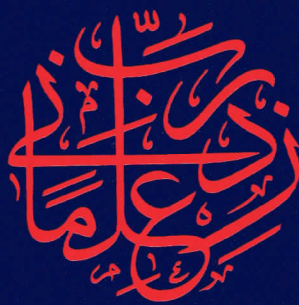


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original language. However, the present issue of the book does not take any account of the last two decades of scholarship on Suhrawardī. Over that period, several books and more than fifty articles have been published on Suhrawardī, many of them dealing with his Persian narratives. This reprint is just that, a new impression or reissue, rather than a new edition. It has not allowed for any modification or improvement. The introduction could have been expanded to include mention of some of the scholarship on Suhrawardī, or a few pages of bibliography added on. Also over the last several years, there has been a debate about how Suhrawardī should be interpreted. Was he a Peripatetic whose several hundred pages of Sufi narratives should be regarded as 'a footnote to his philosophy', as some have claimed, or was he a Sufi who accorded to Peripatetic philosophy a much lower status than Sufism, as clearly indicated by his own classification in the beginning of his major work *Ḥikmat al-isbrāq*? The present work could have addressed the place of Suhrawardī's Persian writings within the context of this ongoing debate and shed some light on it. Finally, an index to the book would have been extremely helpful.

Despite the missed opportunity to improve, and update the work, it remains an excellent introduction to Suhrawardī's mystical writings and a valuable source for students.

Mehdi Aminrazavi
Mary Washington College

The Heritage of Sufism. Volume III: Late Classical Persianate Sufism (1501–1750)

Edited by LEONARD LEWISOHN and DAVID MORGAN. Oxford: Oneworld Publications. 1999. Pp. xxviii, 548. Price PB £26.99. 1–85168–193–0.

This is the third and last volume of a short series on some aspects of the vast universe that is the traditional domain of Sufism within the cultural boundaries of Persia and the Persianate world. It comprises twenty-four essays by as many specialists from all around the globe presented at a conference, held at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, 19–21 May 1997, and entitled 'Sufism in Persianate culture during the Safavid and Mughal period'. The conference's focus on India and Persia during the period of Mughal (1526–1720) and Safavid (1501–1722) rule respectively, leaves out the cultural sphere of the contemporary Ottoman Empire, then at the height of its splendour and whose political boundaries embraced almost the entire Arab world and large parts of south-east Europe. This focus is clearly meant to reflect the close and intensive cultural links between Central Asia and Persia proper on one side and the Indian sub-continent on the other, the latter's Islamic religious culture then being strongly influenced by the influx of scholars and ideas from the Persian world.

The first three sections of the book discuss, from different viewpoints, the impact of Ismā'īl Ṣafavī (r. 1501–1525) and his successors on the intellectual climate in Persia in general and on the Sufi orders in particular. Considerable prominence is given to the so-called Illuminist Ishrāqī 'School of Isfahān' (a term coined by Henri Corbin and S. H. Nasr in the sixties). The subtle philosophical elaborations of its most prominent figures, which include Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (commonly known as Mullā Sadrā, d. 1050/1640), Mīr Dāmād (d. 1041/1631) and 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhījī (d. 1072/1661) among others, represent innovative attempts to reconcile the exoteric and esoteric domains of knowledge (*ḥikmat*, *'irfān*) and the means to attain to it. (See Ian R. Netton's contribution in section IV which re-visits the influence of Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (549–587/1153–1191) on Mīr Dāmād and the 'School of Isfahān', and that of Leonard Lewisohn, here on the role of *taṣawwuf* in the 'School of Isfahān' (63–134).) These thinkers have attracted much scholarly attention over the past decades and their output is generally acknowledged as among the finest achievements of Persian thought of the period, in part because, it is argued, they prefigure some elements of modern thought.

Other essays investigate the history of the Ni'matullāhī order as it appears from contemporary Safavid chronicles (Sholeh A. Quinn, 201–22), and the ways its leading authorities adapted to the changes in social and political climate brought about by the end of Timurid rule and the rise of Safavid state ideology (Terry Graham, 165–200). The early history of this particular *ṭarīqa* exemplifies in an interesting fashion the close relationship between Persia and India during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Some of the order's most prominent leaders migrated to the Bahmani court in the Deccan, moving into powerful positions through political manoeuvring and inter-marriage with the ruling families. The narrative also illustrates how far a regular Sufi order could maintain its integrity while its head (spiritual leadership, in India) remained separated from the trunk (administrating deputies, in Persia) for more than a century.

Chapter IV, somewhat confusingly entitled 'Sufism & Ishraqi & Akbarian Philosophy' offers two exciting articles by William C. Chittick and Muhammad Reza Juzi. The former explores the doctrinal and methodological contents of a Sufi manual by Shaykh Maḥmūd Khwūsh-Dahān (d. 1026/1617), a Chishtī authority in the line of Shaykh Gīsū Darāz (d. 825/1422), who spent most of his time in Bijapur, and entitled *Ma'rifat al-sulūk*. The work whose importance and significance for similar later treatises was indicated by Richard Eaton in his *Sufis of Bijapur* (Princeton, 1978) attempts to present a synthesized and integrated vision of a number of conceptual schemes formed around the technical terminology current among most Sufi authorities in different orders.

By means of a circular schema divided into eight sectors each further divided into five successive levels following a hierarchical order, the Chishtī shaykh aims to represent the convergence of different realities encountered on the initiatic path toward the awareness of the Supreme Divine Oneness (*tawḥīd*). From the series of subtle centres (*laṭā'if*) described by some orders as stages of the initiatic path to the purely intellectual perception of the five

degrees of Divine Presences in the Universe (*ḥarāt al-khamsa*) theorized in descending order by Ibn al-‘Arabī, from the five possible ways of interiorizing the Sufi practice of *dhikr* to the subtle secrets contained in the letters of the Arabic alphabet that culminate in the impenetrable mystery of the *lām-alif*, the author emphasizes the final resolution of that multiplicity (eight sections of five levels each adds up to forty terms) in the unique and undefined point of convergence at the centre of the schema. Shaykh Maḥmūd thereby anticipates by more than a century the better known efforts of, say, a Shāh Walī Allāh Dihlawī (d. 1762), to harmonize the sometimes apparently disparate ways of explaining the fundamental tenets of Sufi doctrine.

Section V, entitled ‘Esoteric Movements & Contemplative Disciplines’, in fact continues the concerns of the preceding section, albeit over a slightly later time frame. It offers among others, essays by Marcia K. Hermansen on the ‘pivotal role of Shāh Walī Allāh in the transition from pre-modern to modern ways of thinking and writing in Muslim religious literature’ (320), and Carl W. Ernst on prevalent aspects of Chishtī methodology as taught in the early eighteenth century (344–57).

Section VI contains three essays on the marked influence of Persianate thought on Sufism in different parts of the world, including an interesting analysis by Sachiko Murata of Sufi texts translated from Persian into Chinese and widely studied by disciples in contemporary China.

The last section covers selected topics within the immense universe of Persianate Sufi poetry that has inspired Annemarie Schimmel (as in the two previous volumes, here too her presence and contribution nicely complete the frame of participants at almost every conference on every aspect of Islamic culture) to extensive studies of work not only in the elegant Persian language, but also in the humbler nevertheless vigorous vernacular traditions, especially of the Indian subcontinent. Heidah Ghomi on the imagery of annihilation (*fanā*) used by the Safavi poet Sā‘ib Tabrīzī (born ca. 1039/1630) and including fine examples of the so-called ‘Indian style’ favoured by that poet after a prolonged stay on the subcontinent; Simon Weightman on the various levels of sacred symbolism used in the Shaṭṭārī Shaykh Manjhan’s work *Madhumāltī* (written in the north-eastern Indian dialect Awadhi); and Christopher Shackle on a Qādirī poem by the Punjabi master Ghanīmat Kunjahī (second half of the seventeenth century) underline the great variety in style and language that existed in the Persian and Persianate world during the epoch under study.

In conclusion, this extensive excursion into the winding paths of Persianate thought over the centuries provides a stimulating insight into the cultural richness and intellectual vigour in that part of the world. Through the combination of new approaches to already researched topics with fresh glimpses of hitherto unexplored topics, the book leaves us with a clear impression of the extraordinary potential of this field for further research by present and future specialists.

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Islam: Essays on Scripture, Thought and Society: A Festschrift in Honour of Anthony H. Johns

Edited by PETER G. RIDDELL and TONY STREET. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1997. Pp. 361. Price HB \$148.00. 2590–04–10692–8.

More often than not a Festschrift is a collection of papers that somehow hang together but lack a high degree of thematic coherence. Happily, this Festschrift in honour of Professor Anthony Johns belongs in the minority group. Combining papers delivered at a conference with solicited papers, the editors have produced a work that contains some excellent research pieces.

The preliminary matter includes, besides an Introduction and a list of Anthony Johns’s publications, Anthony Reid’s review of the corporal-turned-scholar Anthony Johns’s intellectual career. Reid brings out the unity of approach and sentiment underlying the diversity of Johns’s impressive literary output. Part I, which deals mainly with the Islamic scripture, has nine papers. It begins with Anthony Johns’s ‘On Qur’ānic Exegetes and Exegesis’. According to Johns, ‘From the sixteenth century on, there is documentary evidence of the prosecution of the various Islamic disciplines in the Indonesian archipelago, whether in Arabic, or vernacularised into various of the local languages’ (4). He examines the nineteenth-century scholar Nawawī al-Bantani’s two-volume commentary on the Qur’ān, *Marāḥ labīd*, with special reference to the commentary on *sūra* 38. He shows that Nawawī’s main source is al-Rāzī’s Qur’ān commentary, *Mafāṭih al-Ghayb*. Johns shows that Nawawī’s work, while it may be called ‘a pastiche ... hardly a sentence in the *Marāḥ labīd* is his own’ (40–1), is not without principles of selection peculiar to Nawawī. Thus Nawawī at times differs with al-Rāzī (e.g. on the interpretation of David’s lapse [28]). Besides, some of his emphases (e.g., his excursus, in connection with the David story, on political authority [34]) may be interpreted as allusions to the political situation obtaining in Indonesia during his life. Through careful analysis and comparison, Johns convincingly shows that Nawawī’s work is ‘a chapter in the development of Qur’ānic exegesis in the Malay world’ (48). One hopes that Johns would undertake a more detailed study of Nawawī’s *tafsīr*.

David Burrell’s short but important paper, ‘Islamicist as Interpreter,’ presents Anthony Johns as a model Western scholar. Employing the skills of Western literary analysis, Johns studies the Qur’ānic treatment of Biblical stories, ‘helping us to follow their logic, without being constrained to move them into our [Western] narrative field’ (54); ‘what we are invited rather to do is to proceed in a comparative fashion, using our modes of access to biblical texts as leverage into another textual world ... [without employing] our standards as normative’ (55).

Peter Riddell in ‘The Transmission of Narrative-Based Exegesis in Islam’ argues that, like Judaism and Christianity, Islam ‘depends heavily upon narrative as a device for transmitting religious messages and morals’ (58). To illustrate the Muslim exegetical use of narrative, Riddell studies al-Baghawī’s Qur’ān commentary, *Ma‘ālim al-tanzīl*, comparing al-Baghawī’s work with

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