EBN AMÄJÜR. See BANG AMÄJÜR.

EBN ‘ÂMER. See ‘ABD-ALLÄH B. ‘ÂMER.

EBN AL-ÂMID, cognomen of two famous viziers of the 4th/10th century: Abu'l-Fazl and his son Abu'l-Fath. The father of the first was called Hoseyn. Tawhidi claims that this Hoseyn was of humble origin, a nakâqâl (wheat-sifter) in the grain market of Qom (Aklâq al-wazîrânayn, p. 82). This, however, is probably not true. After occupying major administrative posts, Hoseyn was appointed chief of the chancery (diwân al-rasâ’il) at the court of the Samânid amir Nûh b. Naṣr in Khorasan and was given two honorific titles: “Amîd” (chief, doyen) and “Shaikh.”

Not much is known about Hoseyn’s son, Abu'l-Fazl before he became the vizier of Rokn-al-Dawla, the Buyid sultan who ruled a district which included Ray, Hamadân, and Isfahan; but the fact that he occupied such a post indicates that he took the same line as his father. His early education combined Arabic poetry and Greek sciences and philosophy. His fame as a vizier spread far and wide, and many poets and men of letters were attracted to his court. The poet Motanabbi in one of his panegyrics speaks of him as one who had met Aristotle, Alexander, and Ptolemy. Meskawayh and Tawhidi both confirm his interest in philosophy, but the latter adds that Abu'l-Fazl did not hesitate to kill his adversaries—a trait not quite befitting a philosopher. During his vizirate, Abu'l-Fazl won several honorific titles: “Ra‘îs,” “Ostâd,” “the second Jâhez,” etc.

Apart from a collection of epistles and some poetry, Abu'l-Fazl left no books. Tawhidi copied some wise sayings and proverbs from a book by him entitled al-Kalq wa'l-kolq, but this book remained in draft form (Aklâq al-wazîrânayn, p. 328; al-Bâsî’er VI, p. 165). In his style, he was not so fond of saj (rhymed prose) as his contemporary Sâheb b. ‘Abbâd. He admired Jâhez’s style a great deal, but could not emulate it. This was due, according to Tawhidi, to the fact that Abu'l-Fazl lacked several of the natural and circumstantial qualities which Jâhez possessed (Enti‘î, I, p. 66).

When Abu'l-Fazl died in 360/971, he was succeeded in the vizirate by his son of twenty-two years, Abu'l-Fath, who served two Buyid sultans: Rokn-al-Dawla and his son Mo’âyâyad al-Dawla. Abu'l-Fath was a good prose writer, in the manner of the secretaries of the diwân (q.v.), and was highly respected by the military. For this reason, he was given the title “Du‘l-kefâyatîn,” that is, master of both the pen and the sword. Six years into his vizirate, in 366/977, he was killed after having fallen out of favor with the powerful Buyid sultan ‘Azod-al-Dawla; he had also indulged excessively in pleasures, to the point of being oblivious to the intrigues being concocted around him. According to Sâbi, however, his violent end was due to two factors: a) Rokn-al-Dawla’s lenient treatment of him, and b) the fact that he had inherited rather than earned the vizirate (Ta‘âlebi, Yâtîma II, p. 217).


EBN AL-‘ARABÎ, MOHYI-AL-DIN Abî ‘Abd-Allâh Mohammad Tâ‘î Hâtemî (b. 17 Ramazân 560/28 July 1165; d. 22 Rabî‘ II 638/10 November 1240), the most influential Sufi author of later Islamic history, known to his supporters as al-Sâyîk al-akbar, “the Greatest Master.” Although the form “Ebn al-‘Arabî,” with the definite article, is found in his autographs and in the writings of his immediate followers, many later authors referred to him as “Ebn ‘Arabî”, without the article, to differentiate him from Qâzî Abu Bakr Ebn al-‘Arabî (d. 543/1148).

Life, views, terminology.

He was born in Murcia in Spain, and his family moved to Seville when he was eight. He experienced an extraordinary mystical “unveiling” (katb) or “opening” (futûh) at about the age of fifteen; this is mentioned in his famous account of his meeting with Averroes (Addas, pp. 53-58; Chittick, 1989, pp. xii-xiv). Only after this original divine “attraction” (jadha) did he begin disciplined Sufi practice (sâlih), perhaps at the age of twenty (Addas, p. 53; Chittick, 1989, pp. 383-84). He studied the traditional sciences, Hadith in particular, with many masters; he mentions about ninety of these in an autobiographical note (Badawi). In 597/1200 he left Spain for good, with the intention of making the hajj. The following year in Mecca he began writing his monumental al-Futûbât al-makhlîya; the title, “The Meccan Openings,” alludes to the inspired nature of the book. In 601/1204 he set off from Mecca on his way to Anatolia with Majd-al-Dîn Shâhî, whose son to Anatolia with Majd-al-Dîn Shâhî, whose son Sadr-al-Dîn Qâwamî (606-73/1210-74) would be his...
most influential disciple. After moving about for several years in the central Islamic lands, never going as far as Persia, he settled in Damascus in 620/1223. There he taught and wrote until his death.

Ebn al-`Arabi was an extraordinarily prolific author. Osman Yahia counts 850 works attributed to him, of which 700 are extant and over 450 probably genuine. The second edition of the Fīqhah (Cairo, 1329/1911) covers 2,580 pages, while Yahia's new critical edition is projected to include thirty-seven volumes of about five hundred pages each (vol. 14, Cairo, 1992). By comparison, his most famous work, Foṣṣūs al-ḥekam (Bezels of wisdom), is less than 180 pages long. Scores of his books and treatises have been published, mostly in uncritical editions; several have been translated into European languages.

Although Ebn al-`Arabi claims that the Fīqhah is derived from divine "openings"—mystical unveilings—and that the Foṣṣūs was handed to him in a vision by the Prophet, he would certainly admit that he expressed his visions in the language of his intellectual milieu. He cites the Koran and Hadith constantly; it would be no exaggeration to say that most of his works are commentaries on these two sources of the tradition. He sometimes quotes aphorisms from earlier Sufis, but never long passages. There is no evidence that he quotes without ascription, in the accepted style, from other authors. He was thoroughly familiar with the Islamic sciences, especially tafsīr, feqah, and kalām. He does not seem to have studied the works of the philosophers, though many of his ideas are prefigured in the works of such authors as the Eḵwān al-Šafā' (q.v.; Rosenthal; Takeshita). He mentions on several occasions having read the Elḥāy of Gāzālī, and he sometimes refers to such well known Sufi authors as Qoṣayrī.

In short, Ebn al-`Arabi was firmly grounded in the mainstream of the Islamic tradition; the starting points of his discussions would have been familiar to the 'olama in his environment. At the same time he was enormously original, and he was fully aware of the newness of what he was doing. Earlier Sufis had spoken about theoretical issues (as opposed to practical teachings) in a brief or allusive fashion. Ebn al-`Arabi breaks the dam with a torrent of exposition on every sort of theoretical issue related to the "divine things" (elāhiyāt). He maintains a uniformly high level of discourse and, in spite of going over the same basic themes constantly, he offers a different perspective in each fresh look at a question. For example, in the Foṣṣūs al-ḥekam, each of twenty-seven chapters deals with the divine wisdom revealed to a specific divine word—particular prophet. In each case, the wisdom is associated with a different divine attribute. Hence, each prophet represents a different mode of knowing and experiencing the reality of God. Most of the 560 chapters of the Fīqhah are rooted in similar principles. Each chapter represents a "standpoint" or "station" (maqām) from which reality, or a specific dimension of reality, can be surveyed and brought into the overarching perspective of the "oneness of all things" (tawḥīd).

Ebn al-`Arabi assumed and then verified through his own personal experience the validity of the revelation that was given primarily in the Koran and secondarily in the Hadith. He objected to the limiting approaches of kalām and philosophy, which tied all understanding to reason ('aqīq), as well as to the approach of those Sufis who appealed only to unveiling (kaṣf). It may be fair to say that his major methodological contribution was to reject the stance of the kalām authorities, for whom taṣbīh (declaring God similar to creation) was a heresy, and to make taṣbīh the necessary complement of tanẓih (declaring God incomparable with creation). This perspective leads to an epistemology that harmonizes reason and unveiling.

For Ebn al-`Arabi, reason functions through differentiation and discernment; it knows innately that God is absent from all things—tanẓih. In contrast, unveiling functions through imagination, which perceives identity and sameness rather than difference; hence unveiling sees God’s presence rather than his absence—taṣbīh. To maintain that God is either absent or present is, in his terms, to see with only one eye. Perfect knowledge of God involves seeing with both eyes, the eye of reason and the eye of unveiling (or imagination). This is the wisdom of the prophets; it is falsified by those theologians, philosophers, and Sufis who stress either tanẓih or taṣbīh at the expense of the other.

If Ebn al-`Arabi’s methodology focuses on harmonizing two modes of knowing, his actual teachings focus more on bringing out the nature of human perfection and the means to achieve it. Although the term al-ensān al-kāmel “the perfect human being” can be found in earlier authors, it is Ebn al-`Arabi who makes it a central theme of Sufism. Briefly, perfect human beings are those who live up to the potential that was placed in Adam when God “taught him all the names” (Koran 2:30). These names designate every perfection found in God and the cosmos (al-ālam, defined as "everything other than God"). Ultimately, the names taught to Adam are identical with the divine attributes, such as life, awareness, desire, power, speech, generosity, and justice. By actualizing the names within themselves, human beings become perfect images of God and achieve God’s purpose in creating the universe (Chittick, 1989, especially chap. 20).

Even though all perfect human beings—i.e., the prophets and the "friends" (awliyā) of God—are identical in one respect, each of them manifests God’s uniqueness in another respect. In effect, each is dominated by one specific divine attribute—this is the theme of the Foṣṣūs. Moreover, the path to human fulfillment is a never-ending progression whereby people come to embody God’s infinite attributes successively and with ever-increasing intensity. Most of Ebn al-`Arabi’s writings are devoted to explaining
the nature of the knowledge that is unveiled to those who travel through the ascending stations or checkpoints of human perfection. God's friends are those who inherit their knowledge, stations, and states from the prophets, the last of whom was Muhammad. When Ebn al-'Arabi claimed to be the "seal of the Muhammadan friends," he was saying that no one after him would inherit fully from the prophet Muhammad. Over time, God's friends would continue to exist until the end of time, but now they would inherit from other prophets inasmuch as those prophets represent certain aspects of Muhammad's all-embracing message (Chodkiewicz, 1986).

The most famous idea attributed to Ebn al-'Arabi is waḥdāt al-wujūd, "the oneness of being." Although he never employs the term, the idea is implicit throughout his writings. In the manner of both theologians and philosophers, Ebn al-'Arabi employs the term wujūd to refer to God as the Necessary Being. Like them, he also attributes the term to everything other than God, but he insists that wujūd does not belong to the things found in the cosmos in any real sense. Rather, the things borrow wujūd from God, much as the earth borrows light from the sun. The issue is how wujūd can rightfully be attributed to the things, also called "entities" (a'yān). From the perspective of ṭanẓīl, Ebn al-'Arabi declares that wujūd belongs to God alone, and, in his famous phrase, the things "have never smelt a whiff of wujūd." From the point of view of ṭabāṣīr, he affirms that all things are wujūd's self-disclosure (tajamūl) or self-manifestation (zohūr). In sum, all things are "He is He" (kwā wa la kwā), which is to say that they are both God and other than God, both wujūd and other than wujūd.

The intermediateness of everything that can be perceived by the senses or the mind brings us back to imagination, a term that Ebn al-'Arabi applies not only to a mode of understanding that grasps identity rather than difference, but also to the World of Imagination, which is situated between the two fundamental worlds that make up the cosmos—the world of spirits and the world of bodies—and which brings together the qualities of the two sides. In addition, Ebn al-'Arabi refers to the whole cosmos as imagination, because it combines the attributes of wujūd and utter nonexistence (Chittick, 1989).

**Influence on Persian Sufis and Philosophers**

Tracing Ebn al-'Arabi's influence in any detail must await an enormous amount of research into both his own writings and the works of later authors. Most modern scholars agree that his influence is obvious in much of the theoretical writing of later Sufism and discernible in works by theologians and philosophers.

Wahdāt al-wujūd, invariably associated with Ebn al-'Arabi's name, is the most famous single theoretical issue in Sufi works of the later period, especially in the area under Persian cultural influence. Not everyone thought it was an appropriate concept, and scholars such as Ebn Taymiya (d. 728/1328) attacked it vehemently. In fact, Ebn Taymiya deserves much of the credit for associating this idea with Ebn al-'Arabi's name and for making it the criterion, as it were, of judging whether an author was for or against Ebn al-'Arabi (on this complex issue, see Chittick, forthcoming).

Although Ebn al-'Arabi's name is typically associated with theoretical issues, this should not suggest that his influence reached only learned Sufis. He was the author of many practical works on Sufism, including collections of prayers, and he transmitted a šerqī that was worn by a number of later šaykhs of various orders. As M. Chodkiewicz (1991) has illustrated, his radiance permeated all levels of Sufi life and practice, from the most elite to the most popular, and this has continued down to modern times. Today, indeed, his influence seems to be on the increase, both in the Islamic world and in the West. The Muḥyiddin Ibn 'Arabi Society, which publishes a journal in Oxford, is only one of many signs of a renewed attention to his teachings. Ebn al-'Arabi's first important contact with Persian Islam may have come through one of his teachers, Makīn-al-Dīn Abū Ṣūjā' Ẓāher b. Rostam Esfahānī, whom he met in Mecca in 598/1202 and with whom he studied the Ṣaḥīḥ of Tirmidhī. He speaks especially highly of Makīn-al-Dīn's elderly sister, whom he calls Sayyīka-at-Ḥejāz ("Mistress of Hijaz"), Fakhr-al-Nasīr ("Pride of mankind") bent Rostam, adding that she was also Fakhr-al-Rejāl ("Pride of men") and that he had studied Hadith with her. It was Makīn-al-Dīn's daughter, Neżām, who inspired Ebn al-'Arabi to write his famous collection of poetry, Tarjomān al-āswāq (Nicholson, pp. 3:4; Jahāngirī, pp. 59-62).

In 602/1205 Ebn al-'Arabi met the well-known Sufi Awhād-al-Dīn Kermānī (d. 635/1238) in Konya and became his close friend; he mentions him on a number of occasions in the Fawāʾid (Chodkiewicz et al., pp. 288, 563; Addas, pp. 469-73). Awhād-al-Dīn's biographer tells us that Ebn al-'Arabi entrusted his stepson Qūnawī to Awhād-al-Dīn for training (Forūzānfar, pp. 86-87), and Qūnawī confirms in a letter that he was Kermānī's companion for two years, traveling with him as far as Shiraz (Chittick, 1992b, p. 261).

Qūnawī is the most important intermediary through which Ebn al-'Arabi's teachings passed into the Persian-speaking world. He taught Hadith for many years in Konya and was on good terms with Jālāl-al-Dīn Rūmī, but there is no evidence in Rūmī's works to support the oft-repeated assertion that he was influenced by the ideas of Ebn al-'Arabi or Qūnawī (Chittick, forthcoming). Nevertheless, Rūmī's commentators typically interpreted him in terms of Ebn al-'Arabi's teachings, which had come to define the Sufi intellectual universe.

Qūnawī is the author of about fifteen Arabic works.
including seven books and a number of relatively short treatises. These works are much more systematic and structured than those of his master. His focus on certain specific issues in Ebn al-‘Arabi’s writings, such as wujūd and the perfect human being (al-ensān al-kāmel), helped ensure that these would remain the central concern of the school. Certainly terms typically ascribed to Ebn al-‘Arabi, such as al-ḥaṣarāt al-ʻalāhiyya al-ţams, “the five divine presences,” seem to be Qūnawi’s coinages. In al-Foḵāḵ (ed. M. Kāšjavī, Tehran, 1371 Š./1992), Qūnawi explains the significance of the chapter headings of the Foḵāḵ; this work was used directly or indirectly by practically all the Foḵāḵ commentators (Chittick, 1984).

Qūnawi wrote a few minor Persian works, but probably not Tabāṣerat al-moḥaddid or Moṭafle-e īmān, both of which have been printed in his name (Chittick, 1992b, pp. 255-59). However, from at least 643/1245 he taught the Tāfīya of Ebn al-Fāræz in Persian, and his lectures were put together as a systematic commentary on the poem by his student Sād-d al-Dīn Farḡānī (d. 695/1296) as Moḵāreḵ al-darārī (ed. S. J. Āšṭānī, Mašhad, 1398/1978). This work was extremely popular, but even more so was his much expanded Arabic version of the same work, Montahâl-madārek (Cairo, 1293/1876).

The most widely read Persian work by Qūnawi’s students was no doubt the Lamā’īt of Fakr al-Dīn Erāqī (d. 688/1289), which is based on Qūnawi’s lectures on Ebn al-‘Arabi’s Foḵāḵ (Chittick and Wilson). Moḵayyed al-Dīn Jandī (d. c. 700/1300), who was initiated into Sufism by Qūnawi, wrote in Arabic the first detailed commentary on the Foḵāḵ (ed. Āšṭānī, Mašhad, 1361 Š./1982) as well as a number of Persian works, including Naḵẖat al-rūḥ (ed. N. Máyel Heravī, Tehran, 1362 Š./1983; despite the editor’s claim of a unique Tehran manuscript, there are at least two other copies in Istanbul [Sehit Ali Paşa 1439, Haci Mahmud Efendi 2447], the first an expanded version).

Jandī taught the Foḵāḵ to ʻAbd al-Razzāḵ Kāšānī (d. 730/1330), who wrote one of the most widely disseminated commentaries (Cairo, 1386/1966); it often summarizes or paraphrases Jandī’s text. Kāšānī wrote several other important works, both in Arabic and Persian, all of which are rooted in Ebn al-‘Arabi’s universe of discourse. His Tawil al-Qorān has been published in Ebn al-‘Arabi’s name (Beirut, 1968); for passages in English, see Murata; although permeated with Ebn al-‘Arabi’s basic world view, there are important differences of perspective that mark Kāšānī as an independent thinker (Lory, 1987, pp. 101-06). A Persian work on fotowwat (fotowhāt) has also been published (Tawfiq al-egwīm fi kāḵeš-e feyżān, ed. M. Šāraf in Rasāʾel-e javānmandārān, Tehran, 1973).

Persian commentaries on the Foḵāḵ are frequently based on the Arabic commentary of Kāšānī’s student, Dāwūd Quyṣari (d. 751/1350), author of a dozen other Arabic works. His systematic philosophical introduction to Sīrat al-Fūqāḵ (Tehran, 1299/1882, Bombay, 1300/1883) itself became the object of commentaries (for the latest, see Āšṭānī, 1385/1966). Certainly, Quyṣari’s influence is obvious and acknowledged in the first Persian commentary on the Foḵāḵ, Noḵās-e āḵār (partly edited by R. Māz̄ūmī, Tehran, 1359 Š./1980), written by his student Bābā Rokn al-Dīn Šīrāzī (d. 769/1367). The Persian commentary by Tāj-al-Dīn Ḥosayn b. Ḥasan Kārāzmi (d. ca. 835/1432; ed. N. Máyel Heravī, Tehran, 1364 Š./1985) is almost a verbatim translation of Quyṣari. Other Persian commentaries include Harâl-e Foḵāḵ by Sāyed Ali Ḥamadānī (d. 786/1385); this work has been wrongly attributed to Kājah Pārsī in its printed edition (ed. J. Mēgarzaḏ, Tehran, 1366 Š./1987; see Māyel Heravī, 1988, pp. xxii-xxvii). In his comprehensive list of the more than one hundred commentaries on the Foḵāḵ, Osman Yahiya mentions ten in Persian, some of which, however, may be repeats (introduction to Āmolī, pp. 16-36). Persian commentators that he does not mention include the following: 1. Kātam al-Foḵāḵ, attributed to Shah Ne’mat-Allah Wallī (d. 834/1437); this is much longer than any of Shah Ne’mat-Allah’s printed rasāʾel manuscripts include Nadwät al-ʻolamaʾ 35; Andhra Pradesh State Oriental Manuscript Library, Taṣawwuf 254, Jādīd 715; Kōdābaḵš, Fārsī 1371). 2. Another long commentary is also attributed to Shah Ne’mat-Allah (Andhra Pradesh, Taṣawwuf 185). 3. Shaikh Mōḥibb-Allah Mōbarek Elāhābādī (d. 1048/1648). Ebn al-‘Arabi’s most faithful Indian follower, wrote a lengthy Persian commentary and a shorter Arabic commentary. 4. Hāfez Gōlām-Moṣtafa b. Moḥammad-Akbar from Thaneswar wrote Sīḵḳ al-hemam fi ṣ̄arḥ Foḵāḵ al-hekam, a commentary of 1024 pages in the Andhra Pradesh copy (Taṣawwuf 296), apparently in the 11th/18th century. The last Persian commentary on the Foḵāḵ in India seems to be al-Tawil al-mohkam fi motasabab Foḵāḵ al-hekam by Mawlāwī Moḥammad-Ḥasan Sāibe Ṭāmūhawī; he was living in Hyderabad (Deccan) when this 500-page work was published in Lucknow in 1893.

A number of Qūnawi’s contemporaries not directly connected to his circle were important in making at least some of Ebn al-‘Arabi’s teachings available to Persian speakers. Sād-d al-Dīn Hamūyā (d. 649/1252), a Persian disciple of Najm-al-Dīn Kōbrā, corresponded with Ebn al-‘Arabi and spent several years in Damascus, where he met both Ebn al-‘Arabi and Qūnawi. He wrote works in both Arabic and Persian; these are often extremely difficult, especially because the author delighted in letter symbolism (for a Persian work, see al-Moṣb̄ūd fi-l-taṣawwuf, ed. N. Máyel Heravī, Tehran, 1362 Š./1983). His disciple ʻAzīz-al-Dīn Nashāfī (d. before 700/1300) was responsible for making some of Ebn al-‘Arabi’s terminology well-known in Persian; his popularizing works can hardly be compared in sophistication to those of
'Erāqī or Fargānī (sec. e.g., his Ensān-e kāmel, ed. M. Mole, Tehran, 1962; an English paraphrase of his Maqṣad-e aqṣā was published by E. H. Palmer as Oriental Mysticism, London, 1867; see also Morris, pp. 745-51). Šams-al-Dīn Ebrāhīm Abarqūhī began to write Majma’ al-bahrāyin (ed. N. Māyel Heravi, Tehran, 1364 S./1985) in 714/1314. The work represents an early effort to integrate Ebn al-ʿArabī’s teachings into Persian Sufism; more sophisticated than Nasaff, the author does not have the strong philosophical orientation typical of Ḥamawī and his circle.

Among early Persian poets influenced by Ebn al-ʿArabī’s teachings and terminology were ‘Erāqī, Maḥrūbī, and Maḥmūd Šabestarī (d. ca. 720/1320). Moḥammad Lāḥījī (d. 912/1506) commented on Šabestarī’s thousand-verse Golshan-e rāz in Sarḥ-e Golshan-e rāz, a long Persian work rooted in the writings of Kāsānī and Qaysārī. One of Ebn al-ʿArabī’s most learned and successful popularizers was the poet ʿAbbād-al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d. 898/1492), especially through his ġazals and maktābās; about 1,000 verses of his Selselat al-dahab carefully follow the text of Ebn al-ʿArabī’s Ḥalqat al-ḥadīth (Māyel Heravi, 1888, pp. xxxvii-xl). Jāmī’s Persian work deals with Ebn al-ʿArabī’s teachings—the Lawā’eh, Lawāmī’eh, Aṣ̄aʿat al-lumā’ud, and Naqṣ al-ḥalqat fi Sarh Naqṣ al-Foṣūṣ—as well as his Arabic commentary on the Foṣūṣ, were also widely read (see introduction to Jāmī, 1977). Jāmī was especially popular in India, and most of the numerous followers of Ebn al-ʿArabī in the subcontinent—who were much more likely to write in Persian than in Arabic—are indebted to his explanations of the Shaikhī’s works (Chittick, 1992). Moḥammad b. Moḥammad, who was known as Shaikh-e Makkī (d. 926/1020) and considered himself a disciple of Jāmī, defended Ebn al-ʿArabī against attacks by narrow-minded critics in his Persian al-Jāneb al-ḡarbi fi ḥall moḵkētāt al-sayyid Moḥyy al-Dīn Ebn ʿArabī (ed. Māyel Heravi, Tehran, 1364 S./1985).

The poet and Sufi master Shah Neʿmat-Allah Wali was one of Ebn al-ʿArabī’s most fervent admirers and followed closely in the tracks of Kāsānī and Qaysārī. He wrote over one hundred rasālas (treatises) on theoretical and practical Sufism that fit squarely into Ebn al-ʿArabī’s universe; four of these comment on the Foṣūṣ or Naqṣ al-Foṣūṣ, Ebn al-ʿArabī’s own treatise on the essential ideas of the Foṣūṣ. The Persian-Indian poet Mirzā ʿAbbās-al-Qāder Bidel (=Bēdīl, q.v.; d. 1133/1721) demonstrates an intimate knowledge of Ebn al-ʿArabī’s school in such maktābās as ‘Erāfīn.

Even Sufi authors critical of Ebn al-ʿArabī’s teachings adopted much of his terminology and world view. Thus in Persia ‘Alāʾ al-Dawla Šemnānī (d. 736/1337) and in India Shaikh Mohammad Hosaynī, known as Gīšī-Dezād (d. 825/1422), and Shaikh Ahmad Serhendī (d. 1034/1634) do not diverge markedly from most of the teachings established by him and his immediate followers. Most Sufis did not take the criticisms of these authors too seriously. Typical are the remarks of Sayyed Aṣrāf Jahāngīr Šemnānī (d. probably in 829/1425), who studied with ‘Alāʾ al-Dawla Šemnānī but sided with Kāsānī in his defense of Ebn al-ʿArabī against Šemnānī’s criticisms (see Landolt, 1973). After providing the views of the participants in this debate and those of a number of observers, Sayyed Aṣrāf tells us that Šemnānī had not understood what Ebn al-ʿArabī was saying and that he retracted his criticisms before the end of his life (Yamānī, Layāt ef-e aṣrafi, latīfa 28, pp. 139-45; Māyel Heravi, 1367, pp. xxxi-xxxv). In a similar manner, Shah Wali-Allah Dehlawī (d. 1176/1762) wrote a work showing that there was no fundamental difference between Ebn al-ʿArabī’s waḥdat al-wujūd and Serhendī’s waḥdat al-ḥaqqūd.

From the 8th/14th century onward Ebn al-ʿArabī’s influence is clearly present in many works written by authors known primarily as theologians or philosophers. Among Shīʿītes, Sayyed Ḥaydar Amolī (d. 787/1385) was especially important in bringing Ebn al-ʿArabī into the mainstream of Shīʿī thought. He wrote an enormous commentary on the Foṣūṣ, Nasīr al-ḥalqat, the 500-page introduction of which has been published (representing about 10 percent of the text). Amolī investigates the meaning of the Foṣūṣ on three levels: naqṣ (the Koran and Hadith, making special use here of Shīʿī sources), āṣal (meaning kalām and falsafa), and kāʾf (referring both to his own experience and the writings of major members of Ebn al-ʿArabī’s school). Amolī also wrote several Arabic works on metaphysics; especially significant is Jāmeʿ al-ṣarār (ed. Corbin and Yahia, Tehran, 1347 S./1969; see Morris, 106-08), which was written in his youth during his initial movement into Ebn al-ʿArabī’s universe.


(William C. Chinick.)

EBN 'ARBASH, SEHB-AL-DIN ABU'L-ABBAS AHMAD b. Muhammâd ... Hanâfi 'Ajâmi (b. DAMASCUS, 791/1389; d. CAIRO, 854/1450), literary scholar and biographer of Tâmerlaine (Timûr). According to the autobiography quoted by Ebn Tağibîrî, when Timûr conquered Damascus in 803/1401, Ebn 'Arbash and his family were transported to Timûr's capital, Samarkand. He spent the next eight years in Transoxiana and Chinese Turkestan, where he learned Persian and Mongolian and studied with Sârif Muhammad Qorjâni, Sa'd al-Dîn Mas'ûd Tâftâzâni, and Sams al-Dîn Muhammad Jazari. Later, in Kârâizm, Susây, Astrakhan, and the Crimea, he associated with the ruling elite, scholars, and litterateurs. Around 815/1412, he entered the service of the Ottoman sultan Muhammad I, holding the office of confidential secretary (kâteb al-sarî). At this time, he translated several religious works from Arabic into Turkish and 'Avfî's Jâme' al-hekkâtâ wa lâme' al-revvâyât from Persian into Turkish. Ebn 'Arbash returned to Syria and reentered Damascus in 825/1422 after the death of Muhammad I. There he occupied several minor religious posts and completed his celebrated biography of Timûr, 'Ajâ'eb al-maqdîr fit nawâ'eb Timûr (q.v.). Sometime after 841/1438, he settled in Cairo, where he became acquainted with the historians Ebn Tağibîrî and Sâkâwî (Sa'âwî, II, pp. 128-29, 130-31). He initially secured the favor of the Mamûl sultan Jaqmaq and composed several works in his name, including an adaptation of the MARZBAN-NAMA entitled Fâkehât al-kolâfâ' wa maâjânat al-zorâfâ', written in 852/1448. In 854/1450, Jaqmaq imprisoned him for a few days as the result of a rival's complaint. Ebn 'Arbash died twelve years after his release.


(John E. Woods.)

EBN ASDAQ, MKZÂ AL-MOHÂMÂD (b. Mashad 1267/1850; d. Tehran, 1347/1928), prominent Bâhai missionary. He was given the honorific designation Ebne-e Aasdaq in certain Bâhai scriptural writings. Toward the end of his life Bâhai-Allāh counted him a living manṭîr and referred to him as Sahid Ebne-e.