

THE IDEA OF *QURBĀ* IN EARLY SUFISM: A PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

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ملخص

تناقش هذه المقالة لفظة "القربة" في الفكر الصوفي وعلاقتها بمفهوم الولاية، وكثيرا ما تربط كلمة القربة في الأدبيات الصوفية بفكرة المحبة والشوق والأنس. وعلى وجه الخصوص تتناول هذه الكتابة أفكار ثلاثة رجال من كبار الصوفية بالبحث وهم الترمذى (ت ٩٠٥م) والنفارى؟ (ت ٩٦٥م) وابن عربي؟ (ت ١٢٤٠م). فرق الترمذى بين نوعين من الأولياء : ولي حق الله وولي الله، وقال إن أعلى ما يمكن لولى حق الله أن يبلغه من مقام هو مقام يعرف بمحل القربة ففي هذا المقام يتمكن الولى من تلقي نور القربة من الله حتى يبقى قادرا على الهيمنة على هواه. والنفارى يربط نظره في فكرة القربة بالمواقف التى سلكها كصوفى، ويرى أن موقف القربة يأتى فى مرتبة ثانية ولا يترقى إليه إلا الذين يزهدون عن الدنيا ويتعدون عن غروره. أما ابن عربى فعنده لا تنفصل فكرة القربة عن الولاية والنبوة، فإن مقام القربة يقع بين نبوة التشريع أى مقام الأنبياء الذين جاءوا بالتشريع وبين الصديقين أى مقام الصديقين، وفى هذا المقام (أى محل القربة) يتأتى لأحد أن يلتقى مباشرة مع الملائكة المقدسين.

Abstrak

Makalah ini membahas pemikiran para sufi mengenai terminologi *qurbā* (kedekatan) dalam kaitannya dengan wacana *walāya* (ke-wali-an). Dalam literatur sufi kata-kata *qurbā* sering dihubungkan dengan ide mengenai cinta

(*mahabba*), rindu (*shauq*), dan keintiman (*uns*). Secara spesifik makalah ini mengangkat pemikiran tiga orang sufi besar, yaitu al-Tirmidhī (w. 905), al-Niffari (w. 965) dan Ibn al-'Arabi (w.1240). Al-Tirmidhī setelah membedakan dua jenis wali; *wali haqq Allah* dan *wali Allah*, mengatakan bahwa tahapan tertinggi yang dapat dicapai oleh seorang wali haqq Allah adalah maqam yang disebut *maḥall al-qurbā*, tempat kedekatan. Pada posisi tersebut seorang wali dapat menerima pancaran *nur al-qurbā* dari Allah, sehingga ia tetap dapat mengontrol hawa nafsunya.

Al-Niffari menghubungkan pendapatnya mengenai ide *qurbā* ini dengan fase-fase pemberhentian (*mawāqib*) yang ia lalui sebagai seorang sufi. Menurutnya *mawqib qurbā* ada pada urutan kedua, dan hanya dapat dicapai oleh mereka yang selalu menjauhkan diri dari godaan dunia (*zuhd*).

Sedangkan Ibn al-'Arabī, pemikiran mengenai *qurbā* ini tidak dapat dipisahkan dengan *walāya* (kewalian) dan *nubuwwa* (kenabian). *Maqām qurbā* menurutnya terletak di antara kedudukan para nabi pembawa shari'at (*nubuwwat al-tashri'*) dan para pembenar nabi yang pernah iman (*ṣiddīqīya*). Di tempat kedekatan ini (*maḥall al-qurbā*), seseorang dapat bertemu secara langsung dengan malaikat yang suci.

The notion of *qurb* or *qurbā* (nearness, closeness, proximity) is central in the mystical works of early ṣūfis as well as in the lives of the ṣūfis themselves. The root of the word is *q-r-b*, which means "to be near". From this root, other words such as *qarīb* (near) and *muqarrabūn* (those who are near) are derived. In mystical discourse, the word *qurb* or *qurba* is particularly used to indicate the station (*maqām*, pl. *maqāmāt*)¹ of the ṣūfis or walīs in terms of their relationship with God. Accordingly, the idea of *qurba* corresponds closely with the notion of *walī* (saint) and *walāya* (sainthood) in Islamic mysticism.² The term *walī*, which is derived from the root *w-l-y*, can mean "to be close to," and to be close to someone means to be his friend.³

The words described above as deriving from *q-r-b*, occur several times in different places and in different contexts in the Qur'ān. However, not all of those words have an immediate significance with regards to mystical issues. Only a few are ever referred to by the mystics when they discuss the notion of *qurb*. The ṣūfi writers often quote texts from the Qur'ān such as: "But bow down in adoration, and bring yourself the closer to God (*wa-sjud wa-qtarib*);"⁴ "When my servants ask you concerning me, I am indeed close (*qarīb*);"⁵ "We are nearer to him than you, but you do not perceive;"⁶ and "But we created

man, and we know what his soul whispers, for we are nearer to him than his jugular vein".⁷

In the mystical vocabulary, the word *qurb* is generally defined in its literal sense as undertaking the acts of obedience (*tā'ā*),⁸ and in a somewhat broader sense as the proximity (nearness) of the servant to God with all of the felicity given by Him.⁹ This word frequently appears together with such others as *uns* (intimacy), *shawq* (longing), and *mahabba* (love),¹⁰ signifying one of the mystical states or stations which the *ṣūfis* experience before reaching or attaining the highest degree of friendship with God. The station of *qurba* is even considered by some *ṣūfis* to be the highest mystical station. Of course, different *ṣūfis* use different hierarchical orders and different mystical expressions, based on their own experiences.

This paper attempts to survey the significance of the notion of *qurba* and its relations to the theory of *walāya* in early Islamic mysticism with particular references to the thought of three major figures in sufism: namely, al-Tirmidhī (d.905), al-Niffarī (d.965), and Ibn al-'Arabī (d.1240). These three figures played important roles in the history of sufism, with each contributing to the development of sufi thought in his own way. al-Tirmidhī is credited with being the first writer to introduce the theory of *walāya* into sufism; indeed as Bernd Radtke states, al-Tirmidhī was Ibn al-'Arabī's precursor in the theory of sainthood.¹¹ Ibn al-'Arabī effectively developed some terms and ideas which had already been established by al-Tirmidhī. Moreover, Ibn al-'Arabī also dedicates some chapters in his *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīya* to answering al-Tirmidhī's questions. This constitutes an excellent example of the continuity in the evolution of mystical thought, and particularly the concept of *walāya*. In the same manner, Ibn al-'Arabī admits the significance of al-Niffarī's mystical ideas, an indication perhaps that he might have been inspired by the writings of the latter.¹²

Qurbā in *Ṣūfī* Works

Many writers of mystical works have given considerable attention to the notion of *qurb* or *qurba*. Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d.988), in his *Kitāb al-Luma' fī al-Taṣawwuf*, distinguishes the state of *qurb* as one of ten mystical states (*aḥwāl*).¹³ In his view, to attain the state of *qurb*, i.e. the sense of God's nearness, one has to practice *murāqaba* (meditation or concentration). Moreover, al-Sarrāj asserts that the state of nearness belongs to one who contemplates God's nearness to him, and seeks to draw near to God as well as to obey His commands, concentrating his thoughts through the medium of virtuous deeds and consistent remembrance of God (*dhikr*).¹⁴ In addition, al-Sarrāj classifies the *mutaqarribūn* (people of nearness) into three categories or

classes. The first category includes those whose endeavors to draw near to God are inspired by their knowledge that God is all-knowing, and that God is close to them and dominates them. However, this group is considered as still remaining on the level of *mujāhada* (effort). The second category is comprised of the people of proximity (*qarībīn*) who see God as being nearer to the thing which they see than they are themselves. The third, and the highest, class consists of those whose nearness to God causes them to be no longer conscious of their nearness to God.¹⁵

Interestingly, some *ṣūfi* writers also relate the state of *qurb* with the notion of love (*maḥabba*). Abū al-Husyan al-Nūrī (d. 907), for example, maintains that real proximity to God (*qurb*) can be attained by the seeker when he is at the level of pure love. In this state, there occurs a private intimacy between the lover (*ṣūfi*) and the beloved (God), and the heart of the lover experiences a vision of the beloved.¹⁶ As such, the *ṣūfi*'s completion of proximity (*qurb*) to, and his communion (*uns*) with, God are dependent upon the progress of his soul on the path of love. al-Nūrī, therefore, considers love as the only link between a *ṣūfi* and his God, yet love often has the effect of transforming the attributes of the lover (*ṣūfi*) into those of the beloved (God).¹⁷ The *ṣūfi* who is close to God and arrives at the stage of love is described in the *ḥadīth qudsī* where God states: "When I love him, I will be his eye by which he sees and his ear by which he hears and his hand by which he reaches out."

Another *ṣūfi* writer, Abū Bakr Muḥammad al-Kalābādhi (d.1000), in his *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf li-Madhhab Ahl al-Taṣawwuf* devotes one section to explaining the doctrine of nearness.¹⁸ From al-Kalābādhi's standpoint, nearness could be attained by the act of concentrating on God and turning away from everything other than God.¹⁹ Quoting the sayings of different *ṣūfis*, al-Kalābādhi asserts that *qurb* is the act of abolishing every barrier which exists between oneself and God. *Qurb* also means that one witnesses what God has done for him. In other words, one sees God's actions and generosity, and consequently becomes less conscious of his own acts and endeavors.²⁰ A *ṣūfi* of the twelfth century, al-Qushayrī, maintains that the first rank of nearness is obedience to God and the performance of His commands. A later *ṣūfi* like 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī (d.1330) defines the term *qurb*, in his *Iṣtilāḥāt al-Ṣūfiya*, as an expression of the accomplishment of the covenant which had been set in primordial time between God and His servant, as mentioned in the Qur'an: *a-lastu bi rabbikum qālū balā*. al-Kāshānī also describes *qurb* as a station of "two bow's distance" (*qāba qawsayn*).²¹

Qurbā and *Walāya* in the thought of three *Ṣūfīs al-Tirmidhī*

As has been stated, al-Tirmidhī can be regarded as having been the first writer to develop the theory of *walāya* (sainthood),²² and, as such, was "the reputed founder of the *Ṣūfī* doctrine of *walāya*."²³ Therefore, the discussion on the idea of *qurba* from al-Tirmidhī's viewpoint cannot be separated from the discussion on his theory of sainthood. In fact, he mentions the word *qurba* in several places in his *Kitāb Sirat [Khatm] al-Awliyā'* in respect to the notion of *walāya*. al-Tirmidhī uses a number of different phrases, such as *maḥall*, *makān*, *manāzil* (place), *rawḥ*, *nūr*, *anwār* (light), in genitive constructions with the word *qurba*.²⁴ Although al-Tirmidhī did not adopt a particular stance on this point, we can still relate his use of the term *qurba* to the whole notion of *walāya* which he introduced to sufism.

In his book, al-Tirmidhī classifies sainthood into two basic types. The first type is general sainthood which constitutes belief in one God (*al-tawḥīd*), and is, therefore, a form of sainthood to which all believers can aspire. The second type is particular sainthood which consists of spiritual persons who have an intimate relationship and engage in conversation with God.²⁵

Moreover, al-Tirmidhī introduces two types of *walī*: namely the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* and the *walī Allāh*.²⁶ The first type is someone who is close to God because of *ḥaqq*, or obligation. In other words, he is a friend of God because he is willing to accomplish his *ḥaqq* toward God, or to live in accordance with the commands of God. From al-Tirmidhī's viewpoint, the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* is a man who has woken up from his intoxication, and who has turned to God in repentance. In addition, the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* is a man who carries out the necessary religious obligations, and is mindful of penalties for wrongdoing.²⁷

The *walī Allāh*, however, in al-Tirmidhī's view, is a man who stands immovable in his station and who lives according to the conditions set by God. This *walī* observes strict truthfulness while journeying towards God, practices the prescribed religious duties, and is aware of the consequences of breaking the law. He also remains in his station until he becomes upright. al-Tirmidhī then mentions ten qualities of the *walī Allāh*. The *walī Allāh* is refined (*hudhḥiba*), educated (*uddiba*), purified (*nuqqiya*), cleansed (*tuhhira*), rendered sweet smelling (*tuyyiba*), broadened (*wussi'a*), developed (*rubbiya*), nourished (*ghudhḥiya*), promoted (*shujji'a*), and made accustomed (*'uwwida*). The friendship of this *walī* with God is thus brought to perfection through these ten qualities.²⁸ As such, the *walī Allāh* attains to God himself not through his own endeavors, but rather by divine grace (*rahma*).

In al-Tirmidhī's thought, the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* achieves a closer relationship with God by performing his duties towards Him. But, although the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* approaches near to God, he does not actually reach God

himself. Therefore, the station of the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* is what al-Tirmidhī calls the place of nearness (*mahall al-qurba*). al-Tirmidhī asserts that the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* is commanded to stay in his rank of nearness of God in order to receive the light of proximity (*nūr al-qurba*) which will burn the desire of the soul from his breast until he becomes one of those chosen by God. He will be guided by the truth, and if he successfully remains in his position, and is not deceived by his carnal soul (*nafs*), he will redeem his pledge to God.²⁹

Al-Tirmidhī implies that *qurba* is one of the steps which is experienced by the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* in his spiritual journey to God. In one passage al-Tirmidhī describes how the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* for whom God has opened a path towards Him receives the refreshing breeze of divine closeness (*rawḥ al-qurba*) from his Lord. First of all, when the path to God is opened for the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* and the light shines in his breast, he attains the refreshing breeze of the path (*rawḥ al-tariq*) and finds the strength to repudiate lusts. His rejection of and isolation from passion increases, and the refreshing breeze (*rawḥ*) grows because every time he rejects something, he receives the *rawḥ al-qurba*, increasing his strength and enabling him to reject passion, until he becomes more intelligent and qualified in journeying to God.³⁰

It seems that al-Tirmidhī regards the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* as a traveler to God (*sā'ir ilā Allāh*). He distinguishes between two types of *sā'ir*. The first is the one who, when he finds the *rawḥ al-qurba*, assumes that he has attained complete nearness, so that he may enjoy the desires of the carnal soul, when in fact he has not. The second is the one who has traveled a short distance on the path, but who then turns aside towards religious practices (*tā'a*), and takes pleasure in them to such an extent that these practices are reduced to mere outward worship.³¹ al-Tirmidhī calls such a person the *ṣādiq* who receives divine mercy (*rahma*) from God. His heart is led away from the place where his sincerity had become perplexed, and he comes to stand in a position of closeness to the Possessor of the Throne. Now he experiences the breeze of divine closeness and its aromatic air, and enjoys its vast expanse. These are the wide courtyards of God's Oneness.³²

Furthermore, in describing the *walī ḥaqq Allāh*, al-Tirmidhī uses different names such as *ṣādiqūn* (the righteous) and *kirām* (the noble),³³ although he also differentiates between their positions. The *ṣādiqūn*, in al-Tirmidhī's view, are placed in the lowest heaven in the house of Glory (*bayt al-'izza*), while the *kirām* are placed in the well-appointed house (*al-bayt al-ma'mūr*) within the loftiest regions (*'illiyūn*). Both *ṣādiqūn* and *kirām* are all friends of what is due unto God (*walī ḥaqq Allāh*). They reside in their ranks, breathe the *rawḥ al-qurba*, and enjoy living in the expanse of God's Oneness. They have emerged from slavery to the carnal soul.³⁴ Moreover, al-Tirmidhī speaks of the light of divine closeness (*nūr* or *anwār al-qurba*). He states that

the *wali haqq Allāh* is able to liberate himself from the desire of the carnal soul, since he receives the light of closeness which alights upon him and reduces the desires of his soul to ashes.³⁵ At that time, he becomes one of the few chosen by God as suitable for Him.

Clearly al-Tirmidhī regards the place of closeness as a transient station. He does not put it at the highest level. Despite the fact that the *wali haqq Allāh* has arrived at the *mahall al-qurba*, the desire of his carnal soul (*shahawāt*) still remains in his heart, and the *wali haqq Allāh* still contaminates his works with love of praise from the people. Answering a question concerning the quality of the *wali haqq Allāh*, al-Tirmidhī states

The one who has arrived at the place of divine closeness is accorded a residence, and there he resides with his heart, though his carnal soul and its remaining faults are still with him. Indeed, he is compelled to adhere to his rank because if he undertakes a particular work of piety with his carnal soul, he will contaminate the work with passion, love of praise from the people and fear of losing his standing. Thus his works are not free of self-aggrandizement and hypocrisy, on however small a scale. Now can an intelligent person expect that his heart will be left to reside in the place of divine closeness, if he allows his heart to contain the impurities of hypocrisy and self-aggrandizement?³⁶

As has been said, al-Tirmidhī explains the qualities and grades of the *wali haqq Allāh*: *sā'ir*, *wāṣil*, *ṣādiq*, *aḥrār*, *kirām*, and so on. However, they have this in common that they have received the clemency of God, and have been chosen in a unique way. God himself has prepared them to obtain his knowledge and has shed light upon them until their souls were purified as metal is purified by fire. When they have reached the state of purity, God exalts them to the highest place and gives them His wisdom (*ḥikma*). They are guided from the gloominess of the soul into the light of nearness (*qurba*) and then from the light of nearness into His light.³⁷ Therefore, al-Tirmidhī also often states that the *wali haqq Allāh* is the *wali Allāh*, because God has taken it upon Himself to adopt him and convey him to the place of divine closeness (*mahall al-qurba*).³⁸

In addition to the use of the term *qurba*, al-Tirmidhī also mentions, albeit infrequently, the term *muqarrabūn* in his treatise. He argues that the *muqarrabūn* are the *awliya' Allāh*,³⁹ and that they will enjoy felicity in paradise. He also calls the *muqarrabūn* the people of the loftiest regions (*ahl 'illiyīn*), or the people of upper-floor chambers (*ahl al-ghuraḥ*), those who have been made close to God.⁴⁰ Here, al-Tirmidhī quotes the Quranic verses: "The servants of the Compassionate who walk humbly on the earth."⁴¹ and "These people shall be rewarded with the upper-floor chamber because they have been patient." Furthermore, the Prophet is also reported to have said that the *ahl al-*

ghuraf will appear in the highest ranks of paradise like a bright star that appears on the horizon.⁴²

A-Niffarī

Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbār al-Niffarī, commonly known as al-Niffarī, was an eminent saint (*walī*) and a renowned spiritual master (*shaykh*) of his age,⁴³ but little is known about his life.⁴⁴ However, he made a truly great contribution to sufism, a contribution which lies primarily in his teachings on the renunciation of the world (*zuhd*) and communion with God.⁴⁵ Although al-Niffarī does not propound a particular idea of sainthood, his mystical thought certainly reflects his close friendship (*walāya*) with God. His teachings can be discerned in his mystical work entitled *Kitāb al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, which seems to have been a reflection of his mystical experiences.

Al-Niffarī’s work seems to consist of imaginary visions that are written as a series of divine inspirations. The *Kitāb al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, is arranged into seventy-seven stopping places (*mawāqif*) and fifty-six addresses (*mukhāṭabāt*).⁴⁶ The work comprises esoteric allusions and enigmatic words inspired by the author’s speculation and reason. Since the relation between the creature and the Creator (God) or material and spiritual forms the central motif of al-Niffarī’s writings, Bruce Lawrence observes that his mystical thought seems to have been intensely influenced by neo-Platonic (*ishrāqī*) ideas as well as Islamic philosophical speculation.⁴⁷

In his elaboration of the *mawāqif* al-Niffarī states the fact that he was addressed by God who inspired him to record His words either during or after this peculiar experience. al-Niffarī’s work, therefore, can be considered as representative of Muḥammad’s spiritual experience. Through such conversations, mystics become the friends of God. Conversation of this type are not unknown to later ṣūfis as well who frequently affirm that God had spoken to them.⁴⁸ And, as we perceive, al-Niffarī constantly begins each *mawqif* with the phrase: “He stayed me in [...], and said to me (*awqafānī fī [...]* *wa qāla lī* ...). Accordingly, al-Niffarī’s composition seems to indicate that he experienced an imminent relationship and direct conversation with God. However, it is not clear enough whether he arranges these *mawāqif* hierarchically to indicate the mystical stages through which mystics must pass, as other mystics categorize them.

Regardless of this lack of clarity, al-Niffarī, in his *Kitāb al-Mawāqif*, evidently puts *al-qurb* in the second *mawqif*.⁴⁹ We can also observe his statements on the idea of *qurb* dispersed in different passages, which can be regarded as an illustration of his personal experiences. The *mawqif al-qurb* basically deals with the mystical experience of nearness to God.⁵⁰ al-Niffarī

begins this *mawqif* by saying, "He stayed me in nearness, and said to me, Nothing is nearer to Me than any other thing, and nothing is farther from Me than any other thing, except insofar as I establish it in nearness and farness."⁵¹ According to al-Niffarī, the most important practice that marks the spiritual journey of the mystic to God is the renunciation of the world (*zuhd*). God loves only those who are not concerned with anything else. God says: "You have renounced all things because of what I have revealed to you, so that you are Mine and nothing separates you from me, and you cleave to Me alone, and this is the description of those who are my friends, the saints (*wali*), so know that you are one of them."⁵²

al-Niffarī also seems to emphasize the recollection of God (*dhikr*) because it leads to the transformation of human attributes into divine qualities. Although divine knowledge goes beyond and transcends all thoughts and symbols, yet genuine contemplation by the mystic can lead him to perceive the ultimate truth. In this respect, the worshipper annihilates himself completely in his remembrance of God and thus accomplishes the real state of proximity to God (*qurb*). In this state, the veil between the *ṣūfi* and God is removed; then God gives them divine inspiration.⁵³

Observing al-Niffarī's notion of *qurb* more closely, one will eventually arrive at the conclusion that al-Niffarī places the *mawqif al-qurb* in a strong relationship with the idea of renunciation of the world (*zuhd*), remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and intimacy (*uns*) with God. This implies that al-Niffarī relates these notions to the idea of *walāya*, though he does not introduce it in a definite manner.

In one passage, al-Niffarī separates the *awliyā' Allāh* into three categories. The first is that of the worshipper (*wāqif bi-'ibāda*). To this worshipper God makes Himself known through generosity (*karam*). This implies that the *wāqif* worships God because he has an expectation of entering paradise or of being given spiritual recompense such as dreams or miracles. The second category is that of the philosopher (*wāqif bi-'ilm*) to whom God makes Himself known by glory (*'izza*). In other words, those in this category can never find the God who is glorious whom they seek, for which reason they maintain that God's essence is inconceivable. The third is that of the gnostic (*wāqif bi-ma'rifa*) to whom God makes Himself known by means of ecstasy (*ghalaba*).⁵⁴ This type of *wāqif* becomes possessed and controlled by a rapture that makes him no longer conscious of his individual existence. In this respect, al-Niffarī seems to enjoin the gnostic to perform only such acts of worship as may be in accordance with the vision of God, even though in so doing he may possibly transgress the religious law which has been fabricated for common people.

In his work, al-Niffarī also deals with the conduct of the saints (*adab al-awliyā*). He maintains that the word would never understand the *walī*, neither would the change of word. It is only God who understands the *walī*, because He has created for the *walī* the knowledge of Him beyond every creature.⁵⁵ The station (*maqām*) of the *walī*, according to al-Niffarī, is between God and everything else, and there is no veil between the *walī* and God.⁵⁶ The *walī* is called a *walī* because his heart is closer to (*yālī*) God than to any other thing, and the *walī* is effectively God's abode through which He speaks.⁵⁷

It is noteworthy that al-Niffarī expresses the idea of *qurb* in conjunction with that of *bu'd* (farness). From his point of view, people can perceive farness by means of nearness, and people can arrive at the state of nearness by means of spiritual experience.⁵⁸ al-Niffarī also states the relates another message that God delivered to him, i.e., that God is he "whom nearness does not seek, and whom spiritual experience does not attain."⁵⁹ He goes on to state that the nearness which is known by a human, compared with the nearness that God knows, is as human gnosis compared with God's gnosis,⁶⁰ and "whoever contemplates God certainly does not recollect, and whoever recollects God certainly does not contemplate."⁶¹

For the mystics (*ṣūfis*), it is commonly known that God is the Near (*qarīb*), and that *qarīb* is one of God's divine attributes. Therefore, from al-Niffarī's perspective, God's nearness to his servant is not the same as the nearness of one thing to another, nor is God's farness from his servant.⁶² In al-Niffarī's thought, God's nearness cannot be known by the gnosis of the gnostics, just as God's farness cannot be attained by the sciences of the scientist.⁶³ Moreover, he states, "the least of the sciences of my nearness is that you should see the effects of my regard in everything, and that it should prevail in you over your gnosis of it."⁶⁴ The nearness of God to his servant is illustrated in his statement that He is "nearer to the tongue than its speech when it speaks."⁶⁵

After all, al-Niffarī had undoubtedly introduced, if not perfected the language of sufism. He also made use of symbols to express mystical experiences, and developed a mystical language that abridges human experiences with their transcendent reference, namely God.⁶⁶ Through symbols, a mystic becomes familiar with God who inspires him divine revelation in the language of human being without compromising his transcendence.

Ibn al-'Arabī

Basically, Ibn al-'Arabī's theory of *walāya* and *nubūwa* is a further exposition of the theory of *walāya* established by his predecessor, al-Tirmidhī⁶⁷ Therefore, it could be considered as a more complex version of al-Tirmidhī's

thought on the subject. In his *al-Futūḥāt*, Ibn al-‘Arabī also develops the notion of *qurba*,⁶⁸ or more precisely that of *maqām al-qurba* which has a strong relationship with the ideas of *walāya* and *nubuwwa*. He also gives answer to al-Tirmidhī’s question presented in *Kitāb Sīrat [Khatm] al-Awliyā’*: “and where are the halting stations of the people of divine closeness (*ayna manāzil ahl al-qurba*)?”⁶⁹

Therefore, it will be more convenient first to discuss briefly Ibn al-‘Arabī’s thought on *nubuwwa* and *walāya* in order to have a clear perception of his idea of *maqām al-qurba*. Ibn al-‘Arabī maintains that *nubuwwa* is of two types: law-giving or legislative prophethood (*nubuwwat al-tashrī’*), and general prophethood (*nubuwwa ‘amma*).⁷⁰ The first type is also called by Ibn al-‘Arabī special prophethood (*nubuwwa khāṣṣa*), while the second type is called sainthood (*walāya*).⁷¹

According to Ibn al-‘Arabī, legislative prophethood was completed in the prophethood of Muḥammad, in the sense that there will be no law-giving prophethood after Muḥammad, and there will be no other revealed law (*sharī‘a*) accordingly. This kind of prophethood is implied in the saying of the Prophet: “There shall be no prophet after me.”⁷² By contrast, general prophethood, according to Ibn al-‘Arabī, is neither blocked nor terminated. In this classification, Ibn al-‘Arabī, seems to include Jesus, who will come at the end of time to be the seal of the sainthood (*khātim al-walāya*).⁷³

More interestingly, like al-Tirmidhī, Ibn al-‘Arabī categorizes the saints (*awliyā’*) in a hierarchical order. However, his classification appears at first glance to be much more complicated and extensive than al-Tirmidhī’s. First, Ibn al-‘Arabī divides the saints into different classes and assigns different names. There are saints whose number is the same at any given time, and there are saints whose number varies according to the ages. According to him, the number of the saints who belong to the first category is five hundred and eighty-nine, divided into thirty-five classes, beginning with the one known as *qutb* (whom Ibn al-‘Arabī also calls *ghawth*),⁷⁴ followed by the two *imāms*,⁷⁵ the four *awtād* (pegs),⁷⁶ and the seven *abdāl* (substitutes),⁷⁷ *nuqabā’*, *nujabā’*, and so on.⁷⁸ This complex hierarchy can also be found in Ibn al-‘Arabī’s description of different types of *awliyā’* such as the *nabīyūn*, the *siddiqūn*, the *shuhadā’*, the *ṣalīhūn* and others.⁷⁹

In this connection, Ibn al-‘Arabī speaks of the *maqām al-qurba*. From his point of view, the station of proximity (*maqām al-qurba*) is between *ṣiddiqīya* and *nubuwwat al-tashrī’*.⁸⁰ He also speaks of the station of nearness in his response to al-Tirmidhī’s question in *Kitāb Sīrat [Khatm] al-Awliyā’* concerning the stations (*manāzil*) of the *ahl al-qurba*. In the same manner, Ibn al-‘Arabī asserts that their station (*maqām*) is between *ṣiddiqīya* and *nubuwwat*

al-tashrīf (legislative prophethood), or more precisely their station is below legislative prophethood, but above *ṣiddīqīya*.⁸¹

Ibn al-'Arabī also designates *maqām al-qurba* as the station for the *muqarrabūn* and *afṛād*.⁸² The *afṛād* are the *muqarrabūn*, and their station is that of the *nubūwa muṭlaqa*, which is, as Ibn al-'Arabī's vocabulary designates, the same as the *maqām al-qurba*, the station of proximity. This is why the *afṛād* are also called *muqarrabūn*.⁸³ In this station, a human being meets with the highest angel. Ibn al-'Arabī defines the term *afṛād* as including those who are outside the hierarchy governed by the *qutb* (pole). The *qutb* does not have any control over them. The *afṛād* receive inner knowledge (*al-'ilm al-bāṭin*) from the presence of proximity (*ḥaḍrat al-qurba*).⁸⁴

In his discussion of the station of proximity (*maqām al-qurba*) Ibn al-'Arabī refers to the people of this station as the *malāmīya*. For him, the *malāmīya* are people who have arrived at the highest stage of sainthood.⁸⁵ It is to be noted however that Ibn al-'Arabī did not equate these people with certain ascetics who were also called *malāmīya*, whose external behavior often invited the criticism (blame, *malām*) of other people, and who at the same time kept a secret ascetic discipline among themselves in their solitude.⁸⁶ This notion of *malāmīya* (sometimes *malāmatīya*) initially seems to have been introduced into the vocabulary of sufism by Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī (d.1021). The latter defines the people of *malāmīya* as those whose inner secret life (*bawāṭin*) God has blessed with various miracles, such as closeness (*zulfā*), nearness (*qurba*), intimacy (*uns*), and union (*ittiṣāl*). This station, according to al-Sulamī, is similar to that of the Prophet when he ascended to the highest rank of nearness, i.e., the station of *qāba qawsayn*.⁸⁷

As has been stated earlier, the *muqarrabūn* are placed between the law-giving prophet and the *ṣiddīqūn* who believe in the words of the Prophet and acquire the knowledge of *tawḥīd* which is brought by that prophet. Ibn al-'Arabī is careful to distinguish between the *muqarrabūn* and the *ṣiddīqūn*. On the one hand, the *ṣiddīqūn*, he suggests, do not obtain direct revelation from God, but believe in the prophetic message through the light of faith (*nūr al-īmān*).⁸⁸ The *ṣiddīqūn* are those who carefully convey the words of God, believe in them, and, consequently, arrive at the knowledge of God by way of faith.

The *muqarrabūn*, on the other hand, acquire the knowledge of *tawḥīd* directly from God, and are guided by the light of knowledge (*nūr al-'ilm*).⁸⁹ Therefore, their knowledge of God is not dependent upon the teachings of the prophets, and in this respect, they (the *muqarrabūn*) correspond to the saints in general. Ibn al-'Arabī also calls their station "the station of absolute prophethood" (*maqām al-nubuwwa al-muṭlaqa*) or "the station of general prophethood" (*maqām al-nubuwwa al-'amma*).⁹⁰ Hence, quoting the Qur'anic verse, "God witnesses that there is no God but He, and so do the angels and

those who possess knowledge,"⁹¹ Ibn al-'Arabī implies that knowledge (*'ilm*) is superior to faith (*īmān*).

As far as his own spiritual experiences were concerned, Ibn al-'Arabī states that he reached the station of nearness to God (*maqām al-qurba*) in the month of Muḥarram 596 A.H, when he was traveling in a place called Abjisa in the Maghrib.⁹² For him, this station represented the highest spiritual station that one who is not a prophet can achieve. Ibn al-'Arabī reports that he found himself alone in the station and felt a dreadful loneliness, and in this state, he saw the spirit of Abū 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī manifest itself to him.⁹³ In his opinion, however, to reach this station does not imply that one has to escape from the world of everyday experience.

In Ibn al-'Arabī's view, the *walī* will be in a position to arrive at the station of nearness (*maqām al-qurba*) when he is able to counteract the inducement to stop at each sequential stage of his journey. What is prohibited for him, ever since the disappearance of the seal of Muḥammadan sainthood, is to sojourn in the central position, a position which is reserved only for those who are the heirs of Muḥammad in the real sense.

Concluding Remarks

Despite the fact that the three ṣūfī writers discussed above express the notion of *walāya* and *qurb* differently, they share a common view that the *walī* occupies a special place in relation to God, and that *qurb* or *qurba* is one of the mystical stations through which the *walī* must pass. al-Niffarī puts *qurb* in the second *mawqif* although this does not necessarily mean that *qurb* is the second mystical stage or rank, in connection with other *mawāqif*. al-Niffarī relates *qurb* with the idea of remembrance of God (*dhikr*) and renunciation of the world, and indirectly with the idea of *walāya*. He furthermore postulates that the *walī* who has attained his *maqām al-walāya* will be able to converse with God directly because the veil between him and God will have been removed.

al-Tirmidhī places the *maḥall al-qurba* at the second rank in his scheme of *walāya*. This *maḥall* is assigned by al-Tirmidhī to those called the *walī ḥaqq Allāh*. This implies that the *maḥall al-qurba* is a temporary place before the *walī ḥaqq Allāh* attains, or is given, the ten qualities of *walāya* which will transform him into the *walī Allāh*. However, although al-Tirmidhī distinguishes between these two types of *walī*, he often states that both are the same. They are the *muqarrabūn* or *awliyā' Allāh*.

Meanwhile, despite the fact that his classification of the *walī* is much more sophisticated, Ibn al-'Arabī states that the *maqām al-qurba* is the highest position which can be achieved by the *walī*. He places this *maqām* between the *ṣiddīqiya* and the *nubuwwat al-tashrī'*. This station is also designated for the

muqarrabūn, the *afṛād*, and the people who are called the *malāmīya*, the last-named to be understood in a manner different from its traditional usage.

ENDNOTES

*Tenaga Pengajar Fakultas Ushuluddin IAIN Sunan Ampel, Surabaya.

¹In addition to *maqām*, some ṣūfī writers use the words *ḥāl* (pl. *aḥwāl*) or *manzil* (pl. *manāzil*). The *maqāmat*, *aḥwāl*, and *manāzil* are the stations, states or places through which the seekers (*sālikūn*) must pass in their endeavor to reach perfection and in their effort to prepare themselves for the overflowing of mystical graces. However, according to al-Jurjānī, a mystic of the fourteenth century, in his *Kitāb al-Ta'rifāt*, the *maqām* is a permanent mystical station, not a temporary stage. al-Jurjānī, *Kitāb al-Ta'rifāt* (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnan, 1990), 244.

²Michel Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints: Prophethood and Sainthood in the Doctrine of Ibn 'Arabī* (Cambridge: The Islamic Texts Society, 1993), 26.

³Bernd Radtke, "A Forerunner of Ibn al-'Arabī: Ḥakīm Tirmidhī on Sainthood," *Journal of the Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī Society* 8 (1989), 43.

⁴Qur'ān 96:19.

⁵Qur'ān 2:186.

⁶Qur'ān 56:85.

⁷Qur'ān 50:16.

⁸Anwar Fu'ād Abī Khuzām, *Mu'jam al-Muṣṭalahāt al-Ṣūfiya* (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnan, 1993), 141-142.

⁹al-Jurjānī, *al-Ta'rifāt*, 182.

¹⁰Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1975), 132.

¹¹Radtke, "A Forerunner of Ibn al-'Arabī: Ḥakīm Tirmidhī on Sainthood," 43.

¹²Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 80. See Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīya*, ed. 'Uthmān Yahyā (Cairo: al-Hay'a al-Miṣriya al-'Āmma li al-Kitāb, 1987), vol.4, 38; vol.6, 81-82; vol.9, 174.

¹³The ten mystical states in al-Sarrāj's view are: *murāqaba* (watching of one's own inner consciousness), *qurb* (realization of the nearness of God), *maḥabba* (love), *khawf* (fear), *raja'* (hope), *shawq* (longing, yearning), *'uns* (a state of intimacy with God), *iṭmi'nān* (a sense of security), *mushāhada* (contemplation), and *yaqīn* (certainty). al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma' fi al-Taṣawwuf*, ed. R.A. Nicholson (Leiden: Brill, 1914), 54-72; also Cyprian Rice, *The Persian Sufis* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1969), 56.

¹⁴al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-Luma'*, 56.

¹⁵al-Sarrāj, *al-Luma'*, 56-57.

¹⁶R.S. Bhatnagar, *Dimensions of Classical Sufi Thought* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984), 62.

¹⁷Bhatnagar, *Dimensions of Classical Sufi Thought*, 64.

¹⁸ al-Kalābādhi, *Kitāb al-Ta'arruf li-Madhhab Ahl al-Taṣawwuf* (Cairo: 'Isa al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1960), 107-108. See also the English version of this work entitled *The Doctrine of the Ṣūfīs*, tr. A.J. Arberry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1935), 99-101.

¹⁹ al-Kalābādhi, *al-Ta'arruf*, 108.

²⁰ al-Kalābādhi, *al-Ta'arruf*, 108.

²¹ Abd al-Razzāq al-Kāshānī, *Istīlāḥāt al-Ṣūfiya* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1984), 153.

²² Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 27. On the life of al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī, his writings and his position in Islamic intellectual history, see Radtke's "Introduction" in *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism: Two Works by al-Ḥakīm al-Tirmidhī*, an annotated translation by Bernd Radtke and John O'kane (London: Curzon Press, 1996), 1-11; Sara Sviri, "Ḥakīm Tirmidhī and the Malāmatī Movement in Early Sufism," in *Classical Persian Sufism: From Its Origins to Rumi*, 583-613.

²³ Hermann Landolt, "Walāya," in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion*, ed. Mircea Eliade, vol.15, 322.

²⁴ For example, see al-Tirmidhī, *Kitāb Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, ed. Bernd Radtke (Beirut: Dār al-Nashr, 1992), 5, 11, 15, 17, 18, 30, 31, 33, 35. There is also an earlier edition of this same work prepared by 'Uthmān Ismā'īl Yahyā with the title *Kitāb Khatm al-Awliyā'* (Beirut: al-Maṭba'at al-Kāthūlikiya, 1965).

²⁵ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, p.2; Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1993), 196; al-Geyoushi, "Al-Tirmidhī's Theory of Saints and Sainthood," *Islamic Quarterly* 15:1 (1971): 18.

²⁶ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 2.

²⁷ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 2; Radtke, "A Forerunner of Ibn al-'Arabī: Ḥakīm Tirmidhī on Sainthood," 44.

²⁸ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 33.

²⁹ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 18. Kathryn V. Johnson, "The Unerring Balance: A Study of the Theory of Sanctity (Walāyah) of 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rānī," Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1985, 14.

³⁰ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 4 and 5. al-Tirmidhī draws an interesting analogy between how the servant should act in order to attain nearness to his lord and the way an official acts in order to get closer to his chief (*amīr*). Arrival at the *maḥall al-qurba* is not achieved by building a physical thing such as a palace, but rather by obeying the commands of one's lord.

³¹ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 11.

³² al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 15.

³³ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 18.

³⁴ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 17, 18.

³⁵ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 17, 18.

³⁶ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 30; Radtke, *The Concept of Sainthood in Early Islamic Mysticism*, 88.

³⁷ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 35; al-Geyoushi, "Al-Tirmidhī's Theory of Saints and Sainthood," 21.

³⁸ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 33.

³⁹ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 384.

⁴⁰ al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 127.

⁴¹ Qur'ān 25:63.

⁴² al-Tirmidhī, *Sīrat al-Awliyā'*, 127.

⁴³ Bhatnagar, *Dimensions of Classical Sufi Thought*, 69.

⁴⁴ For a brief account of al-Niffarī's life, see A.J. Arberry's introduction to *Kitāb al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 1-6; A.J. Arberry, "al-Niffarī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new edition, vol.viii, 13; 'Abd al-Mun'im al-Ḥifnī, *al-Mawsū'at al-Ṣūfiyya* (Cairo: Dār al-Rashād, 1992), 391.

⁴⁵ Julian Baldick, *Mystical Islam: an Introduction to Sufism* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1989), 53-54.

⁴⁶ Bruce B. Lawrence, "An Indo-Persian Perspective on the Significance of Early Persian Sufi Masters," in *Classical Persian Sufism: From its Origins to Rumi*, ed. Leonard Lewisohn (London and New York: Khaniqahi Nimatullahi Publications, 1993), 39.

⁴⁷ Lawrence, "An Indo-Persian Perspective on the Significance of Early Persian Sufi Masters," 39.

⁴⁸ Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, 80-81.

⁴⁹ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁵⁰ Arberry, "Commentary," in *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 190.

⁵¹ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁵² al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 30.

⁵³ Bhatnagar, *Dimensions of Classical Sufi Thought*, 70.

⁵⁴ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 4; Reynold Nicholson, *The Mystics of Islam* (London: Arkana, 1989), 71.

⁵⁵ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 104.

⁵⁶ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 105.

⁵⁷ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 105.

⁵⁸ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁵⁹ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁶⁰ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁶¹ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁶² al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁶³ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 212.

⁶⁴ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁶⁵ al-Niffarī, *al-Mawāqif wa al-Mukhāṭabāt*, 2.

⁶⁶ Ira Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 113.

⁶⁷ Radtke, "A Forerunner of Ibn al-'Arabī: Ḥakīm Tirmidhī on Sainthood," 42.

⁶⁸ From Ibn al-'Arabī's point of view, man must seek nearness (*qurb*) to God, in respect of His merciful names, not His wrathful names, in order to achieve felicity. Ibn al-'Arabī makes this point while discussing the station of nearness, which, as a Sufi term, is usually defined as "undertaking acts of obedience." William Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, 151.

- ⁶⁹ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.12, 65.
- ⁷⁰ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 351.
- ⁷¹ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 391.
- ⁷² Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 351. Ibn al-'Arabī also states that whoever claims the office of legislative prophethood after the Prophet Muḥammad is a liar. *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 396.
- ⁷³ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.3, 174-175.
- ⁷⁴ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 274-5.
- ⁷⁵ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 275.
- ⁷⁶ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 276.
- ⁷⁷ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 278.
- ⁷⁸ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 281-291. Here, Ibn al-'Arabī describes the quality of each type of the saints. This however is not the place to discuss it in detail.
- ⁷⁹ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 390, 393, 398, 402.
- ⁸⁰ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 398.
- ⁸¹ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.12, 65.
- ⁸² Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.12, 66.
- ⁸³ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.12, 66. Michel Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, 126. Also see Michel Chodkiewicz, *An Ocean Without Shore: Ibn 'Arabi, The Book, and the Law* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 50.
- ⁸⁴ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.12, 66.
- ⁸⁵ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.3, 153; vol.11, 362.
- ⁸⁶ A.A. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Din-Ibnul Arabi* (Lahore: SH. Muhammad Ashraf, 1938), 96.
- ⁸⁷ Abū 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Sulamī, *Uṣūl al-Malāmatiyya wa Ghulāt al-Ṣūfiyya*, ed. 'Abd al-Fattāḥ Aḥmad al-Fāwī Maḥmūd, 1985, 141; also see Abū al-'Alā al-'Afīfī, *al-Malāmatiyya wa al-Ṣūfiyya wa Ahl al-Futuwa* (Cairo: 'Isā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, 1945), 87.
- ⁸⁸ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 393.
- ⁸⁹ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 399.
- ⁹⁰ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.11, 254.
- ⁹¹ Qur'ān 3:18.
- ⁹² Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.14, 607.
- ⁹³ Ibn al-'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt*, vol.14, 609. William Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-'Arabī and the Problem of Religious Diversity* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 92.