

edited, and the editors of the respective volumes give an account of the sources which they have collated to establish the text.

The most important biographical notices to the modern historian are those of al-Šafadī's contemporaries, concerning whom he could draw on his own memories or those of his friends. Since, moreover, he passed most of his life in Syria, he is particularly informative on persons connected with that part of the Mamluk realm. These two volumes, dealing as they do with people bearing Arabic names, have little to offer on members of the Mamluk ruling and military élite, whose names were Turkish or Mongol. Yet even brief accounts of obscure men, who are unmentioned by the great chroniclers, can offer points of historical interest. Two instances may be given from Vol. XXI. No. 107 at p. 107, the Amīr 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī b. Tuğhrīl, was, on the evidence of his name, the son of a Mamluk like al-Šafadī himself. This fact did not, however, exclude him from military office, and in Rabī' II 748/July–August 1347, he arrived in Damascus from Cairo, appointed to the high office of *hājib*. At this very time, Yalbughā al-Yahyāwī, the governor of Damascus, was trying to foment a revolt against Sultan al-Muza'far Ḥājjī. 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī and other amīrs received secret orders to arrest Yalbughā, who fled from Damascus. Having played a valiant part in the pursuit of Yalbughā, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī obtained leave to retire to Cairo, where he died of plague in 749/1348–9. Another son of a Mamluk who had his place in the military élite was an amīr of Ten in Damascus, 'Alā' al-Dīn 'Alī b. Ṭaydamur, to whom five lines are devoted (No. 110 at p. 108). His father, a Mamluk of al-Nāšir Muḥammad, called by al-Šafadī Ṭaydamur Kukuz, is possibly identical with Ṭaydamur D.k.z al-Sāqī, *muqaddam* of a Thousand (i.e. an amīr of the highest rank) in Damascus, who died in Rajab 737/Jan.–Feb. 1337 (Barbara Schäfer, *Die Chronik al-Šuğā'is*, i, Wiesbaden, 1977, 15). However this may be, Ṭaydamur or his comrades must have made provision for his son at a tender age. The Amīr 'Alī b. Ṭaydamur died (another victim of the Black Death) in Damascus in Rajab 749/Sept.–Oct. 1348 *wa-lam yabqul wajhuh* – "and his face was yet beardless".

P. M. HOLT

IBN AL-'ARABĪ'S METAPHYSICS OF IMAGINATION: THE SUFI PATH OF KNOWLEDGE. By WILLIAM C. CHITTIK. pp. xxii, 478. Albany, N.Y., State University of New York Press, 1990.

Anyone who has ever attempted to read Ibn al-'Arabī's *magnum opus*, *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* (which may be translated as *The Meccan Revelations*, or as Chittick prefers, *The Meccan Openings*), will know how difficult it is to make sustained and coherent sense of this great work, particularly if the Arabic edition chosen lacks any indices. If ever there were a work crying out for an intelligent *pīr* to guide and direct the reader, the *Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya* is that work. It is for this reason among others that I – in common, no doubt, with many other scholars of Ibn al-'Arabī and Islamic philosophy – breathe an enormous sigh of relief and welcome most warmly what is a magnificent achievement. Professor Chittick's book, if not the expected *maḥdi*, is at least an awaited *pīr* par excellence. He has written what must surely become the standard guide not only to the *Futūḥāt* but to Ibn al-'Arabī himself, replacing in the process lesser, but still notable achievements, of his predecessors like A. E. Affifi's *Mystical Philosophy of Muḥyīd-Dīn-Ibnul Arabī (sic)*, republished from the original Cambridge edition by Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf of Lahore in June 1964, which constituted a thorough, if controversial, introduction to the *Doctor Maximus* (as Ibn al-'Arabī has been termed).

Professor Chittick, who is the Professor of Religious Studies at the State University of New York, Stony Brook and author of *The Sufi Path of Love: the Spiritual Teachings of Rumi* as well as nine other books, is clearly soaked in the thought of Ibn al-'Arabī. His book is, Chittick tells us, the fruit of twenty years' study, begun originally at Tehran University under such notable luminaries as

Seyyed Hossein Nasr and T. Izutsu. Chittick notes that Ibn al-'Arabī "is not afraid to go into detail". It is one of the major merits of this book that neither is Chittick.

The author tells us that "in writing the book, I tried to avoid any preconceptions as to what Ibn al-'Arabī should be saying or what he has to offer ... I have tried to open the door to Ibn al-'Arabī's larder and allow the reader to look in, if not actually step inside". These comments provide a key to what the author has done: his greatest achievement is not necessarily to have translated so much of the *Futūḥāt*, often for the first time, in double columned pages, as to have organised in a lucid and readable fashion the contents, themes and doctrines of Ibn al-'Arabī's greatest work and made them available, not just to specialists like this reviewer, but to all scholars and students of philosophy and thought whether that be Islamic or otherwise. When one considers that the *Futūḥāt*, as Chittick points out, will fill a projected 17,000 pages in Osman Yahia's critical edition, that it includes 560 chapters, and that "the whole corpus stands at an extremely high level of sophistication and demands familiarity with all the Islamic sciences", one realises how much Professor Chittick's book is a *tour de force* of brilliant organisation.

In a work comprising a little over 400 pages of pure text – I do not include here the additional (and thorough) notes, bibliography and indices – Chittick has organised his material under eight major headings: after the *Introduction*, there are large sections providing an *Overview* and then surveying Ibn al-'Arabī's work in terms of its *Theology*, *Ontology*, *Epistemology*, *Hermeneutics* and *Soteriology* before ending with a final chapter entitled simply *Consummation*. All the themes and problems familiar to the scholar and student of Ibn al-'Arabī are here: *wujūd*, the names of God, the role of Muḥammad, manifestation, the status and function of man, to name but a very few. One may not always agree with aspects of Chittick's sustained analysis but one is always grateful for his vision and the breadth of the enterprise. The Index of Names and Terms alone at the end of the book (pp. 441–478) in double columns is a superb and much-needed research tool.

It will be clear from these remarks that the reviewer has felt the need to deploy a considerable armoury of superlatives: but this is a work which necessarily and justly evokes such a response. It is, I repeat, a magnificent achievement. I fervently hope that the sale of this book will not be restricted to libraries but will also be to private and public students and scholars everywhere who require an erudite *pīr* to guide them through Ibn al-'Arabī's greatest – but most difficult – enterprise.

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ISLAMIC SPAIN. By GODFREY GOODWIN. (Architectural Guides for Travellers.) pp. x, 150, front., illus., plans, map. London, etc., Penguin Books, 1990. £8.99.

This book amounts to a catalogue raisonné of Islamic buildings in Spain, designed to be of practical use to the interested traveller. It will serve its purpose admirably, being at once comprehensive and concise, as well as light in weight, clearly arranged, and easy to consult in difficult conditions. There are numerous illustrations, a general map, plans of Seville, Córdoba, Granada, the Alhambra, and Toledo, a short glossary, and a useful note on museums. The scope of the volume is restricted to Spanish territory on the European mainland, Ceuta, Melilla and the Balearics being excluded. This is perhaps in accordance with the plan of the series, but it would surely have been sensible to include not only the islands, but also Portugal. The Islamic remains there are neither numerous nor spectacular and would not have added much to the length, or presumably the cost, of the book. The present frontier between Spain and Portugal was of no significance, either political or cultural, within the boundaries of Al-Andalus. The word "Islamic" in the title has been interpreted less narrowly than has "Spain". Mudéjar work is included and non-Islamic buildings which were not erected under Muslim rule or patronage. Visigothic remains are often noted.