

SUMMER SCHOOL

STUDIES IN SUFISM

3rd EDITION

IBN 'ARABI
AND HIS INTERPRETERS

26-31 AUGUST 2019
SARAJEVO (BiH)

Introduction

We are pleased to announce the **3rd edition** of the **Summer School-Studies in Sufism**, organized by the **association Perennia Verba** (Parma, IT) in collaboration with the Istituto per l'Oriente Carlo Alfonso Nallino (Rome, IT), the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (IT), the Officina di Studi Medievali (Palermo, IT), and the Istituto di Scienze dell'Uomo (Rimini, IT), that this year will take place in **Sarajevo**, in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, from the **26th** to the **31st of August**, and will be hosted by the **Faculty of Islamic Studies of the University of Sarajevo (BiH)**.



The aim of this third edition of the Summer School-Studies in Sufism is to bring together senior scholars, emerging researchers and postgraduate students working on Islamic thought, for a set of lectures, conversations and reading sessions on the theme ***Ibn 'Arabī and His Intepreters***. All school lectures and activities will be in English, but as some of the sessions will consist in analyzes of original texts the ability to read classical Arabic is also desirable (it is not a prerequisite for admission though). All lectures will take place at the Faculty of Islamic Studies in Sarajevo.

Set at the crossroads of East and West, this enchanting city, that is home to the three Abrahamic faiths, is often referred to as 'the Jerusalem of Europe'. As the meeting place of tradition and modernity, of eastern wisdom and western values, Sarajevo will also be the ideal location to reflect on the implications of Islamic metaphysical studies, and the Akbarian school of thought in particular, for the role and the future of Islam in our complex contemporary societies.

Ibn 'Arabī and His Interpreters

The third edition of our Summer School-Studies in Sufism will focus on the personality and teachings of Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn al-'Arabī (1165-1240) and his school of thought. Known also as *Al-Shaykh al-Akbar*, 'the Greatest Master', Ibn 'Arabī is undoubtedly one of the greatest figures in the intellectual spirituality not only of the Islamic world, but of all history. His literary production is monumental and we can attribute to him with certainty at least 400 works, the most important of which are the well-known *Futūḥāt al-makkiyya* and the *Fuṣūs al-ḥikam*. The first is a veritable encyclopedia of the 'inner science' of Islam, an ocean of all the esoteric knowledge of his era. As for the *Fuṣūs*, this 200-page book in Arabic can be considered as his spiritual testament and the synthesis of his thought, although Ibn 'Arabī affirmed that his source of inspiration for the work was the Prophet Muhammad himself who gave him the text in a dream.

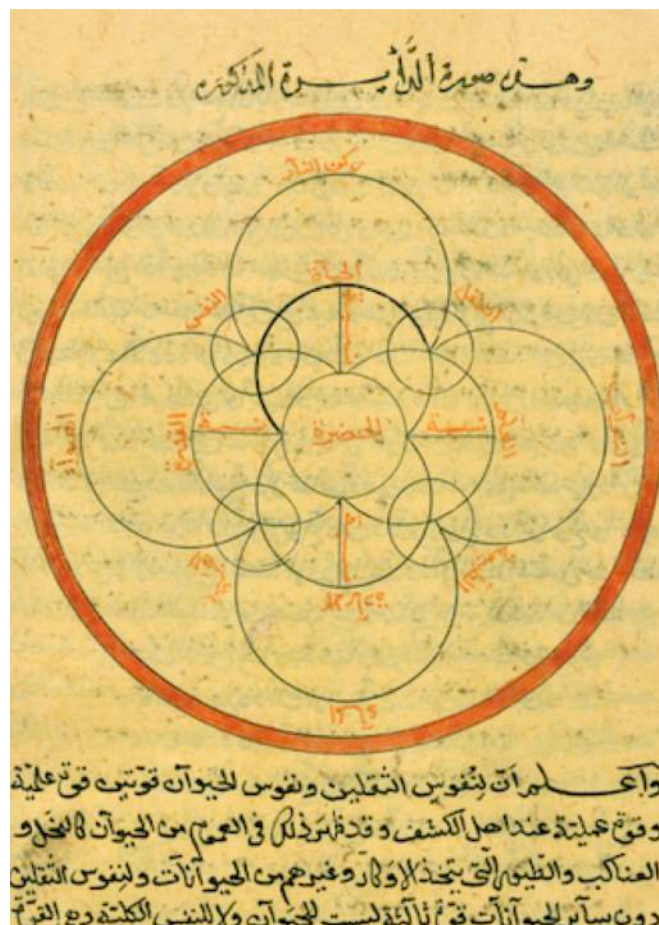


Diagram from a manuscript of the *Futūḥāt al-makkiyya*

Many of the concepts exposed by Ibn 'Arabī in a profound, daring and often enigmatic language have become the actual foundations of later Sufism. The two main themes of his thought revolve around the notions of 'Unicity of Being' (*waḥdat al-wujūd*, a term first used by his disciple Qunawī) and of the 'Perfect Man' (*al-insān al-kāmil*). It is not difficult to see in them the metaphysical dimension of the double formula of the Islamic profession of Faith. Both have been extensively elaborated by the interpreters of his thought, personalities like Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d. 1274), Mu'ayyad al-Dīn Jandī (d. 1300), Sa'd al-Dīn Farghānī (d. 1300), 'Abd al-Razzāq Qāshānī (d. 1330), Dawūd Qayṣarī (d. 1350), Haydar Amoli (d. 1384), 'Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī (d. 1403), Molla Ṣadra Shirāzī (d. 1636), Abd Allah Busnawi (d. 1644), up to the most recent 'Abd al-Ghani Nabulusi (d. 1731) and Emir 'Abd al-Qādir (d. 1883), only to mention the most famous ones.



Ibn 'Arabī's tomb in Damascus

Program

Key lectures, by Pablo Beneito (University of Murcia, ES), Caner Dagli (College of the Holy Cross, USA), Demetrio Giordani (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, IT), Stephen Hirstenstein (Institute of Ismaili Studies, UK), Enes Karić (University of Sarajevo, BiH), Federico Salvaggio (University of Udine, IT), Paolo Urizzi (Perennia Verba Association, IT), and Ahmed Zildžić (University of Sarajevo, BiH), will take place from Monday to Friday and will be divided into morning and afternoon sessions.

Lectures will cover all key aspects of Ibn 'Arabī's thought as represented in his works and in those of his most famous interpreters. A special section will be devoted to Akbarian scholars in the Balkans and in Bosnia in particular.

With the intention of providing students with the opportunity to approach the proposed texts from a perspective that is epistemologically consistent with the *Weltanschauung* of their authors, and of the historical milieu in which they lived, teachers have been selected among those scholars who besides being endowed with high academic standards are also gifted with the ability to penetrate and transmit the original spirit of the ideas and sources they discuss

The working language of the Summer School will be English.



University of Sarajevo - Faculty of Islamic Studies

Summer School Venue and Accommodation

This year Summer School will take place, from the **26th to the 31st of August in Sarajevo**. All lectures will take place within the premises of the historical building of the **Faculty of Islamic Studies of the University of Sarajevo, 54 Čemerlina street, in Sarajevo**. Set in the historic city center, it will be the ideal starting point for after-school walking distance visits to most important museums, sights and tourist attractions. The course fee is of **350 euro** and includes all school lectures and school materials (including a set of digital publications on this year's topic) and after-school organized activities. Please notice that the fee **does not include** travel to/from Bosnia and accommodation costs and meals in Sarajevo. The University of Sarajevo has made available one of its hosting structures at a special rate for participants to the Summer School. The organization will be happy to provide interested students with details. The school fee **does cover** all after-school visits to museums, sights and tourist attractions (including entrance tickets). It also includes a guided one-day school trip to Blagaj and Mostar scheduled on Saturday the 31st of August (including transportation). The course fee is **non-refundable**, with the exception of specifically documented cases.

Students coming from U.S. or from African/Asian countries are asked to proceed to the visa request as soon as their admission to the school is confirmed. The organization is not responsible in any way for the administrative procedures regarding visas, but will provide all possible help and information.

Program

Monday 26 August

Morning session 9.00-12.30

- Registration
- Summer School opening
- **The Unending Journey**

Stephen Hirtenstein (Institute of Ismaili Studies, UK)

In this lecture we will give an overview of Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine of the spiritual journey, its kinds, contours and outcomes, the types of travelers and their methods, as well as an introduction to his understanding of the journeys made by the messengers, prophets and saints. This will include his description of the Way that he himself traveled in the footsteps of the prophets, and its implications for human beings today.

Afternoon session 14.00-16:30

- **The Sufi Path of Poetry: *shi'r*, *shu'ūr* and the hidden structure of the *Tarjumān***

Pablo Beneito (University of Murcia, ES)

On the meaning of *shi'r* as foundation and original language of the cosmos and the faculty of *shu'ūr* as inner perception, poetic interpretation and conscious dialogical relationship. While discussing different levels of Ibn 'Arabī's poetry, some unknown aspects of the hidden structure of the *Tarjumān al-ashwāq* will be analyzed.

After-school activities 17:00-19:00

- Visit to museums/tourist sights

Thursday 27 August

Morning session 9.00-12.30

- **The Essence of Separateness: the One that is Many**

Stephen Hirtenstein (Institute of Ismaili Studies, UK)

In this lecture we will explore some of Ibn 'Arabī's responses to the age-old questions of how plurality can arise out of unity and how the One and the Many are related to each other. What is the difference between the One that is Unique (*al-aḥad*) and the One that is Many (*al-wāḥid al-kathīr*)? Why is 2 not a number? What is meant by God's Names and the clear Truth (*al-ḥaqq al-mubīn*)? Does a plurality of Names cause a separation within unity? How does his sophisticated doctrine of Unity relate to modern notions of pluralism and religious diversity?

Afternoon session 14.00-16:30

- **Ibn 'Arabī and His Hermeneutics**

Enes Karić (University of Sarajevo, BiH)

This lecture explores the principles of Akbarian hermeneutics as can be inferred from Ibn 'Arabī's main works. It shows the implications of his metaphysical thought for the interpretation of the Qur'an and the methodology by which the sacred text can be approached.

After-school activities 17:00-19:00

- **Visit to museums/tourist sights**

Wednesday 28 August

Morning session 9.00-12.30

- **On the *Kitāb al-'Abādila* and the heteronymic vision of Human Being and the Universe**

Pablo Beneito (University of Murcia, ES)

This session will deal with the relationship of the Divine Names and the degrees of Human realization as well as with the notions of perspective and transjectivity relating to different modalities of consciousness, presences and spiritual stations.

Afternoon session 14.00-16.30

- **Perfect Muhammadan Sanctity in Ibn 'Arabī's Thought**

Paolo Urizzi (Perennia Verba Association, IT)

In this lecture, sanctity will be examined as a form of prophetic heritage. Since the degree of each saint is determined by the type of prophetic heritage he received, for Ibn 'Arabī the highest degree necessarily belongs to the Muhammadan Heirs by virtue of the completeness of the 'Seal of the Prophets'. Being he "prophet when Adam was still among water and clay," he is also the Model of all perfections. Special attention will be devoted to the Muhammadan Reality as a principle of prophecy, and to some passages of the *Futūḥāt* dealing with the Muhammadan sanctity. In particular, the two first chapters of the *Fuṣūs* will also be studied.

After-school activities 17:00-19:00

- **Visit to museums/tourist sights**

Thursday 29 August

Morning session 9.00-12.30

- **The Development of the School of Ibn 'Arabī**

Caner Dagli (College of the Holy Cross, USA)

Ibn 'Arabī is known not only through his own writings but the school of thought to which they gave rise, which grew to reach into not only Sufism but also theology and philosophy. We will look at how the school crystallized over time as part of the Islamic intellectual landscape.

Afternoon session 14.00-16:00

- **The Akbari initiation and the transmission of its *Khirqā'***

Demetrio Giordani (University of Modena and R.E., IT)

Among the most fascinating hypotheses concerning the Akbarian heritage is the direct transmission of the personal *baraka* of Shaykh al-Akbar to some of his chosen disciples. According to some hypotheses the *Khirqā' Akbariyya* would be handed down effectively through the centuries to some important Sufi masters of the recent past.

- **Islamic Linguistics: an Akbarian perspective**

Federico Salvaggio (University of Udine, IT)

The term 'Islamic linguistics' can ambiguously refer to both the linguistic study of the texts at the core of the Islamic civilization and to the discipline of linguistics as it developed form within the Islamic tradition. The present contribution adopts the latter approach and attempts to identify some essential principles that lie at the basis of the Islamic vision of language and linguistic studies. It will try to discuss those Islamic linguistic founding principles as generally represented within the Islamic tradition and in particular in the works of Ibn 'Arabī and his school of thought.

After-school activities 17:00-19:00

- **Visit to museums/tourist sights**

Morning session 9.00-12.30

- **The Muqaddimah of Dawūd al-Qayṣarī**

Caner Dagli (College of the Holy Cross, USA)

Qayṣarī was a creative and synthesizing thinker who was able to re-cast the prevailing language of theology and philosophy to communicate the perspective of the Akbarian school of which he was a preeminent representative. We will look at some of the key ideas from his famous introduction to his commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ* of Ibn ‘Arabī.

Afternoon session 14.00-16:30

- **Bosnian adherents of Ibn ‘Arabī:
‘Abdullāh, Alī and Ṣalāḥ al-dīn**

Ahmed Zildžić (University of Sarajevo, BiH)

This tripartite lecture and presentation aims at introducing the three principal representatives of the Akbarian school of thought in the Ottoman period, originally from Bosnia: celebrated ‘Abdullāh al-Bosnawī – *Shāriḥ al-Fuṣūṣ*, ‘Alī-dede Bosnawī, and Ṣalāḥ al-dīn ‘Ushshāqī al-Bosnawī, labeled the Ottoman Ibn ‘Arabī. While many other Ottoman authors of Bosnian origin could be named, we chose those three scholars as their entire worldview and scholarly output was suffused almost exclusively in Akbarī coloring as is readily observable from their soubriquets. The lecture will also introduce some lesser known facts from their scholarly biography, the reception of their major and minor works in modern scholarship in the Bosnian language including monographs, studies and translations, as well as offer an overview of the existing manuscripts of their works held in Bosnian manuscript collections.

- **Concluding Roundtable Discussion**

Pablo Beneito (University of Murcia, ES), Caner Dagli (College of the Holy Cross, USA), Demetrio Giordani (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, IT), Stephen Hirtenstein (Institute of Ismaili Studies, UK), Enes Karić (University of Sarajevo, BiH), Federico Salvaggio (University of Udine, IT), Paolo Urizzi (Perennia Verba Association, IT), Ahmed Zildžić (University of Sarajevo, BiH).

Saturday 31 August

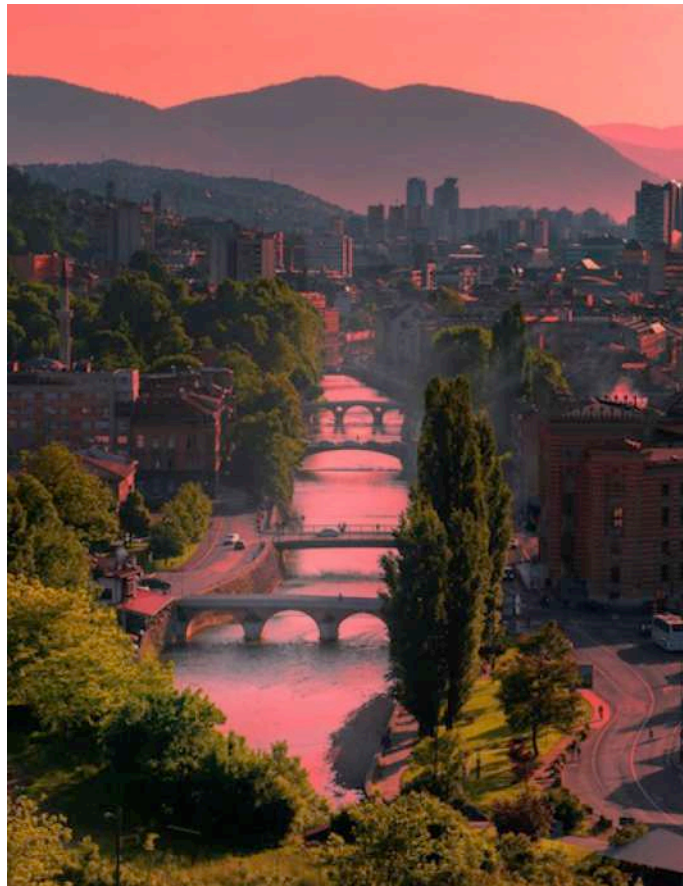
- 9.30-18.00: *Guided tour to Mostar*



and visit to the **Sufi Tekke of Blagaj**



<http://tekijablagaj.ba/en/>



Application

The application should be sent in pdf form to sufistudies3@outlook.com. It must include:

1. A brief cover letter presenting the applicant's profile and his/her interest and expectations in attending the Summer School.
2. A CV with background in Islamic Studies and level of knowledge of Classical Arabic and English. It may also include a list of selected publications (MA/PhD thesis, articles, books). Please include contact details.

The deadline for the submission of the application is **Sunday the 9th of June**. **Applications will be processed as they are received up to the fulfillment of the available posts.**

School Director:

Paolo Urizzi (Perennia Verba Association, IT)

Scientific Committee

Demetrio Giordani (Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia, IT)

Patrizia Spallino (University of Palermo, IT)

Michele Petrone (Université Catholique de Louvain, BE)

Federico Salvaggio (University of Udine, IT).

For any information please contact sufistudies3@outlook.com



Everything is to perish except His Face.

Qur'an 28:88