOOD IN
THE FULLNESS OF TIME

Ibn al-'Arabī's Book of the Fabulous Gryphon



CONTENTS

List of figures and plates	xii
Acknowledgements	xiii
Abbreviations	xv
A Note on the system of transliteration	xviii

INTRODUCTION

I. The Renewal of Religion	3
II. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī Ibn al-‘Arabī	13
III. The End of an Age	49
IV. The <i>Kitāb ‘Anqā’ Mughrib</i>	76
V. The Notion of <i>Walāyah</i>	109
VI. The Seal of the Saints	131
VII. The Flight of the Fabulous Gryphon	163
VIII. A Description of the Sources	196

TRANSLATION

PART ONE

I. <i>The Vessel Sealed on the Secret Unrevealed</i>	228
[<i>Seek the Truth Within</i>]	235
II. The Explanation of the Purpose of This Book	237
[<i>Be Your Own Ruler</i>]	243
III. <i>A FATHOMLESS SEA AND A DEEP-SEA DIVER</i>	246
1. The Key of a Pilgrimage and the Showing of a Way Thereto	246
[<i>A Meditation on the Pilgrimage</i>]	249
2. The Descent of a Trustworthy Spirit with the Shining of a Clear Dawn	257
[<i>A Description of the Condition after Release and Departure</i>]	262
[<i>Wisdom of Instruction from a Wise Instructor</i>]	264
[<i>A Poetic Meditation</i>]	266
3. A Trustworthy Hoopoe Bringing Sure Tidings	277
4. Purest Sealed Wine—Its Blend, Heavenly Water	281

5. The Dropping of the Veils on the Full-Moons	288
6. The Lifting of a Veil and the Holy Struggle of an Unpierced Pearl	293
7. A Pledge Held in <i>Lieu</i> and the Adoption of a Covenant	299
[<i>Be Patient till Truth Comes</i>]	300
8. The Station of Distinction and Effect of True Devotion	302
9. A Tempestuous Wave from Which a Hidden Pearl Is Drawn Forth	307
10. A Marriage Is Contracted and a Wedding Attended	312
[<i>An Ocean without Shore</i>]	319
[<i>The Mighty Mosaic Way</i>]	322

PART TWO

THE SURROUNDING SEA, THE ROAR OF WHOSE WAVE GOES

<i>UNHEARD</i>	328
I. An Hermaphrodite Pearl in an Obscure Abyss [concerning the Gnosis of the Divine Essence]	328
[<i>The Station of the "Courteous"</i>]	334
II. The Divine Attributes: <i>A Flash of Lightning and a Nocturnal Apparition</i>	339
III. The Divine Acts: <i>A Wave Striking the Shore and Withdrawing, Depositing Thereupon the Pearl and Sea-Shell</i>	346
IV. An Eternal Conference on an Everlasting Plane	353
V. THE SOURCE OF GENESIS AND THE FIRST ARISING	372
<i>The Sea of Large and Small Pearls Deposited in the Macrocosm and in Man</i>	372
<i>Man's Portion in the World</i>	386
VI. THE EMERGENCE OF THE WORLD OUT OF THE MUHAMMADAN REALTY: <i>THE TEN MACROCOSMIC "PEARLS"</i>	388
The Emergence of the Cosmic Water of the Throne from the Muḥammadan Reality as a First Pearl	388
A Second Pearl: <i>The Emergence of the Supernal Host Therefrom</i>	392
A Third Pearl: <i>The Emergence of the Divine Throne Therefrom</i>	393

A Fourth Pearl: <i>The Emergence of the Divine Footstool Therefrom</i>	394
The Pearl of the Spheres, They Being the Spirits of the Heavens: <i>The Emergence of the Seven Ways and Seven Stars Therefrom</i>	400
A Sixth Pearl: <i>The Emergence of the Primary Elements Therefrom</i>	403
A Seventh Pearl: <i>The Emergence of the "Smoke" in Which the Highest Heavens Were Opened</i>	408
An Extra Seventh Pearl: <i>The Emergence of the Image of the Vision of the Real in the World of Creation</i>	411
An Eighth Pearl: <i>The Close Adherence of the Jacynths and the Ordering of Times</i>	413
A Ninth Pearl: <i>A Rebuttal to Him Who Hunts with the Arrow of Obliquity</i>	420
A Tenth Pearl: <i>The Extension of the Subtle-Rays from the Muhammadan Reality to All of the Essential Realities</i>	423
VII. THE TEN MICROCOSMIC "JEWELS"	428
The Jewel of the First Pearl: <i>The Perfect Knowledge</i>	428
The Jewel of the Second Pearl: <i>The Primary Inspirations</i>	431
The Jewel of the Third Pearl: <i>The Prophetic Legacy from "One Who Draws Nigh" as the Rising Sun</i>	432
The Jewel of the Fourth Pearl: <i>The Mystical Resurrection and Judgment in the Interval of Intervals</i>	434
The Jewel of the Fifth Pearl: <i>The Meanings of the Times and the Planets and the Stars</i>	438
The Jewel of the Sixth Pearl: <i>Human Correlations with the Four Elements</i>	446
The Jewel of the Seventh Pearl: <i>Human Existence—A Mirage and an Image</i>	446
The Jewel of the Eighth Pearl: <i>Concerning the Difference between the Prophet and the Saint</i>	448
The Jewel of the Ninth Pearl: <i>Concerning the Dual Nature of Man, Corporeal and Spiritual</i>	450
The Jewel of the Tenth Pearl: <i>The Light of Gnosis Like the Light of a Lamp</i>	453

PART THREE

I. The Proof of the Imāmate, <i>Absolutely, without False Attribution</i>	462
II. An Epitome of Glorious Nobility <i>concerning Chambers above Which Are Chambers</i>	474
<i>The Seal of the Saints of Glorious Nobility</i>	475
<i>The Concluding Piece concerning the Preserved Pearl</i>	480
III. Microcosmic Correspondences concerning the Seal/Mahdī	484
1. <i>Man's Two Origins</i>	484
2. <i>Two Prophetic Inheritances</i>	485
3. <i>Two Solar Risings</i>	487
4. <i>The Hidden Treasure in the Western Ocean</i>	488
5. <i>Spiritual and Carnal Understanding of the Law</i>	489
6. <i>A Concealing and Reminding</i>	491
7. <i>The Coming-of-Age of Two Orphans</i>	491
8. <i>Reciprocal Risings and Settings</i>	493
9. <i>The Meeting-place of Two Seas</i>	494
10. <i>Traditionary Scenarios of the End of Times</i>	495
11. <i>The Black Mole and the Black Stone</i>	496
12. <i>The Homage-Ceremony and Abraham's Imāmate</i>	497
13. <i>The Conquest of the Great City</i>	498
14. <i>The Retinue of the Mahdī/Seal</i>	501
15. <i>Trials of Afflictions and the Triumph of Righteousness</i>	502
IV. The Epitome of Consummate Informing <i>concerning the Designation of the Seal of the Saints</i>	505
V. The Clear Declaration of the Glorious Scripture as to the Stations <i>of the Seal of the Saints and the Teaching of His States and His Signs</i>	508
—Qur'ānic passages treating of: <i>The Seal's Birth, his Lineage, where he dwells, his Tribe, and what happens to him until the time of his death, as well as his Name and those of his Parents</i>	511
<i>Sūrah II: The Cow (al-Baqarah)</i>	511
<i>Sūrah III: The Family of 'Imrān (Āl 'Imrān)</i>	512
<i>Sūrah IV: Women (al-Nisā')</i>	513
<i>Sūrah V: The Table (al-Mā'idah)</i>	514
<i>Sūrah VI: Cattle (al-An'ām)</i>	516
<i>Sūrah IX: Immunity (Barā'ah)</i>	516

<i>Sūrah XIX: Mary (Maryam)</i>	517
<i>Sūrah XXI: The Prophets (al-Anbiyāʾ)</i>	517
<i>Sūrah XXIII: The Believers (al-Muʾminūn)</i>	517
<i>Sūrah XXXVII: The Phalanxes (al-Ṣaffāt)</i>	518
<i>Sūrah XLII: Counsel (al-Shūrā)</i>	518
<i>Sūrah XLIII: Ornaments of Gold (al-Ẓukhruf)</i>	518
<i>Sūrah LVII: Iron (al-Ḥadīd)</i>	518
<i>Sūrah LXI: The Ranks (al-Ṣaff)</i>	519
<i>Sūrah LXVI: The Forbidding (al-Taḥrīm)</i>	519
<i>More traditional material on the Seal/Mahdī</i>	519
VI. The Pearl Following the Foregoing Jacynth	527
Translator's Epilogue	533

APPENDICES

I. Selected commentaries related to the <i>ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib</i>	537
II. Al-Ḥijāzī's commentary on the <i>ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib</i> (H)	565
III. Some notes on the cryptic script and "Madīnah- talisman" of the <i>ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib</i>	574
IV. Selected texts relating to the Seal of Sainthood, <i>etc.</i>	589
Glossary of problematic technical terms used in the <i>ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib</i>	616
Bibliography	625
Index of Qurʾānic verses quoted/alluded to by Ibn al-ʿArabī	649
Index of Qurʾānic verses quoted/cited by others than Ibn al-ʿArabī	651
General Index of names, titles and groups	659
Index of technical terms and subjects	688

PLATES AND FIGURES

Plate I.	Sīmurgh, King of the birds	<i>frontispiece</i>
Figure I.	Referents of the general term, <i>walī/awliyāʾ</i>	115
Figure II.	Range of the special terms, <i>walī, nabī</i> and <i>rasūl</i>	153
Plate II.	Fifth/11th-century Fātimid bronze gryphon (<i>ʿanqāʾ</i>)	186
Figure III.	Manuscript sources of the <i>K. ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib</i>	198
Plate III.	F. 16 from <i>Ms. Berlin 3266</i> (B)	220
Plate IV.	F. 52 from <i>Ms. Carullah 986</i> (C)	221
Plate V.	Ff. 73b-74 from <i>Ms. Chester Beatty 5495</i> (D); and ff. 19b-20 from <i>Ms. Vatican 292</i> (V)	222
Plate VI.	Ff. 1b-2 from <i>Ms. Wien 1906</i> (W); and ff. 3b-4 from <i>Ms. Berlin 2895</i> (B2)	223
Plate VII.	Ff. 1b-2 and 224b-225 from <i>Ms. Vatican 293</i> (M)	224
Plate VIII.	Ff. 1b-2 from <i>Ms. Berlin 2898</i> (S); and pp. 1-2 from <i>Ms. Hacı Mahmud Ef. 2347</i> (H)	225
Plate IX.	The title-page of the first printed edition of the <i>ʿAnqāʾ Mughrib</i> , Cairo, 1353/1934 (Q)	226
Plate X.	The Conference of the Divine Names, showing the subtle-rays (<i>raqāʾiq</i>) [from <i>Ms. Manisa</i> <i>1183/11</i> , ff. 137b-138]	369
Figure IV.	Key to Plate X	370
Figure V.	Scheme of hypostatic emanations of the Muḥammadan Reality	377
Figure VI.	The “ <i>Madīnah-talisman</i> ” from B (The seven- walled city of the human heart)	499
	Two lines of cryptography from B and C, giving the names and titles of Jesus	523-24
	Some Lines of cryptography from Q	561
	A Line of cryptography from E, giving the name of Jesus	577
Figure VII.	Table of specimens showing the cryptographic system of the Akbarian school	580
Plate XI.	F. 46b from B	581
Plate XII.	F. 45 from B	582
Plate XIII.	F. 47 from B	583
Plate XIV.	F. 60 from C	584
Plate XV.	Ff. 44b-45 from V; and ff. 65b-66 from W	585
Figure VIII.	The “ <i>Madīnah-talisman</i> ” from E	587
Figs. IX and X.	Two “ <i>Madīnah-talismans</i> ” from late sources	588