

NOTHING LEFT

I used to think that in the world for me no friend was left
 Then I abandoned me, and knew that no stranger was
 left.
 In everything I used to see thorns, not a rose in sight
 Then the whole world became a rose garden; now no
 thorns are left
 Night and day my heart used to weep and wail
 I don't know what happened, no tears and cries are left
 Out went multiplicity, in came Unity, seclusion happened
 with the Friend
 The whole world became the Real, no town and
 marketplace are left
 Religion, rules, custom, reputation – all gone with the wind
 O Niyazi, what happened? For you no shackles of
 religiousness are left.¹¹

11. *Dīvān* 180.

Book Reviews

In Search of the Lost Heart: Explorations in Islamic Thought, by William C. Chittick. Edited by Mohammed Rustom, Atif Khalil, and Kazuyo Murata. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012, xiv + 411 pp.

An in-depth exploration of Islamic thought is no small matter. In a period of history when peripheral questions have taken centre stage and so much of the substance of Islamic knowledge is forgotten, it is rare to find an interpreter who is up to the task at hand. Readers of the *Journal* are surely familiar with the many profound studies and translations that have been offered by William C. Chittick over the last 40 years. Less familiar, however, are his countless and rare articles, buried in academic journals and, until now, earnestly waiting to be rediscovered.

To compile and republish all of Chittick's many essays into one large, imposing volume would have been ideal, but due to the voluminous output of the author we can safely assume this was not a viable option. Yet here the editors have done something even more creative and useful: twenty-six (painfully selected) essays are arranged into four topical sections, which aim to guide us into the unity of Islamic thought. Part I deals with 'Sufism and the Islamic Tradition'; Part II: 'Ibn al-'Arabī and His Influence'; Part III: 'Islamic Philosophy'; and Part IV offers Chittick's thoughtful 'Reflections on Contemporary Issues'. The four sections as a whole are designed to allow the reader to progressively explore the many diverse expressions of Islamic thought.

Each essay has been thoughtfully placed to introduce and complement what follows. The editors have achieved their intention with great success. If one compares the essays in this volume with their originals, it becomes obvious that they have been considerably recreated and revived; additionally, the notes to the essays have been updated, providing both many useful references to the relevant primary and secondary literature, and helpful clarifications on controversial issues. Besides being free

from errors, the work also includes a complete index of Quranic and Hadith passages, a chronological list of historical figures cited, an appendix which lists Chittick's previous books, and an index of all important names and technical terms.

Seeking to address all his potential readers, Chittick has mastered the ability to formulate the most complex ideas into simple and clear language. By directly engaging the classical texts with thorough familiarity, his writings are able to speak to a wider audience than many other academic presentations of Sufism and Islamic Philosophy. And here he does just that, by first focusing on the inner meaning of 'Islam in Three Dimensions', an essay which sets the foundation for the path taken throughout the remaining pages. A discussion of the inner significance of prayer is treated in an essay entitled 'The Bodily Gestures of the *Ṣalāt*'. This is followed by 'Weeping in Islam and the Sufi Tradition'; 'A Shādhilī Presence in Shi'ite Islam'; 'The Pluralistic Vision of Persian Sufi Poetry'; and 'The Real Shams-i Tabrīzī'. Individually, each essay acts to locate the reader in the broad universe of the traditional Islamic worldview. The entrance into Sufi metaphysics takes off in the first section in a profound closing essay entitled 'The Koran as the Lover's Mirror'.

It is perhaps the second section of this work, dealing as it does with Ibn al-'Arabī (d.638/1240) and his influence, that will be of greatest interest to the readers of this journal. The section is significant because it is able to openly set the record straight regarding the term *waḥdat al-wujūd* in the essay 'A History of the Term *Waḥdat al-Wujūd*'. Although originally published as '*Waḥdat al-Wujūd* in Islamic Thought,' the article was later integrated into an expanded article, 'Rūmī and *waḥdat al-wujūd*.' The article in this collection is taken from the first section of that later version. Chittick convincingly shows that the term *waḥdat al-wujūd* was first used well after the death of Ibn al-'Arabī. If the term seems to be a good fit for explaining Ibn al-'Arabī's ideas, it is also very imprecise and simplistic when his writings are considered as a whole. If it is the relation between God, the world, and the human soul that is in question, the essays that follow each elucidate how many interpretations can be given

to the virtually infinite expressions of the divine principle. A perfect example of this phenomena is shown in an article on Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273), entitled, 'The Question of Ibn al-'Arabī's "Influence" on Rūmī.' This article was originally found in the second section of the previously mentioned 'Rūmī and *waḥdat al-wujūd*', and deals with precisely this subject.

Immediately following the more well-known essay 'Ibn al-'Arabī on the Benefit of Knowledge', Chittick turns to the writings of Ṣadr al-Dīn Qūnawī (d.673/1274). The essay 'Qūnawī, Neoplatonism, and the Circle of Ascent' was originally written for the study *Neoplatonism and Islamic Thought*. Here, Chittick shows what is distinctive about Qūnawī's teachings and why broad labels like 'Neoplatonic' remain insufficient for describing his influence and metaphysics. Likewise, Chittick is able to highlight the distinctive interpretations of Ibn al-'Arabī that were given by Sa'īd al-Dīn Farghānī (d.699/1300) and 'Abd al-Raḥmān Jāmī (d.898/1492) in the essays 'Farghānī on Oneness and Manyness' and 'Jāmī on the Perfect Man'.

In this section, Chittick is able to discuss the lesser-known but equally profound Indian authors, like Khwāja Khurd (b.1010/1601) and 'Abd al-Jalīl Ilāhābādī (d.1043/1633-34), who are each given separate essays: 'Two Treatises by Khwāja Khurd' and 'A Debate Between the Soul and the Spirit'. The discussions are each set around primary texts which are generously translated for the first time. One striking feature of reading these authors together is how each one has brought new dimensions to Ibn al-'Arabī's insights. If one is looking for definitive answers on how to interpret Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings, then perhaps disappointment is inevitable. Yet, these writings from the sub-continent are surely the clearest and most interesting interpretations that have been offered so far. It would not be an exaggeration to suggest that the unique translations offered in this section alone make the volume essential for those seeking to discover theoretical Sufism.

An interesting aspect of the section treating Islamic Philosophy is that it unexpectedly begins with an essay on Rūmī and the limitations of reason. Perhaps if one thinks Averroes (d.594/1198) is the summit of Islamic philosophy,

then Chittick's writings may not be so appealing. Yet he does not deny or overlook the primacy of demonstration in Islamic philosophy. Instead, he seeks to explain the worldview of Islam in which that rational discourse was (and still is) situated.

By focusing on the later philosophical tradition and its interaction with Sufism, Chittick is able to show that for most of the later Islamic philosophers rational demonstrations were only the fruits issuing forth from the tree of sanctity (*walāya*), which itself issues from the most inner aspect of prophecy (*nubuwwa*). Philosophy was seen to both come to humanity from God and provide a mode of return to God. These ideas are expressed best by Chittick in his two essays 'The Circle of Life' and 'The Goal of Philosophy'. It will be unsettling for some to see that what is 'Islamic' in particular about later Islamic philosophy is its use of Quranic language and its consistent defence of love and illumination as higher modes of knowing. Indeed, Quranic verses such as *Above everyone who has knowledge is one who knows* (12:76) bring to the forefront the quest of philosophers such as Bābā Afḍal Kāshānī (d.606/1210) or Mullā Ṣadrā (d.1050/1640), both of whom are discussed in separate essays within this section. The section on philosophy also includes what is surely one of the most important essays on the question of eschatology in Islamic thought to have been written in modern scholarship.

In the final section of this work, essays have been selected to bring to light Chittick's own use of classical Islamic thought for providing answers to complex contemporary issues. For example, in the essay 'The Metaphysical Roots of War and Peace', Chittick argues that it is the interplay of God's divine names that gives rise to the relative instability of the world. In addition to essays dealing with the Quranic roots of religious inclusivism and the importance of humanity's harmony with nature, the collection closes with the essay 'In Search of the Lost Heart', which is a comparison of learning as a means of finding the heart in both Confucian and Islamic traditions. Chittick uses the two traditions to show how the true meaning of education has been largely misunderstood in the modern world. He points out that to merely acquire information is not what

these ancient and medieval thinkers intended when speaking on the importance of education. Instead, education was to be a process of inner transformation, which in its completion not only brings about virtue and goodness in the individual, but also brings about these same qualities within communities. Chittick gives diverse examples of how this understanding of learning was applied historically; through these comparisons, he is able to indicate how these traditions of learning might remain relevant when applied to our own, ever-changing, and challenging context.

The many studies offered here will be of exceptional benefit to students attempting to locate the unity that encompasses the many currents of Islamic discourse. Benefit will also be gained by specialists seeking to increase their knowledge pertaining to some of the most complex thinkers in the history of Sufism and Islamic Philosophy. Without hesitation, we can suggest that this edited volume of Chittick's most important articles is essential reading for all those interested in exploring the heart of Islamic thought.

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Sufi Aesthetics: Beauty, Love, and the Human Form in the Writings of Ibn 'Arabi and 'Iraqi, by Cyrus Ali Zargar. Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 2011, xi + 235 pp.

Sufi Aesthetics is, as its title suggests, a major in-depth study of the aesthetics of vision and the envisioning of the divine in forms. In his introduction, Zargar stresses that although he is focusing on a particular 'school' of witnessing and love within Sufism, he is particularly concerned to respond 'to questions raised by those who have mishandled the Islamic tradition' (p. 2), be they those who divorce the sacred from the profane or those who view the Quranic paradise literally as a place of meaningless sensual pleasure. The task he sets himself is a noble one: to study perception and beauty in the light of the writings

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