

Fig. 1 The opening page of Malik 4263, comprising a fihrist listing the last thirty-eight chapters of the *Mawāqif* (out of a total of 77 chapters, first page missing).

Malik MS 4263

A manuscript case-study

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Part I: the transmission of al-Niffarī and the role of al-Farghānī

The remarkable manuscript MS 4263 held in the Milli Malik library (now known as the Malek National Library and Museum) in Tehran, is one of those that give precious insight into the milieu of the followers of Ibn ‘Arabī in Konya. It has been partially studied by Paul Nwyia and by Iraj Afshar, albeit completely independently as they focused on two very different parts: the first part, a beautiful copy of *K. al-Mawāqif* by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Niffarī (d.354/965 according to Ḥājjī Khalīfa,¹ but much more probably post-366/977), which Nwyia has compared with other early copies in creating a new and comprehensive edition of his writings;² and the other, a four-page listing of works identified by Afshar as being in the hand of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d.673/1274), which itemises what his library contained during his lifetime.³ This two-part article will give an overview of the manuscript as a whole, with a more detailed examination of its contents. In the first part of this article, we will also describe the first three sections of the manuscript and discuss the relation between Ibn ‘Arabī and al-Niffarī’s work; in the second part, we will

1. *Kashf al-ẓunūn*, ed. G. Fluegel, vol. 6, p.235.

2. Paul Nwyia, ‘Trois Œuvres Inédites de Mystiques musulmans’, *Collection Recherches*, vol. 7 (Beirut, 1973).

3. Iraj Afshar, ‘Fihrist-i kitābkhānah-yi Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī’, *Tahqīqāt Islāmī*, vol. 37 (1374H), pp.477–502.

examine the four-page listing of al-Qūnawī's library, and make some observations about what appears to have survived of this bibliographic legacy.

MALIK 4263

Malik 4263 is an old manuscript, dated in two places as 662/1264 and 665/1267, with a total of 176 folios and 19 lines per page. It is unclear whether it was originally bound as one unit: there are some blank pages following the text of the *Mawāqif*, and the remaining texts may even have been separate at one time. While the leather covers are old with typical Seljuk 7th/14th-century design, the whole has been rebound in more recent times and certain pages misplaced. There is no mention of the name of the scribe or place of writing, but we are able to identify both writers on the basis of other works: the handwriting of the majority of the text (fols. 0a–174a) is that of al-Farghānī, the well-known student of al-Qūnawī, while the final 4 pages (fols. 174b–176a) were written by al-Qūnawī himself. In addition, there are sufficient clues to establish that the whole text must have been written in Konya.

The history of this text, however, is rather obscure. There is a preliminary page in the hand of Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad Kāzīm Malik (Hāj Ḥusayn Āqā Malik, 1871–1972), an avid collector of Arabic, Persian and Turkish manuscripts, who founded and bequeathed his collection to the Malik library in Tehran. He states that in Muḥarram 1348/June 1929 he purchased a manuscript of the text of the *Mawāqif* and commentary by al-Tilimsānī for 150 tomans from the Islāmiyya bookshop in Tehran. It is unclear whether this note refers to this particular text in the hand of al-Farghānī or not. If it does, then presumably the Tilimsānī commentary has become a separate volume (although I have not been able to trace it amongst the holdings of the Malik library). This manuscript appears to have formally become part of the library three years later in 1351/1932, and became available to the general public when the Malik library was made a public charitable foundation in 1356/1937.

The main scribe Sa'īd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Farghānī (d.699/1300) is primarily associated with his incisive commentary on Ibn al-Fāriḍ's famous poem *al-Ta'īyya al-kubrā* or *Nazm al-sulūk* ('The Poem of the Way'), which was based explicitly on al-Qūnawī's oral teachings.⁴ Little is known of his life, except that according to his own testimony he entered the Sufi path at the hand of Najīb al-Dīn 'Alī b. Buzghush al-Shīrāzī (d.678/1279), a disciple of Shihāb al-Dīn 'Umar al-Suhrawardī. Subsequently, he joined the circle of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī in Konya and was among the group that travelled to Egypt in 643/1245, where his master al-Qūnawī gave famous lectures on Ibn al-Fāriḍ's poem.

From the surviving manuscript base we are able to deduce that he spent several years in Konya, making copies of various works, no doubt partly because he had such clear and elegant handwriting. For example, MS 41 in the Köprülü Library in Istanbul, which is in his hand and gives his name at the end as Sa'īd (or Sa'd) al-Farghānī al-Kāshānī, is a copy of al-Qūnawī's *I'jāz al-bayān*, dated 23rd Sha'bān 669H (= 6th April 1271). Other manuscripts which appear to be in the same hand but do not carry a definitive signature include a collection of 12 texts by Ibn 'Arabī and al-Qūnawī dated 668/1270 (Ankara Milli A571) and a very fine undated copy, the earliest known, of Ibn al-Fāriḍ's *Dīwān* (Yusuf Ağa 7838).

As for the contents of Malik 4263 itself, it consists of five parts, the first four of which are in al-Farghānī's hand. It is these four which we will examine in this article.

Part 1: fols.0a–72b. This is a very fine copy of *Kitāb al-Mawāqif* by al-Niffarī, the 4th/10th-century mystic of Iraq who was much admired by Ibn 'Arabī. The text is semi-vocalised, in al-Farghānī's extremely fine *naskh*, with occasional notes or corrections in the margin.

4. See Giuseppe Scattolin, 'The Key Concepts of al-Farghānī's Commentary on Ibn al-Fāriḍ's Sufi Poem, *al-Ta'īyya al-kubrā*', *JMIAS*, 39 (2006), 33–83. See also Heike Stamer, 'Sa'īd al-Dīn al-Farghānī's Usage of the Term *wahdat al-wujūd* and His Role in Ibn 'Arabī's School', *JMIAS*, 56 (2014), 43–66.

Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Niffarī came from Niffar (or Nuffar), which had once been the important Babylonian and Sumerian city of Nippur, on the river Euphrates, in southern Iraq. According to Sumerian myth, man was first created at Nippur, and the city had a temple dedicated to the god Enlil, the god of breath, wind and storms and ruler of the cosmos. It later had a thriving Jewish population through the Parthian, Sassanid and early Arab times, and was a Nestorian Christian bishopric until the 11th century CE. Little is known of al-Niffarī’s life except that he died post-360/970. He is described as a solitary peripatetic, who wandered in deserts and died in Egypt. His writings, which were ‘revelations on scraps of paper’, were gathered together after his death by his daughter’s son or one of his companions.⁵

As the original title page is missing, the text begins in the middle of a *fihris*t listing in gold letters the various *mawāqif* in the book. Beginning with *Mawqif al-fiqh wa qalb al-‘ayn*, there are thirty-eight named chapters listed out of the seventy-seven which the book is said to contain.⁶ The book itself begins on fol. 1a, described as the ‘first part’ (*al-juz’ al-awwal*), although it is somewhat unclear exactly what this refers to (Nwyia takes this to mean the text of the *Mawāqif* as such). On fol. 24a, at the beginning of *Mawqif* no. 28, the copyist mentions that this is a transcript of the ‘third part’, while on fol. 25b, at the beginning of *Mawqif* no. 31, he refers to the fourth, fifth and sixth parts.

5. See A.J. Arberry, *The Mawāqif and Mukhāṭabāt of Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdī’l-Jabbār al-Niffarī* (London, 1935), p. 1.

6. The number 77 is stated at the end of the list. The same number and basic order is given by A.J. Arberry in his original edition and translation (see n. 5), where *Mawqif al-fiqh* is no. 41. However, there are some anomalies and variant readings in the titles: for example, no. 35 reads *Mawqif ‘ahdaka*; there is an extra title between Arberry’s 36 and 37, entitled *Mawqif al-bishārāt* (consisting of 11 annunciations), and between 66 and 67, entitled *Mawqif law ja’aka*, and between 75 and 76, entitled *Mawqif al-idrāk* (which Arberry includes as an extra on pp. 217–18/Arabic and pp. 184–5/English). There is also one misbinding: fols. 4b–5a should have fols. 13a–16b inserted. The ordering and titling in Nwyia’s edition are different, and a total of 70 *mawāqif* are included in the first *juz’*.

On fol. 72b the text of the *Mawāqif* 'which was found in his [the author's] hand' (*al-latī wujīdat bi-khattīhi*) ends.

Part 2: fols. 72b–171b. The second section consists primarily of a series of extracts, all of which appear to be included in Nwyia's edition: the first is entitled 'One of his sayings' (*min kalāmihī*), followed by a section called *bāb al-khawāṭir wa-aḥkāmihā* ('on the incoming thoughts and their properties', fols. 73a–74a⁷). Fols. 74b–104b contain the text of the *Mukhāṭabāt* ('Addresses'),⁸ with a brief introduction and each of the fifty-six addresses beginning with a *basmalah*. Throughout the text the copyist inserts the word *balagha* in the margin, indicating the collation and careful checking of the text. This is followed on fols. 104b–106b by a text on the heart (Nwyia, no. 161), at the end of which the copyist reiterates that it was found in the author's own hand.

There follow various extracts, some of which are said to come from the 'first part' and some from another part, suggesting that the original text was itself rather disordered, as Nwyia remarks. These include prayers (*du'ā* and *munājāt*), poems and divine addresses. Various original dates are mentioned in the text: for example, an extract dated 359H (fol. 111a); a prayer dated 355H (fol. 149a); extracts dated 354H (fol. 153b), 358H (fol. 154a) and 360H (fol. 158b). It includes some 'doubtful' (*mukhtalaf fīhā*) pieces attributed to al-Niffarī but also ascribed to a certain 'Abd Allāh b. 'Alī al-'Ārif (fols. 158b–161a, omitted by Nwyia). Fols. 162a–168a is another section copied from the author's original dated 359H, which includes extra *mawāqif*.

The text ends on fol. 171b (see next page), with the specification that the copy was made from an original which was found written in the author's own hand and dated 359H in Baṣra.⁹ The copy was made at the end of Rabī' I 662H (= January 1264), and

7. This text appears in Nwyia as no. 160 (5th part), and in Marsh 166, fols. 183b–184a.

8. See Arberry, *Mawāqif*, pp. 143–212 (Arabic) and pp. 131–79 (English).

9. The Yusuf Aḡa catalogue states that MS 4905, now sadly lost, contained both the *Dīwān al-Tihāmī* and the original *Mawāqif* in the hand of al-Niffarī.

البحر وجميع من الشجر والقمر وأدخل على كل بيت مسلوناً
وأسلم عليهم ذلك بان في المشية وبأذن تقوم الساعة وأنا

العزير الرحيم

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم . موقف البحر

أوقفتني في البحر فرأيت المراكب تغرق في الألواح تسلم ثم غرقت الألواح
وقال لي يسلم من ركب وقال لي خاطر من القى نفسه ولم يركب
وقال لي هلك من ركب وما خاطر وقال لي في الم خاطر من ركب
وجاء الموج فرفع ما بينه وساح على الساجل وقال لي طاهر البحر
ضواً لا يبلغ وقعر ظلمة لا يمشي بينه ما حيتان لا تستامن
وقال لي تركب البحر فاحجبك بالآله ولا تلق نفسك فيه فأحجبك به
وقال لي البحر حدود فأيها يفتلك وقال لي إذا وهبت نفسك
للبحر فغرفت فيه كنت كدابة من دابة وقال لي غشيتك
إنك للثقل على سواي وقال لي إن هلك في سواي كنت لما ملك
فيه وقال لي الدنيا لمن صرفته عنها وصرفتها عنه والآخرة

من أقبلت بها إليه وأقبلت به علي

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم موقف الرحمانية

أوقفتني في الرحمانية وقال لي أي وصف وجدتي وقال لي ما رفع
حكم الذنب والعلم والوجد وقال لي ما بقى للخلاف أثر فرحته وما
لم يبق له أثر فرحانيته وقال لي قف في خلافتي على التعرف

نوقفت

Halting at the Ocean¹

He brought me to a halt at the Ocean, and I saw the vessels founder and the wooden planks floating unharmed; then the planks also sank. And He said to me:

1. *Whoever voyages is not safe.*
2. *Whoever throws himself in and does not voyage takes a risk.*
3. *Whoever voyages and takes no risk perishes.*
4. *Taking risks is a part of salvation.*

And the wave came, raising up what was underneath it, and ran along the shore. And He said to me:

5. *The surface of the ocean is an unattainable light, and its depths an unfathomable darkness; between the two are fishes that provide no security.*
6. *Do not voyage upon the ocean, lest I veil you by the means of transport; do not throw yourself into it, lest I veil you by that [throwing].*
7. *The ocean has limits – which of them will carry you?*
8. *When you give yourself to the ocean and drown in it, you become like one of its creatures.*
9. *I act most dishonestly towards you if I guide you to other than Me.*
10. *If you perish in other than Me, you belong to that in which you perish.*
11. *This low world belongs to whoever I turn away from it and from whom I turn it away; the next world belongs to whoever I bring it close to and whom I bring close to Me.*



1. *Mawqif al-baḥr*. The term *mawqif* in its root suggests not only stopping, pausing, being stationary, but also instructing and giving attention to. For al-Niffarī, the pause (*waqfa*) signifies 'the source of knowledge... God's presence... an emergence from unreality... beyond the utterable' (see Arberry, *Mawāqif*, pp. 14–15). It is interpreted by Ibn 'Arabī as 'a buffer state (*barzakh*) in which the mystic pauses' between every spiritual abode, descent, station and state (*Fut.* II.805).

a marginal note (partially obscured) specifies that the whole text was read and checked in the home of 'my master and support, my guide to God the Exalted' [= Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī], and then collated with the copy belonging to the '...excellent imām Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī...at other sessions on [Tuesday] 18th Jumādā I 662H (= 18th March 1264)'.

As Nwyia observed in compiling his edition, the surviving manuscripts of al-Niffarī's writings are a very diverse collection: they include a Chester Beatty autograph fragment, dated 344H and held in the Chester Beatty library in Dublin,¹⁰ and Yusuf Ağa 5925, said to be written in Ismā'īl Ibn Sawdakīn's hand.¹¹ It is difficult to establish the original order of the contents, and the main exemplars we possess appear to have been made between 581/1185 (Gotha MS 880) and 662/1264 (the Farghānī copy), i.e. during the lifetime of Ibn 'Arabī and al-Qūnawī. Indeed it is likely that al-Niffarī himself never compiled his writings into a coherent whole, and the first collection was done by his grandson (or possibly companion).¹² The power and profundity of these remarkable writings strikes all those who come into contact with them. Nwyia himself gives the following glowing description: 'Never has the Arabic language been so sublimely employed, nor has any writer transformed it like Niffarī has done, by blowing upon his words the fire of his inspiration'.¹³

What can clearly be deduced from the copies that survive is that it was the circle of Ibn 'Arabī that held the original documents of al-Niffarī's works and promoted a deep study of the *Mawāqif*. Ibn 'Arabī himself clearly held al-Niffarī in high regard: he refers to al-Niffarī as one of the 'people of the Night'

10. A.J. Arberry, 'More Niffarī', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol. 15/1 (1953), pp. 29–42. These texts were incorporated into Nwyia's edition in part 4 (no. 140–54).

11. This is according to Nwyia (p. 187), who mentions that it had recently been rebound, but the current Yusuf Ağa MS 5925 no longer contains any sign of the *Mawāqif* text, and I have not been able to trace it in the Yusuf Ağa holdings. See also the brief description by Ahmed Ateş in 'Konya kütüphanelerinde bulunan yazmalar', *Belleten* 16 (1952), pp. 74–7.

12. As stated by al-Tilimsānī; see Arberry, *Mawāqif*, pp. 1–2.

13. Nwyia, p. 190.

(*ahl al-layl*), and mentions him directly or indirectly several times in his writings, not only in his *Futūḥāt* as Arberry has noted¹⁴ but also in other places such as Ibn Sawdakīn's record of conversations with his master in his *Wasā'il al-sā'il*.¹⁵ Ibn 'Arabī also imitated the style of al-Niffarī in his very early Andalusian work, written in 590/1194 after visiting Tunis, *Mashāhid al-asrār al-qudsiyya* ('Contemplation of the Holy Mysteries'), which contains a series of divine statements beginning with the phrase used by al-Niffarī, *wa-qāla lī* ('and He said to me...').¹⁶ The well-known poet and student of both al-Qūnawī and Ibn Sab'īn, 'Afīf al-Dīn al-Tilimsānī (d.690/1291), wrote a commentary on the *Mawāqif* in 660/1262, which is said to have been checked by Sharaf al-Dīn al-Mawṣilī, the member of the Konyan circle who also appears at the end of the Farghānī text and is reputed to have possessed a copy of the text.¹⁷ One may surmise that this commentary was itself the outcome of special study sessions

14. Arberry, *Mawāqif*, pp.8–11 (who uses the Bulaq edition of 1293H and gives extensive translations) listed five in the Bulaq edition of 1293H. In the Beirut edition, we can find *Fut.*I.115 (ch. 5), I.238 (ch. 41), I.392 (chap. 69), I.613 (ch. 71), II.38 (ch. 73, a single verse by al-Niffarī which comes in section 152 in the Nwyia edition), II.142 (ch. 74), II.145 (in the form of *aṣḥāb al-mawāqif wa al-qawl*), II.609–10 (ch. 279), II.625 (ch. 284), III.147 (ch. 338) and III.196 (ch. 347). There are also many references to the technical terms *mawqif* ('staying') and *wāqif* ('one who stays') scattered throughout Ibn 'Arabī's work.

15. See *Die Terminologie Ibn 'Arabī im 'Kitāb wasa'il as-sa'il' des Ibn Saudakīn*, ed. and trans. M. Profitlich (Freiburg, 1973), no. 58, where Ibn 'Arabī mentions the same passage as in *Fut.*I.613.

16. Echoing the formula of *awqafanī wa-qāla lī* ('He brought me to a halt and said to me...'), he sometimes refers to al-Niffarī's work as *al-Mawāqif wa al-Qawl* ('Halting and Saying'), whereas in the *Mashāhid* he himself emphasises *ashhadanī wa-qāla lī* ('He made me witness/contemplate... and said to me'). See *Contemplation of the Holy Mysteries*, trans. Cecilia Twinch and Pablo Beneito (Oxford, 2001).

17. This is according to the details given in the introductory page by Ḥusayn Malik, although there is no information regarding where this detail is recorded. Al-Tilimsānī's commentary survives in several early manuscripts (e.g. Bodleian Library Marsh 166, dated 694/1295; Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed Pasha 785, dated 695/1296), and was printed in Cairo in 1997 (edited by Jamal Marzuqi).

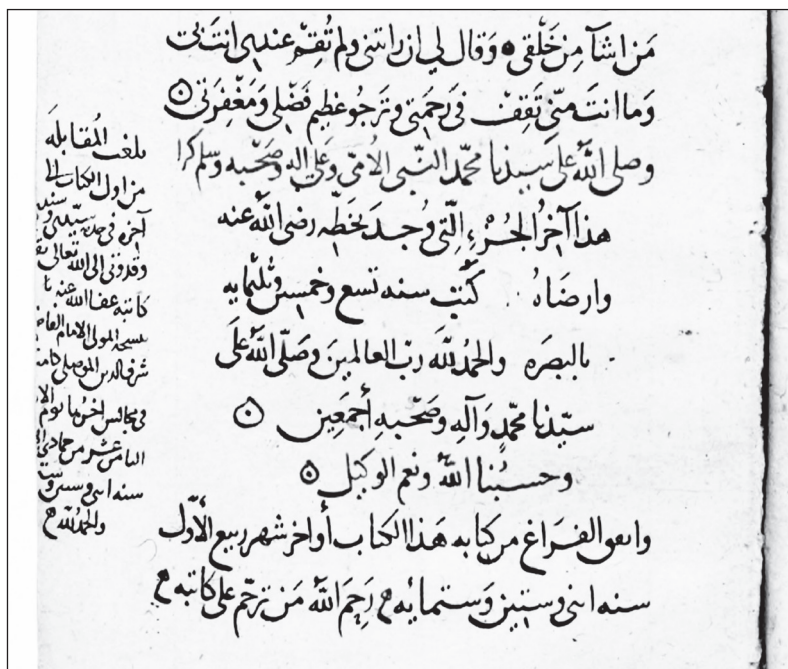


Fig. 2 The attestation that the copy was made from the author's original, with the marginal note on the collation (fol.171b)

held in Konya. Arberry also notes another fragmentary commentary which he speculated might even be a transcript of Ibn 'Arabī's own teachings on the text.¹⁸

Part 3: fols. 173b–174a: the following extract from the teachings of a spiritual master named 'Alī b. Aḥmad al-Balkhī al-Rā'ūdī.¹⁹

He said: the gnostic (*al-ʿārif*) has mirrors in which the Real reveals Himself, in whatever created thing He wishes to be known through, to whomever He wishes amongst the people who are obedient to His commands. When the gaze of the observer is strong, and the thought of the one who receives an inspiration (*ṣāḥib al-khāṭir*) is unified, then the intermediaries are cut away

18. Arberry, *Mawāqif*, p. 25, referring to Bodleian Library Marsh 554.

19. I have not been able to identify this master, who is described as 'the gnostic knower/scholar' (*al-ʿālim al-ʿārif*).

from in-between and the eye ('*ayn*) takes possession of the Essence ('*ayn*). If it remains in its 'place', then 'you will see Me'.²⁰

Connections with others, whether in terms of desire or fear (*raghbatan wa-rahbatan*), are obstacles in the way of God and ignorance of Him. When the heart is made pure and exclusively assigned to its Creator, and is properly awake to respond to the One who calls, the personal motives are removed, and it is caught in the snares of [the divine] intention by a direction in which there is no turning aside. Then whatever thought of otherness may come to him, he will bear it with patience and respond: 'I forgo all other purposes except that which leads me to You.'

The hand of [divine] Giving is mighty in scope and enormously powerful: It is called upon and It calls. Whoever takes from It and through It is blind to lowly intermediary causes, because he sees the attribute of abundant original divine apportioning. The gratitude of those who are grateful can only be due to the most capable Giver (*al-mu'tī al-qādir*). No good comes to you except from God.

This is followed by two of al-Balkhī's poems, in the same vein.

1.

Broken the chain of causation except for those causes
which make me intimate with You and no other
An orphan I am, and one that You have brought up as
an orphan.

Yet I know for certain that I am Yours and no orphan
How long are You going to chase after me with reward
and punishment,
when You already know I am Yours and no sinner?

2.

The command belongs to You since You have the choice,
being One who is all-Powerful and Willing,
and since I have the choice,
letting the whole matter belong to You
My secret heart is tied fast to Your love
seeking Your Good Pleasure –
why then does the heart go astray?

20. Reference to Q.7:143, where Moses asks to behold God and is told 'You shall not see Me' (*lan tarānī*).

Part 4: fol. 174a: an untitled note detailing an important transmission from the Prophet via Ibn ‘Arabī. This is commonly known as ‘the *Ḥadīth* of the Intertwining of Fingers’ (*ḥadīth al-mushābaka*). As this is discussed in greater detail by Samer Dajani in his article in this volume,²¹ I shall restrict myself to some observations here. The full translation of al-Farghānī’s text is as follows:

Our lord and master, our guide and the guide of all beings to God the Exalted, the shaykh, the imam, the man of knowledge and practice, the perfect and the perfecting one, the truly knowledgeable heir, leader of the leaders of the people of realisation, guide of the greatest of true knowers, the proof of God for creation and His greatest mystery on earth, Ṣadr al-milla wa-l-dīn, inheritor of the prophets and messengers, Abū al-Ma‘ālī Muḥammad b. Ishāq b. Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Yūsuf [al-Qūnawī], may God make his [enlivening] rain (*tall*) abundant, used to say: ‘I intertwined my fingers with the fingers of our lord and master, the greatest shaykh (*al-shaykh al-akbar*) and the grandest imam, Muḥyī al-milla wa-l-dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī b. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. al-‘Arabī al-Ṭā’ī al-Ḥātimī al-Andalusī, may God be pleased with him and give him satisfaction. The great shaykh (*al-shaykh al-kabīr*) intertwined his fingers with the fingers of Zakī al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Mas‘ūd b. Shaddād al-Muqrī al-Mawṣilī. Zakī intertwined his fingers with the fingers of Abū al-Ḥusayn ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Muqrī al-Ḥā’ik al-Bā-Jabbārī. Al-Ḥā’ik intertwined his fingers with the fingers of the trustworthy preacher, the righteous devotee, Abū al-Ḥusayn ‘Alī al-Bā’wizāwī, the preacher at Bājabbāra.’ Al-Bā’wizāwī said: ‘I had a dream of the Envoy of God, may God bless him and greet him with peace, in which he told me: “Intertwine [your fingers] with me. Whoever intertwines with me enters paradise. And whoever intertwines with one who intertwines with me enters paradise. And whoever intertwines with one who intertwines with one who intertwines with me enters paradise – and so on up to the seventh [link].”’ Al-Bā’wizāwī said: ‘So I intertwined my fingers with the Prophet’s fingers, and then I woke up.’

21. See Samer Dajani, ‘The Centrality of Ibn ‘Arabī in Popular *Ḥadīth* Chains’, in this volume.

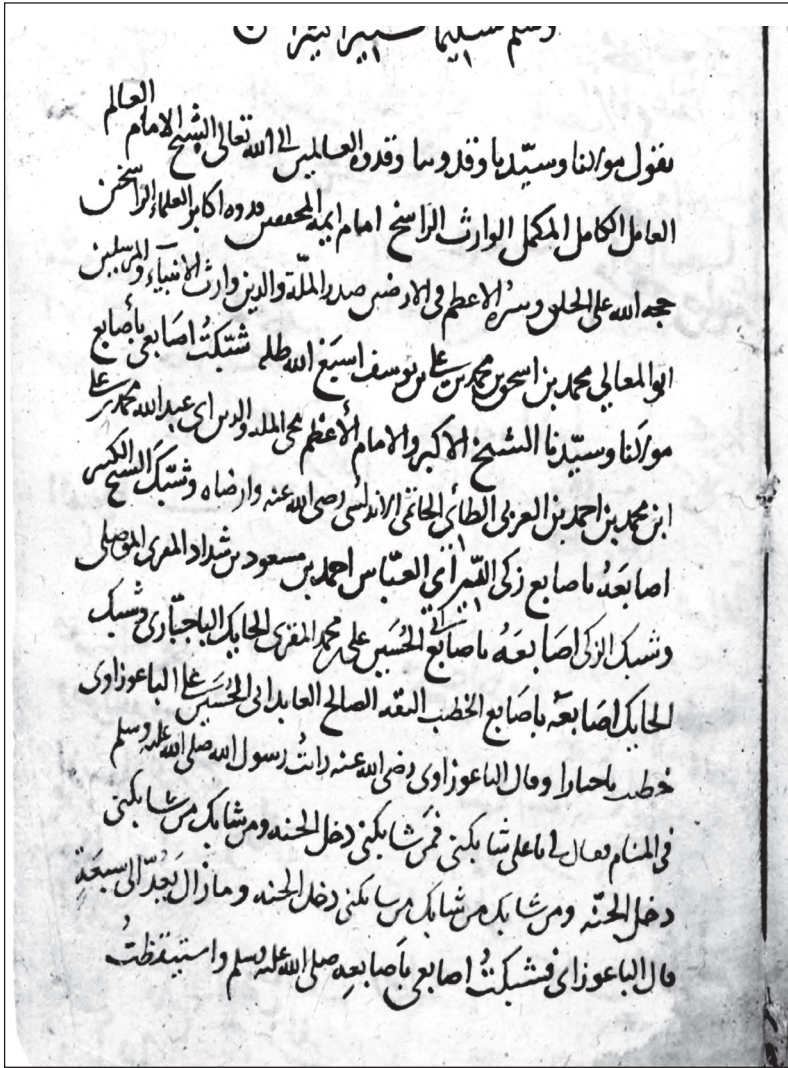


Fig. 3 The text of the *Hadith* of the Intertwining of Fingers (fol.174a)

There are several features of this account that are worthy of note. Firstly, the chain mentioned here is only five people in length, or possibly six if one includes al-Farghānī himself although there is no evidence that he actually received this initiation from al-Qūnawī. Ibn ‘Arabī’s name occurs in the middle, i.e. as the fourth link of a potential seven. This account is echoed in a version by al-Shāṭibī in his *al-Ifādāt wa-l-inshādāt*, where the same chain of transmission goes up to Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Alī al-Ḥātimī al-Ṭā’ī (= Ibn ‘Arabī) and then along a Maghribi line to Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Kinānī,²² who passed it to Abū Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Alī b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Kinānī (Sabta/Ceuta, Rajab 672H), who passed it to Abū Bakr b. ‘Umar al-Qurashī (Shawwāl 757H).²³

Secondly, we can observe an important Mosul connection in the link prior to Ibn ‘Arabī: Zakī al-Dīn Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad b. Mas‘ūd b. Shaddād al-Muqrī al-Mawṣilī. A member of a famous Mosul family, Ibn Shaddād was clearly a well-known Sufi shaykh and *muḥaddith* in Mosul at the time: he first appears in a *samā’* certificate for the reading of *Rūḥ al-quds* in Rabi‘ I 601/November 1204, when Ibn ‘Arabī arrived in Mosul on his way from Mecca to Anatolia;²⁴ Ibn Shaddād also reported a personal vision of the Prophet to Ibn ‘Arabī during his highly productive time in the

22. Possibly the son or other relation of ‘Abd Allāh al-Kinānī, the shaykh whom Ibn ‘Arabī visited in La Marsa near Tunis. For al-Kinānī, see *Rūḥ al-quds*, ed. Ahmed Abrar (Karachi, 2014), p. 182; R.W.J. Austin, *Sufis of Andalusia* (London, 1971), pp. 140–1.

23. See Dajani, this volume, p. 99. The version given by Ibn Khamīs, *Maṭāli‘ al-anwār wa-nuzhat al-baṣā’ir wa-l-abṣār* (Beirut, 1999), vol. 1, p. 243, under the entry on ‘Abd Allāh b. al-‘Azīm al-Zuhrī, appears to be corrupted since he speaks of Abū Bakr Muḥammad Ibn al-‘Arabī (the name of the celebrated *qāḍī* and *muḥaddith* who died in 543/1148), although the *nisba* is given as al-Ṭā’ī al-Ḥātimī (which can only refer to Muḥyī al-Dīn Ibn ‘Arabī). Ibn ‘Arabī is said to have taken it from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī b. Muḥammad al-Muqrī al-Ḥā’ik al-Bāhārī (sic), who took it from Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Bā-Ghawzāwī (sic), described as the preacher of Bāhār (in Iran).

24. University MS A79, fol. 103a. See also Leiden Or MS 86, fol. 1a, where Ibn Shaddād’s name is mentioned as part of a *samā’* on *al-Tadbīrāt al-ilāḥiyya* (dated 7 Ṣafar, year obscured, possibly 601H?).

city, in the course of which the latter also wrote major works such as *al-Qasam al-ilāhī* and *al-Tanazzulāt al-Mawṣiliyya*.²⁵ The close bond between the two men extended to the next generation: four volumes of the *Futūḥāt* were read in front of the author in his house in Damascus by Ibn Shaddād's daughter,²⁶ Umm Dalāl. In these *samā'* certificates, Ibn 'Arabī refers to Ibn Shaddād as 'our master' (*shaykhunā*). Umm Dalāl also recited the volume collecting all the poetic pieces in the *Futūḥāt*, entitled *Naẓm al-Futūḥ al-Makkī*, to the author and his wife in Dhū'l-Hijja 630/September 1233.²⁷

The transmission of a prophetic contact is also apparent in another event recorded by Ibn 'Arabī in the town of Mosul: in the *Futūḥāt* he explains that he met a disciple of the great master Abū 'Abd Allāh Qaḍīb al-Bān, named 'Alī b. 'Abd Allāh b. Jāmi', who in 601/1204 invested him with a cap in exactly the same manner in which he himself had been initiated by al-Khiḍr.²⁸ It was this formal ceremony which seems to have persuaded Ibn 'Arabī that spiritual grace could be transmitted in such a manner. Given that the intertwining of fingers was a physical act, he may have regarded the 'fingers' transmission by Ibn Shaddād in the same way, as he is reported to have conveyed it to at least two others, al-Qūnawī and al-Kinānī.

Finally, in al-Farghānī's account there is the remarkable mention of Ibn 'Arabī as both *al-shaykh al-akbar* ('the greatest master') and *al-shaykh al-kabīr* ('the great master'). As far as I am aware, this is the first time such epithets are definitely recorded for Ibn 'Arabī, showing that within the Konyan circle of his students he was already known as 'the greatest shaykh' *within*

25. *Fut.*IV.490. See also the story in *Muḥāḍarāt al-abrār* (Beirut, n.d.), vol. 2, p.419; and Addas, *Quest*, p.223.

26. Evkaf MSS 1846, fol.156b; 1848, fol.159a; 1850, fol.159b; and 1851, fol.158b (OY *samā'* nos. 21, 29, 34, 38) as given by Osman Yahia in *Histoire et Classification de l'Œuvre d'Ibn 'Arabī* (Damascus, 1964), vol. 1, pp.212–20. Note that Osman Yahia misread one of these entries as Umm Raslān, thereby creating another 'daughter' for Ibn Shaddād.

27. Ahmadiyya MS 774, fol.120a.

28. *Fut.*I.187. See Hirtenstein, *The Unlimited Mercifer* (Oxford, 1999), p.178; Addas, *Quest*, pp.145–6.

the lifetime of al-Qūnawī, and that it was apparently the latter who first used the term. At the same time, however, the use of both epithets together would seem to indicate that the title *al-shaykh al-akbar* was not yet in any way how Ibn ‘Arabī was commonly referred to by his followers: this was not taken up more widely as a ‘brand-name’ until over two centuries later, when his teachings were officially adopted by the Ottoman state in the time of Sultan Selim I.²⁹

[The fifth and final part of this manuscript will be discussed in Part II of this article]

29. See my article ‘Names and Titles of Ibn [al-]‘Arabī’, *JMIAS*, 41 (2007), pp. 109–29.