THE CAREER OF IBN QASĪ AS RELIGIOUS TEACHER
AND POLITICAL REVOLUTIONARY IN 12TH CENTURY ISLAMIC SPAIN

presented by
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Thesis submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts,
University of Edinburgh.
May 1979
"...es inútil preguntar si el misticismo es acción o es contemplación, porque es contemplación activa y acción contemplativa."

- Miguel de Unamuno

.....it is useless to ask whether mysticism is action or contemplation, because it is active contemplation and contemplative action.
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I am deeply grateful to all those who have assisted and encouraged me in the production of this thesis. Thanks go especially to my academic advisers, Professor W. Montgomery Watt and Mr. J.R. Walsh. Mention should also be made of Dr. Ismail Erünsal, who supplied a microfilm of the Kal‘an-Na‘layn, and Dr. Ţal‘at Abū Farḥah, who kindly discussed that work with me. Gratitude must likewise be expressed to my close friend, Mr. ‘Adnän Kālid ‘Abd Allāh, with whom I am currently translating Ibn al-‘Arīf’s Maḥāsin al-Majālis into English. I should also like to thank Miss Irene Crawford for typing this thesis, and Miss Margaret Dowling of Inter-Library Loans, Edinburgh University Library, for her assistance. Finally, I must thank my dear wife Charo, who has assisted me in more than she knows.

* * * *

I have attempted to keep the mechanics of this work as simple as possible. Abbreviations are minimised and follow those of the Encyclopaedia of Islam (2nd edition). After initial entries, shortened titles are often used in footnotes. The Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana (B.A.H.) was frequently consulted, so the following system has been adopted for purposes of its notation:
Transcription from Arabic follows the modern European system, as found in Wehr's Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic. Passages in Arabic are usually followed by a translation into English. Arabic chapter headings from the manuscript are vowelised as they appear, with obvious mistakes being noted. Dating is normally given only according to the Christian calendar. Place-names in Spain and Portugal are generally rendered in the modern languages of those countries.


* * * * * *

ERRATUM: Read Ibn al-Kaṭīb for al-Kaṭīb.

* * * * * *
The present thesis examines the career of the Andalusian mystic and politician, Ibn Qasi, dwelling particularly on his role as a revolutionary figure in the Almoravid period of Islamic Spain. He was able to achieve much of his popular support by virtue of the esteem in which he was held as a spiritual teacher in the mystical doctrines of Islam, and the present study examines his life as both politician and Sufi. Particular attention has been given to Ibn Qasi's only surviving work, the Kal'an-Na'layn, which has been analysed and partially translated in an attempt to establish his place in the spectrum of Islamic mystical doctrine.

The importance of the role played by such men in the political life of Andalusia has long been recognised, and it is the purpose of the present study to give a further precision to the biography of one such leading figure. The transition from Almoravid to Almohad domination in Spain is clarified by isolating, as here, the religious currents which paralleled, and often intermingled with, the patently political objectives.
PART ONE

SECTION I: IBN MASARRA

One of the most interesting institutions of Western Islam was the rábiţa. The term was originally used to describe a chain of frontier forts that collectively represented the boundaries of a state. It was to such remote places that many heterodox Muslims retired, and so the term gradually acquired the sense of "monastery" or "hostel". In al-Andalus the institution of the rábiţa not only provided an escape from Mālikite orthodoxy; it also gave important military support during the extended conflict of the Reconquista. The hermits of these rawābiţ have been called the precursors of Western Sufism.  

Muḥammad Ibn ʿAbd Allāh Ibn Masarra (883-931) was one of these early Andalusian ascetics. It is possible that he was not an Arab, for his father ʿAbd Allāh is

1. See the article "Rábitas Hispanomusulmanas", by L. Torres Balbás, in Al-Andalus, XIII (1948), pp. 475-491. This article notes the frequent confusion between rábiţa (hermitage) and ribāţ (frontier or coastal fort), as the functions frequently overlapped. "Hubo casos, sin duda, en que los ribāţs se organizaron a base de una rábiţa y con un morabito como jefe; el hecho inverso de un ribāţ reducido a ermita por haberse alejado de sus inmediaciones la frontera enemiga, o por otras circunstancias, también es natural que se produjera." (p. 476)

described as a man with blond hair and reddish skin. 1

About the year 854, while still a youth, 'Abd Allāh left his native Córdoba in the company of his brother Ibrāhīm, a merchant. Together they went about the Orient, and while in Basra 'Abd Allāh became attracted to the teachings of the Mu‘tazilites. After returning to Córdoba he formed a friendship with the Mu‘tazilite Kālīl al-Ḡafīla 2 and broke with orthodox Islam. Although 'Abd Allāh gained various disciples, 3 he was careful not to profess his beliefs publicly. His son, Muḥammad, was born on 19 April 883 and proved eventually to be the ideal disciple for his father's esoteric philosophy. 'Abd Allāh trained his son in both theological speculation and ascetic devotion. While Muḥammad was still a young man, his father fled al-Andalus to escape his creditors, but before departing, 'Abd Allāh gave all his books to his son. He died in 899 at Mecca.

Ibn Masarra was approximately sixteen years old when his father departed. The formative period of his life from 899 until 912 is not covered by the biographer al-Faraḍī (No. 1202). Besides his father, only two of Ibn Masarra's teachers are named: Muḥammad Ibn Waḍāḥ and al-Kushānī, both orthodox Mālikite jurists. The

2. ibid., No. 417.
3. For biographies, see ibid., Nos. 306, 895, 1068, 1216.
biographer, taking up the story in 912, shows Ibn Masarra surrounded by a few disciples in a school (madhab) on the Sierra de Córdoba. Ibn Masarra was given the laqab al-Jabali because of his retiral to the Sierra. The disciples presented an image of pious asceticism, but suspicions soon arose that Ibn Masarra was teaching such heresies as the Mu'tazilite doctrine of free-will. These suspicions coincided with a period of widespread resistance to the central power of Córdoba. The amīr 'Abd Allāh may have feared that the mystics and ascetics would make common cause with the insurrectionists, chief among them being the Banū Qasī of Aragon, Ibn Marwān of Galicia, and Ibn Ḥafṣūn of Ronda. It is known, for example, that the ascetic Abū 'Alī as-Sarraj actively opposed the amīr. Ibn Masarra, being both an ascetic and a muwallad, feared persecution by the authorities, and he fled the vicinity of Córdoba, ostensibly to make the Pilgrimage. Ibn Masarra's flight was specifically prompted by a refutation of his dogmatic errors, written by the eminent theologian of Córdoba, al-Habbāb (860-934).

1. Al-Paradī, No. 1202, says of Ibn Masarra: وفتح مذهبه
3. B.A.H., ad-Dabī, No. 396.
Ibn Masarra (with two disciples — Muḥammad Ibn Madīnā of Toledo and Ibn as-Ṣayqal of Córdoba) took the pilgrimage route along the North African coast, stopping at the most celebrated centres of law and theology. In Qairawān, it is known that he attended the lectures of the famous theologian, ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Saʿīd ibn al-ʿArabī (d. 952). This Ibn al-ʿArabī was an orthodox Sufi who had been a disciple of Junayd and Thawrī. Ibn Masarra also visited many of the sacred shrines of Islam, taking a special interest in the house at Madīnā of Māriya the Copt (mother of Muḥammad’s son Ibrāhīm).

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1. For biographies, see B.A.H., Takmila, No. 339 (Ibn Madīnā) and No. 326 (Ibn as-Ṣayqal).


3. See as-Ṣaʿrūnī, Tabaqāt, p. 100, and as-Sulamī, Kitāb Tabaqāt al-Sufiyya, pp. 443-448, for biographies of Ibn al-ʿArabī.

It is not known exactly when Ibn Masarra returned to Córdoba. It can be assumed, however, that his return corresponds to the pacification of al-Andalus during the early years of 'Abd ar-Rahmān III's amirate. Ibn Masarra resumed his ascetic life and his teaching in the hermitage of the Sierra, trying to represent himself as a simple holy man. He seems to have had such an eloquent command of mystical allegory and paradox that he could even preach under the guise of apparent orthodoxy. Only in extreme secrecy, however, did Ibn Masarra openly reveal the secrets of his allegories to a select group of disciples. We are told that one of these disciples, Ḥayy Ibn 'Abd al-Malik, covertly obtained a copy of Ibn Masarra's Kitāb at-Tabṣira, much to the master's disapproval.¹

The principles of the small religious community of Ibn Masarra seem to have been:

1. A new method of ascetic discipline (ṭarīqa)
2. Human free-will (istīṭā'a)
3. Rejection of the physical punishments of hell
4. Spiritual perfection through ascetic practices.

¹. See Takmi1a, No. 113. Other disciples named are Kalīl Ibn 'Abd al-Malik (d.c. 934) (see ibid., No. 186); Muḥammad Ibn al-Mawrūrī (d. 968) (see ibid., No. 347); and Ahmad Ibn Muntīl (d. 955) (see al-Farāḍī, No. 127). It is also known that 'Uthman Ibn ʿSaʿīd of Elvira (d.c. 937) (see ibid., No. 897) maintained correspondence with Ibn Masarra.
Asín has shown that the tarīqa of Ibn Masarra corresponded in large measure with his contemporaries, the Sufis Dhu 'l-Nūn al-Misrī (d.c. 860) and Nahrajūrī (d. 941). The most notable similarity is in the method of examining conscience as a means of elevating the soul to the stage of purity.¹

The populace of Córdoba were divided in their opinion about Ibn Masarra. One group considered him to be an imām—a master and guide in dogmatics and morality. On the other hand, the Mālikite theologians and the majority of the common people condemned Ibn Masarra and his school as heretical. The publication of Ibn Masarra's works (now lost) brought passions to a head; three of the titles are known:

1. **Kitāb al-Mūqannānīn**, dealing with the unity and the infinity of the divine attributes.²

2. **Kitāb at-Tabšira**, possibly the mysterious key to Ibn Masarra's esoteric system.


¹. Al-Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Mahjūb, p. 101: "The sign of true knowledge is sincerity of will, and a sincere will cuts off all secondary causes and severs all ties of relationship, so that nothing remains except God. Dhu 'l-Nūn says: 'Sincerity (ṣidd) is the sword of God on the earth: it cuts everything that it touches.'" For biographies, see as-Sulami, Tabagāt, pp. 23-32 (Dhu 'l-Nūn) and pp. 392-395 (Nahrajūrī). See also Asín, Abenmasarra y su Escuela, Appendix 5: "Vida y doctrina de Dūnūn el Egipto y de el Nahrahurī."

². Ibn al-Mar'ah of Málaga (d. 1214), master of Ibn Sab'īn and a commentator on the Mahāsin of Ibn al-'Arīf, referred to this work (see Massignon, Recueil de Textes Inédits..., p. 70). Asín, Abenmasarra..., fails to mention the book.
These works quickly began to circulate outside Córdoba and soon arrived in the Orient. One of the "orthodox" Sufis of the East who condemned Ibn Masarra's errors was Abū al-Hasan at-Tustarī.¹ It seems, however, that Ibn Masarra's works were not burned during his lifetime, nor was he ever officially condemned as a heretic. He died at the hermitage, surrounded by his disciples, on 20 October 931, and was buried after the mid-afternoon prayer of the following day.

Because of the mystery surrounding Ibn Masarra's doctrine, the esoteric nature of his writings, the small number of his disciples, and the taint of heresy, it is extremely difficult to reconstruct his system. As not even fragments of his works have survived, one has to look for traces of his teachings in the works of other heterodox Sufis of al-Andalus. Ibn al-‘Arabī in his Futūḥāt, for example, invokes the authority of Ibn Masarra more than once. All this obscurity has given rise to disagreement among the various Orientalists who have been concerned with Ibn Masarra. Goldziher² feels that he came under Neoplatonic and Ismā‘īlian influences in the Orient. He goes on to say that Ibn Masarra professed an exaggerated system of Quranic allegory and was the first to introduce a latent movement of free-thinking into al-Andalus. The

1. Aš-Sha‘rānī, Tabaqāt, p. 66.
2. Ibn Tumart, Le Livre de Mohammed Ibn Tumart, p. 68.
most exhaustive examination of Ibn Masarra was *Abenmasarra y su Escuela*, published in 1914 by Asín Palacios. Many of Asín's conclusions were later challenged by Affifi in his work *The Mystical Philosophy of Muḥyid Dīn-Ibnul 'Arabī*. Most of Asín's deductions about Ibn Masarra's theological system are derived from Ibn Ḥazm (Fiṣāl), Ibn al-‘Arabī, and a statement by Ibn Ṣā‘īd that Ibn Masarra was an example of those Muslim Bāṭinis who were inspired by Empedocles. Tracing this passage to al-‘Āmirī, Stern has challenged Ṣā‘īd's example of Ibn Masarra as a follower of Empedocles. Stern says that Bāṭini can mean either a Neoplatonic Ismā‘īlī or simply a Ṣūfī, and that Ṣā‘īd has made a wrong association in the case of Ibn Masarra. He concludes that "Asín Palacios has built up an impressive picture of the history of Neoplatonism in Spain, with Ibn Masarra looming large as a great initiator of a philosophical movement - but this picture is based on an illusion." Despite Stern's objections, there is still

1. Affifi has produced the most authoritative study of Ibn al-‘Arabī. His comprehension of Asín's works, however, seems less than perfect because of an apparent deficiency in Spanish. He refers, for instance, to Señor Asín with a French title and a maternal appellation - as "Monsieur Palacios." (*Ibnul 'Arabī*, p. 178)


3. *Actas - IV Congresso de Estudos Árabes e Islâmicos*, pp. 325-337.

4. ibid., p. 327.
much to recommend Asín's position. Ibn Masarra was indeed a Sufi, but he was also extensively exposed to Neoplatonic and Ismāʿīlī influences through his Muʿtazilism. It is true that the Ismāʿīlīs were especially persecuted by the Spanish Mālikites (owing to the Fāṭimid threat), but their ideas definitely filtered into al-Andalus. Owing to orthodox pressures, the heterodox intellectual currents of al-Andalus—Sufism, Neoplatonism, Aristotelianism, Muʿtazilism—all tended to flow in the same stream bed.

References to Ibn Masarra's theological system appear in Ibn Ḥazm and in Ibn al-ʿArabī, which, while neither copious nor direct, are virtually the only ones available. Chapter 272 of the Futūḥāt, for example, describes the most sublime mystical stage—arriving through ecstatic intuition at awareness of the absolute simplicity and Oneness of God; Ibn al-ʿArabī calls this stage تدريب التوحيد. Asín describes this intuitive concept of the One as the cardinal thesis of all Muʿtazilite and Bāṭinī theology. In the same chapter of the Futūḥāt reference is made to Ibn Masarra's Kitāb al-Hurūf.

1. See the excellent critique, "Ibnul ʿArabī and Ibn Masarra", on pp. 178-183 of Affifi, ...Ibnul ʿArabī.

2. See Asín, Abenmasarra..., pp. 67-69, for a translation and discussion of this section of the Futūḥāt; cf. ...Ibnul ʿArabī, pp. 75-77, and Massignon, Recueil..., pp. 70-71.
In Ibn Ḥazm’s *Fiṣāl* the following is attributed to Ibn Masarra, through an interpolation of the doctrine of Ismā’īl al-Ru’aynī: "«El Trono de Dios (العرش) es el ser que gobierna o rige (المدير) [sic] el cosmos. Dios es demasiado excelso para que se le pueda atribuir acción alguna ad extra.»" ¹ It is not known, however, precisely how Ibn Masarra considered al-‘Arāṣ, the First Material of pseudo-Empedoclean philosophers. Ibn al-‘Arabī, referring to Ibn Masarra, makes al-‘Arāṣ the first universal body in his cosmology, and specifically deals with al-‘Arāṣ in the thirteenth chapter of his *Futūḥāt* entitled "Concerning intuition of the supports of the Throne":

We have learned through oral tradition derived from Ibn Masarra al-Jabali (who was one of the greatest Shīʿī masters because of his knowledge, his ecstatic qualities, and his illumination) the following: "The supported Throne of God is really the kingdom of all creation, which can be reduced to body, spirit, substance, and degree. Adam and Isrāfīl support the bodies; Jibrīl and Muḥammad are the supports of the spirits; Mīkāʾīl and Abraham are concerned with provisions; Mālik and Ṗidwān deal with punishments and rewards." ²

¹. Asín, Abenmasarra..., p. 70.
². Translated from the original in *Al-Futūḥāt*, vol. II, p. 348; cf. Abenmasarra..., p. 72. The pairings are very interesting: Adam with Isrāfīl, angel of the last day; Muḥammad with Jibrīl, angel of revelations; and Abraham with Mīkāʾīl, patron of the Israelites. See "Mālāʾika" by D.B. MacDonald in *E.I.*, 1st ed., vol. III, pp. 189-192.
The above description corresponds to a spurious Ḥadīt, which claims that the Throne of God is supported by four legs in this life and by eight at the Day of Judgment. Thus, each leg of the Throne possesses a double reality—being both exoteric and esoteric. The first three pairs of legs have a man to represent external reality and an angel to represent internal reality; the last pair are both angels—Mālik (custodian of hell) and Ridwān (custodian of paradise).

In addition to Ibn Ḥazm, Ibn al-‘Arabī and Saʿīd, Asīn uses the following Eastern references to reconstruct the pseudo-Hippocratic system of Ibn Masarra:

1. aš-Šahrāzūrī (d. 1117), Rawḍa
2. aš-Šahrastānī (d. 1153), Milal
3. Ibn Abī Usaybiʿa (d. 1270), Tabaqāt al-ʿAtibbā
4. al-Qīṭṭī (d. 1248), Taʾrīkh al-Ḥukmā

1. Cf. Q. 69:17 which says that eight angels will bear the Throne on the Day of Judgment.
3. ibid., pp. 675-677.
5. Affifi, ...Ibnul ‘Arabī, p. 180, states that Ibn Abī Usaybiʿa and al-Qīṭṭī seem to have borrowed all they knew about Hippocrates and Ibn Masarra from Ibn Saʿīd’s Tabaqāt.
Empedocles was, for the Muslims, the first of the ancient Greek philosophers - followed by Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. It is suspected that Ibn Masarra modelled himself directly on the philosophic and ascetic principles of various pseudo-Empedoclean philosophers. The most original feature of Masarrite philosophy consisted in exploiting a somewhat obscure theorem attributed to Empedocles in the Eneadas of Plotinus: the existence of a spiritual material common to all beings, except God. On this idea, Ibn Masarra seems to have constructed his cosmology of the universe, as well as his doctrines of free-will and purification of the soul.

Following Mu‘tazilism, Ibn Masarra reacted against the textual fatalism of the Qur‘ān and developed the distinction of two divine "sciences"; essentially, God could be omniscient without excluding the possibility of human free-will.¹

The ascetic rules of Ibn Masarra’s  ṭarīqa seem to have been derived largely from Dhu ’l-Nūn’s emphasis on sincerity (ṣidq) as the way to purifying the soul.

¹. See Asín, Abenházam de Córdoba y su Historia Crítica de las Ideas Religiosas, vol. V, pp. 90-91; and cf. Q. 6:73, "He has knowledge of the visible and the unseen."
"El examen de conciencia que recomendaba Abenmasarra no tenía por objeto la corrección y enmienda de los vicios o pecados mortales, sino la purificación de la intención con que se practican las virtudes y las obras devotas."

Asín goes on to say that this Sufi doctrine owes much to the teaching in Matthew 6:22-23. Through purification of the soul it was then possible to attain the gift of prophecy and even become the mahdi.

One of Ibn Masarra's most heretical doctrines involved the negation of all rewards and punishments in an after-life. This position derives from his emphasis on the soul and its search for re-incorporation with the spiritual world. Consequently, the concepts of resurrection, physical punishments in hell, and physical rewards in paradise were irrelevant to Ibn Masarra's outlook. The same concepts, however, formed the basis of the social control exercised by orthodox Islam.

The following is a summation of Ibn Masarra's principal doctrines, derived by Asín largely from aš-Šahrazūrī and from aš-Šahrastānī:

1. Concept of the One

Following Plotinus, the cosmos is the result of an emanation and is composed of five hierarchical substances: (i) First Element (al-‘Unṣur), (ii) First Intellect, (iii) Rational Soul, (iv) Animal Souls, (v) Vegetative Souls.

2. The Throne of God

Al-‘Arş represents the First Material and is responsible for the origin, conservation and end of the cosmos.

3. Free-will

Ibn Masarra denies to the One the science of emanated beings, because this science is an essential attribute of the Intellect.

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1. See Affifi, ...Ibnul ‘Arabi, pp. 180-182, which claims that this concept was Neoplatonic but not Empedoclean. Affifi specifically states that the complementary doctrine of the unity of the divine Attributes was developed by the Muʿtazilites. He says that the human soul as a manifestation of the Universal Soul is Neoplatonic (not Empedoclean) and closely associated with the thinking of the Ikwān aṣ-Ṣaḥā. Furthermore, the doctrine of the three souls is essentially Aristotelian. (Asin should not be overly criticised, however, as he is careful to refer to Ibn Masarra's ideas as pseudo-Empedoclean and therefore Neoplatonic.)

2. ibid., p. 183: "...the only thing Ibnul ‘Arabi seems to have borrowed from Ibn Masarra is the divine Throne symbolism on which Ibnul ‘Arabi puts his own interpretation;..."
4. Paradise and hell

A purification from all that is corporal is sought, arriving at an absolutely spiritual eschatology that denies physical rewards and punishments.

5. Prophecy

The ability to perform miracles and the gift of prophecy can be acquired through purification of the soul, independent of divine selection.

Ibn Masarra had no descendants to continue his doctrines; this task was left to his written works and to a few of his personal disciples. The Masarrite school, however, was favoured by the political situation in al-Andalus. When Ibn Masarra died in 931, ‘Abd ar-Rahmān III had consolidated his control even to the extent of calling himself caliph. In addition to this pacification of al-Andalus, the crown prince al-Ḥakam showed an exceptional tendency towards scholarship. Theological and philosophical speculation came to be generally tolerated, with a corresponding decrease in the repressive powers of the Mālikite theologians. Following Asín, some of the known Masarrites who lived during the tenth century were:
1. Ṭarīf al-Qurṭubī of Rota

He was noted for his asceticism and his knowledge of the works of Ibn Masarra. (See Takmila, No. 281)

2. Muḥammad al-Fanī (d. 982)

He introduced grammar and literature from the Orient, and is said to have taught traditions along Masarrite lines. (See al-Faraḍī, No. 1329)

3. Ibn ʿUkt ʿAbdūn of Pechina (d. 986)

After returning from the Orient, he was forced to repent Masarrite teachings by the Córdoban qāḍī Ibn Zarb. (See ibid., No. 179)

4. Rashīd b. Fataḥ ad-Dajjāj of Córdoba (d. 986)

He taught traditions suspected of being Masarrite, but the qāḍī gave his funeral oration. (See ibid., No. 437)

5. Abān b. Saʿīd of Medina Sidonia (d. 987)

Described as a man of letters and subtle polemicist, he also passed as a Masarrite. (See ibid., No. 54)

1. The coastal rābiṭa of Rūṭa (modern Rota in Cádiz) was an important Sufi centre, later visited by Ibn al-ʿArabī about 1193.
6. Ibn al-Imām al-Kawlānī of Córdoba (917-990)

Learned in history and philology, he was a declared Masarrite - even to the extent of praying in the direction of the astronomical Levante. (See ibid., No. 1359. This orientation away from the qibla is unexplained but may have been common to Ibn Masarra and to his early disciples.)

7. Muḥammad al-Qaysī Ibn Kayr of Jaén (d. 992)

Appearing to be orthodox, he made two long study-trips to the Orient; buried with orthodox rites. (See ibid., No. 1364)

8. ‘Abd al-Azīz (d. 997)

A declared Masarrite and great-grandson of Muḥammad I, he was much given to the study of both dogmatic theology and speculative philosophy. (See ibid., No. 834)

The spiritual monopoly of the Mālikite theologians was not broken, however, and attention was soon turned to stopping the advance of Masarrite doctrines. The first to persecute the Masarrites was Ibn Zarb (929-991),1 who later became supreme qādī of Córdoba upon the death of

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1. See ibid., No. 1361, and ad-Ḍabbī, No. 325.
al-Ḥakam II in 976. The famous grammarian Abū Bakr az-Zubaydī of Sevilla (928-989) wrote a refutation of Masarrite ideas which he entitled Ḥatk Sutūr al-Mulḥidīn (Tearing away the veils of the heretics). A third opponent was the famous traditionalist of Talamanca, Abū ‘Umar Ibn Lubī (951-1037), who wrote a voluminous work revealing the occult heresies of the Masarrite system.

Muḥammad Ibn Yabqā Ibn Zarb was the most indefatigable persecutor of the Masarrites. As early as 961, he and az-Zubaydī, with the approval of the aged ‘Abd ar-Raḥmān III, were able to detain the best-known Masarrites. The prisoners were forced to make public retractions and were obliged to burn any works by their master Ibn Masarra. In 979, there followed an even more severe blow to philosophy in general and Masarrism in particular. Following the death of al-Ḥakam II, the power of the young caliph Hishām II was first suppressed by a regency and then by the dictatorship of al-Manṣūr. Ibn Zarb and az-Zubaydī found themselves in exceedingly strong positions; the former was supreme qāḍī and the latter was tutor to Hishām II. Furthermore, the dictator al-Manṣūr was anxious to secure the sympathy of the masses through their spiritual directors. Beginning about 979,

2. Ad-Dabbi, No. 347.
these factors produced a fearful religious inquisition. The Mālikites were directed to expurge all libraries of heretical materials even the magnificent collection of al-Ḥakam II. Śaʿid picks this period as the point of departure for a decadence of philosophical studies in Andalusia, a decadence that was to last until the period of the Taifas. Philosophy became an "underground" discipline until it resurfaced in the petty kingdoms that flourished after the caliphate's disintegration. The following philosophers are known to have suffered:

1. ʿAbd ar-Rahmān b. Ismāʿīl b. Badr, al-Uqlīdī, the "Spanish Euclid"

   This famous geometrician is especially known for a work based on Aristotle's Organon. He was forced to leave Córdoba and took refuge in the East. (See Ibn Śaʿīd, ...Catégories des Nations, pp. 128-129)


   Author of a book on music and an introduction to philosophy (Tree of the Science), he was jailed as an atheist. When his protests of orthodoxy finally gained him release, al-Ḥammār had to seek refuge in Sicily, where he died. (See ibid., p. 129)
3. Ibn al-Ifllill of Córdoba

Writer, theologian and philosopher, he was denounced as the master of an atheistic group of poets, including Saʿīd al-Ḥammār (above); Qāsim (of the Umayyad royal family); Muhammad of Pechina; and Ibn al-Kaṭīb. All narrowly managed to save their lives – at the cost of prison terms and humiliations. (See aḍ-Ḍabbī, No. 1296)

In this atmosphere of intolerance and active repression, the disciples of Ibn Masarra largely dispersed or hid their views. Eventually, the Masarrite school would shift from Córdoba to Almería. The last Masarrite nucleus in Córdoba seems to have consisted of members of a single family; all were either sons or nephews of the famous Mundir Ibn Saʿīd al-Ballūtī (886-966),1 who had once been supreme qādi of Córdoba. Often referred to as a Muʿtazilite, al-Ballūtī seems to have actually been a Zahirite who participated in some Masarrite practices. This compatibility of various schools, specifically the Muʿtazilite and the Masarrite, has been recognised by Asín: "Esta relación entre el motazilismo español y el masarrismo fue tan evidente, que, según dijimos, Abenházam la afirma y la demuestra en su Fīsal (IV, 198 y 80)

respecto de la doctrina del libre albedrío profesada por Abenmasarra. El hecho de ser masarríes y motáziles los hijos de Bellotí confirma la relación... The reference to Ibn Ḥazm is particularly appropriate; initiated as a Mālikite, he passed to the Shaʿfī’ites before becoming one of the best-known Zahirites.

The eldest of al-Ballūṭī’s sons was Ḥakam (d. 1029), a famous poet, physician, lawyer and theologian. He became chief of the Muʿtazilites of his time and followed the ascetic practices of Ibn Masarra. His brother Saʿīd, noted for the eloquence of his prayers, was killed in 1013 during the sacking of Córdoba by the Berbers. A third brother, ‘Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1044), was especially given to a life of meditation and prayer. The fourth brother was ‘Abd al-Malik, who had been šāhib ar-radd under al-Ḥakam II; he was crucified in 978 by al-Maṣūr for his part in a conspiracy to elevate a grandson of ‘Abd ar-Rahmān III to the caliphate. Finally, a cousin of these four brothers, Muhammad, had studied the esoteric books of Ibn Masarra.

1. Asín, Abenmasarra..., p. 94, note 2; see also Appendix 2 ("Primeros Motáziles Españoles") and Appendix 3 ("Primeros Ascetas Musulmanes Españoles").


4. Ibn Baškuwal, No. 809.

5. Asín, Abenmasarra..., p. 95.

About a century after the death of Ibn Masarra, significant changes seem to have been made to his original doctrines. Owing to persecutions in Córdoba towards the end of the tenth century, the Masarrite school developed into a hierarchical, secret society. With the total collapse of the Córdoban caliphate, the Masarrite nucleus was shifted to the secluded village of Pechina near Almería. The most interesting innovation at Pechina was the figure of the imām, who was obeyed implicitly and who even received the ten per cent tax (zakāt). The Masarrite imām who lived during the time of Ibn Ḥazm was Ismā‘īl Ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-Ru‘aynī, who is especially notable for the radical modifications that he introduced to the system of Ibn Masarra:

1. Ismā‘īl’s doctrine of the Throne of God seems similar to that of Ibn Masarra. Al-‘Arāš (also called the First Material or Primal Intelligence) was seen as the being that governed the universe, God being too sublime to attribute any action to Him. It was on this point, however, that a split developed in the group at Pechina.

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2. Ismāʿīl's group declared heretical the doctrine that God knows from all eternity everything that is going to exist, before it actually exists. Ismāʿīl's notion of free-will was but a simplification of Ibn Masarra's original idea of God's two sciences, the universal and the particular.

3. The gift of prophecy, attained through purification of the soul, was given an exaggerated importance by the Masarrites of Pechina. It is said, for example, that Ismāʿīl knew the language of the birds - a sure sign of sanctity and prophecy.¹

4. Al-Ruʿaynī apparently held that all private property was illicit, so it mattered not whether goods were acquired by work, commerce or robbery. Asīn describes this as an absurd aberration of the mystical doctrine of poverty, probably resulting from the economic disintegration of the times.²

5. Temporary marriage (nikāḥ al-mutʿa) was authorised, following Oriental precedents and al-Ruʿaynī's own particular antinomianism.

6. "He who dies has already been resurrected." This was essentially the view of both Ibn Masarra and al-Ru‘aynī; the human soul was seen as freed by death for a return to the Universal Spirit. Consequently, the orthodox positions concerning heaven and hell, resurrection of the body, and a Judgment Day were rejected by the Masarrites. ¹

7. Ismā‘Il further maintained that the world would never be annihilated but would instead continue indefinitely (a modified pseudo-Empedoclean idea).

The denial of private property and the acceptance of temporary marriages are especially indicative of the radicalisation wrought upon Masarrism by al-Ru‘aynī. Following a break with the more intellectual elements at Pechina, Ismā‘Il seems to have sought the support of the general populace. These common people were evidently more responsive to al-Ru‘aynī’s prophecies and miracles, and they were obviously drawn by the prospects of free goods and free-love. One can assume that al-Ru‘aynī took advantage of the general state of anarchy in Andalusia and probably organised his followers as a group of brigands.

¹ See Affifi, ...Ibnul ‘Arabi, pp. 163-170, for a description of how Ibn al-‘Arabī also denied the reality of heaven and hell.
The larger issue to be considered here is the relation of heterodox philosophy to a religious society. During Ibn Masarra's lifetime, society tolerated his ideas only from a position of security established by 'Abd ar-Rahmān III. The subsequent weakening of the caliphate brought persecutions against the heterodox elements. The power vacuum brought on by the fitna led, finally, to a loss of social restraints and to a radical degeneration of the Masarrites.¹

The excesses of al-Ru‘aynī were decisive for the death of the Masarrite school as a cohesive organism. The question is then whether the ideas of this school had any further continuity and influence. Asín, among others, maintains the vitality of diffuse Masarrism, saying that it founded other systems similar in thought, if not in name.²

1. Asín, Abenmasarra... pp. 97-98.

2. ibid., p. 107.
The key to this whole discussion is the city of Almería, originally the watch-tower of Pechina (*mariyyat Bajjāna*). Later developed into a naval arsenal, Almería was officially founded as a city by the caliph 'Abd ar-Rahmān III in 955. This rapid growth from port to suburb to metropolis meant the decadence of Pechina, six miles inland on the wādī Bajjāna. Al-Idrīsī, writing about 1150, describes Pechina as consisting only of a great mosque amidst ruins; he says that all its inhabitants have moved to Almería.  

1. See the following:  


Almería was probably the most powerful of all the Taifa kingdoms that filled the vacuum produced by the collapse of the Andalusian caliphate. Despite its austere terrain, Almería enjoyed an especially favoured location. At a safe distance from Christian incursions, its port replaced Sevilla as the hub of Andalusian trade with the Mediterranean. This commerce fostered various industries, including the manufacture of pottery, copper utensils and textiles. There was also extensive agricultural activity along the nearby Almería River. Al-Idrīsī tells us that, in all of Spain, the people of Almería were unsurpassed in riches, industry and commerce. It was under the Almoravid occupation (1091-1147) that the city reached its zenith, a glory still reflected by the large numbers of fine tombstones and gold ḏīnārs surviving from that period.¹

1. See the following:

(i) L. Torres Balbás, "Cementerios Hispanomusulmanes", Al-Andalus, XXII (1957), pp. 131-191.

(ii) "Ceremonias Funebres de los Arabes Españoles", in Ribera, Disertaciones y Opúsculos, pp. 248-256.

(iii) Vives, Monedas de las Dinastías Arábigo-Españolas, and La Moneda Hispánica, passim.

(iv) The praise rendered to Almería in aš-Šaqundī, Elogio del Islam Español, pp. 112-114.

(v) Lévi-Provençal, Inscriptions Arabes d’Espagne, chapter XVI, deals with the extensive Arabic inscriptions that remain from Almería.
also under the Almoravids that Almería became the most important Sufi centre of al-Andalus. About 1063, Ibn Ḥazm had already described Muḥammad Ibn Ḥasan Ibn ʿĪsā ("the Sufi of Elvira") who preached in Almería on the mystical union with God in anthropomorphic terms (tasbīḥ). This preacher may well have been one of those popular radicals resulting from diffused Masarrism, as he was obviously a contemporary of Ismāʿīl al-Ruʿaynī.

It has been established that the population of Pechina was absorbed by Almería, and that this process was taking place during al-Ruʿaynī's lifetime. It can safely be assumed that Masarrite doctrines generally followed the same course. The radical disciples of al-Ruʿaynī must have propagated his ideas in and around the region of Almería, in a like manner as Muḥammad Ibn ʿĪsā. Further continuity of Masarrite ideas, in the formal context of a Sufi school, is most probably derived from those conservative relatives of al-Ruʿaynī who split with him at Pechina: Abū Harūn, his son; Ahmād, his son-in-law; and Yaḥyā, his grandson. Ismāʿīl's daughter, described as a mutakallima of exceptional abilities, was the only member of his immediate family who continued to

support him. The schismatics from the radicalism of Pechina were largely intellectuals who could not accept the distortion and fanaticism to which Masarrism was being subjected. It seems likely that these outcasts from Pechina retreated to the urban setting of Almería and there professed "orthodox" Masarrite ideas to some unknown extent. As for the followers of the imām of Pechina, their radical ideas became so inarticulate and so dispersed that they could no longer be identified with Ibn Masarra. So if Masarrite doctrines survived collectively to some degree, they most likely did so in Almería.

1. See Asín, Abenházam...Historia Crítica, vol. IV, pp. 246-250. Ibn Ḥazm's informant on this matter was Ḥakam Ibn al-Ballūṭī (d. 1029), leader of the Masarrite remnant at Córdoba. He, as well as Ibrāhīm Ibn Sahl of Orihuela ("one of the principal Masarrites"), also seem to have disagreed with al-Ruʿaynī.
SECTION III: IBN AL-'ARĪF

By 1100, Almeria had become the centre of Sufism in al-Andalus, having inherited at least some of the teachings of Ibn Masarra. During the eleventh century, Andalusian thought had been enriched by numerous Oriental sources. Especially notable are the *Epistles* of the Ikwan as-Ṣafā’, introduced into Spain either by al-Majritī (d.c. 1008) or by his disciple al-Kirmānī (d. 1066). Before the death of al-Ḡazālī in 1111, his works also began to circulate in the Islamic West, and his doctrines "...seemed to infuse fresh, youthful blood into the old Spanish esoteric school, imparting to it a new vitality and, above all, a firm resolve to resist the persecutions of the fukahā’." This resolve was soon tested when the Almoravid sultan Yūsuf Ibn Tashufln, about the year 1106, approved the burning of al-Ḡazālī's greatest work (*Ihya‘ Ulūm ad-Dīn*) by the Córdoban theologians. In response, the theologians

1. During this time, the Sufi centre of the Magrib was the school at Fās, later headed by the famous Abū Madyan (c. 1128-1197), called the pole (qūṭb) of his time.


of Almería, led by al-Barjl, drafted a fatwā condemning the act of the Córdoban qāḍī Ibn Ḫamdīn; this was the only collective protest heard in Almoravid territory.¹

The spirit of Ibn al-‘Arlf was formed in Almería's atmosphere of religious enthusiasm and philosophic inquiry. His full name was Abū al-‘Abbās ʿAbd al-Ṣanḥājī,² indicating that he was a member of the Ṣanḥāja tribe. His father Muḥammad served as al-‘Arlf (chief of the night watch) in Tangier and later formed part of the garrison at the alcazaba of Almería, where his son was born on 24 July 1088. He was apprenticed to a weaver but showed such devotion to scholarly pursuits that he was finally allowed to study theology, philology and poetry under accredited

1. Al-Barjl was from the town of Berja, about 27 miles due west of Almería; see B.A.H., Muʿjam, No. 253, for his biography. For further details of this affair, see Lévi-Provençal, Islam d’Occident, pp. 254-255; Codera, Decadencia y Desaparición de los Almorávides en España, pp. 215-221 and 357-365; Asín, Abenmasarra..., p. 108.

masters in Almería. *The Precious Stones*, by Ṣa‘īd al-
Bagdādī,¹ is one of the works known to have formed his
literary education. Eventually, Ibn al-‘Arīf became
renowned as a calligrapher, jurisprudent, traditionalist,
poet and reciter of the Qur’ān. He even served for a
time as ṣāḥib as-sūq (inspector of weights and measures)
at Valencia.

Yet Ibn al-‘Arīf was most known as a mystic and
ascetic. He was initiated into Sufism by Abū Bakr Ibn
‘Abd al-Baqī, whose chain of masters includes Abū Sa‘īd
Aḥmad Ibn al-‘Arābī, whom Ibn Masarra probably met in
Mecca.² One can assume some similarities between the
esoteric doctrines of Ibn Masarra and those of Ibn al-
‘Arīf, especially in the light of later developments at
Pechina. Ibn al-‘Arīf was also one of the first Western
interpreters of al-Gazālī’s mysticism, and he created a
†arīqa that had many followers throughout al-Andalus. He
taught at Almería, Zaragoza and Valencia; besides Ibn Qasī,
his most famous disciples were:

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¹ Ṣa‘īd resided at the court of the Córdoban dictator
al-Mansūr and produced *Kitāb Sumāh al-Fuṣūq* for his
patron. Written in imitation of *Kitāb al-Nawādir*
by Abū ‘Alī al-Qālī, it is a compilation of
classical texts in prose and in poetry. See Yaqūt,
266-267.

² See Asín, Abenmasarra..., p. 35. Ibn al-‘Arābī was
a direct disciple of the shaykh of the order, al-
Junayd; see Deverdun, Inscriptions..., p. 19, for
the complete silsila from Ibn ‘Abd al-Baqī to the
Prophet Muḥammad.
1. Abū Bakr al-Mayurqī (originally from Mallorca, as the name indicates) was a jurist of the Zahirite school. He studied in Mecca and in Alexandria for several years before coming to live as an ascetic in Granada.¹

2. Ibn Barrajān, originally from North Africa, resided in Sevilla. In addition to skill as a traditionalist, he was a mystical theologian devoted to austerity. Ibn Barrajān was also involved with numerology and is said to have predicted the date of Jerusalem's capture by Saladin (1187).²

There is some doubt about the influence that Ibn al-‘Arīf exercised over the Spanish mystics as a whole. It is known, for example, that Ibn Qasī, al-Mayurqī and Ibn Barrajān formed separate schools in their respective regions. The relationship between Ibn al-‘Arīf and Ibn Barrajān seems to be especially unclear; a recent examination of correspondence between the two men

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concluded that Ibn Barrajān may indeed have been the master. ¹ The humility shown in Ibn al-‘Arīf’s letters, however, is probably merely stylistic. What seems apparent is the greater political ambition of Ibn Barrajān; aš-Ṣa‘rānī informs us that about 130 towns recognised him as imām. ²

The number and the fanaticism of Ibn al-‘Arīf’s disciples seem to have aroused suspicions at the Almoravid court. It is known with what frequency political revolutions in Islam first adopt the appearance of inoffensive religious movements; indeed, this process had propelled the Almoravids themselves to power. The reaction of the Almoravids was prompted by the initiative of Ibn al-Aswad, qādī of Almería, who envied the popular esteem enjoyed by Ibn al-‘Arīf. Ibn al-Aswad sent a written denunciation to the court at Marrākuš, and the sultan ‘Alī subsequently ordered the arrest of Ibn al-‘Arīf, Ibn Barrajān and al-Mayurqī. Al-Mayurqī managed to escape to the Orient, but the other two men were sent to Africa. Ibn al-‘Arīf, unlike his fellow prisoner, was respectfully received by the Almoravid ruler. Both mystics died in suspicious circumstances, shortly after their arrival during September, 1141.

¹. See Hesperis, xliii (1956), pp. 217-221, for the article "...La Correspondance d’Ibn al-‘Arīf avec Ibn Barrajān" by Paul Nwyia, S.J.

². Tabaqāt, p. 15.
The only surviving work of Ibn al-‘Arîf is  

Mahasin al-Majalis,1 a study of the stations (manâzîl) of the mystical way:

1. Ma‘rifâ2 - ecstatic intuition, or gnosis
2. Irâdâ - will, or inclination
3. Zuhd - asceticism, or abstinence
4. Tawakkul3 - confidence, dependence, trust
5. Sabr - patience
6. Huzn - sadness
7. Kafîr4 - fear
8. Raja’ - hope
9. Sukr - gratitude
10. Maḥabba - love; and Sawq - desire, or longing


2. This knowledge of God is generally considered to be the last stage of mystical progression. Paradoxically, Ibn al-‘Arîf has presented ma‘rifâ as the first station. One should also note the esoteric connotations of the author's name, which is derived from the same root as ma‘rifâ.

3. Some mystics took tawakkul as a command to implicitly trust God, even to the extent of refusing to seek food. They described their attitude as that of a corpse in the hands of the washer who prepares it for burial.

4. Stations and, more particularly, states (ahwâl) are often classified in pairs of opposites; such is the case with kafîr and raja’. This particular association may be derived from ἔλπις, whose usage in classical Greek "...makes hope more neutral, i.e., an expectation for the future that may be either good or bad, dependent upon how a man acts at the present time." (From New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. VII, "Hope (In the Bible)", pp. 141-142, by J.E. Fallon.) See also "Hope", by Rabbi Adolf Guttmacher, in The Jewish Encyclopedia, vol. VI, pp. 459-460 (London, 1904).
To these ten steps, Ibn al-'Arif adds penitence (tawba) and familiarity with God (uns). These mystical progressions, which are common to most Sufis, were first defined by al-Muhasibi (d. 857). While al-Muhasibi does not mention irada, he does add poverty (faqr), satisfaction (rida'), and assertion of the unity of God (tawhid). 1

The originality of the Mahasin lies in its esoteric orientation. The basic idea of the work seems to stem from Dhu 'l-Nun al-Misri, who connected the mystical concepts of knowledge (ma'rifat) and love (mahabba). 2 Ibn al-'Arif begins with knowledge and ends with love, but he shows that love is both beginning and end for the Sufi:

فنصل واما الحبة في أول أودية الفداء والعقبة التي يتحدر منها على منازل الحدو هو آخر منزل لتتهنى فيه مقدمة العامه بساحة الخاصة ...

Love for God is the beginning of the valleys of extinction and the hill from which one descends through the stages of self-annihilation. And love is also the last of these stages, where the vanguard of the mass of believers meets the rearguard of the elect.

1. See Smith, Readings from the Mystics of Islam, pp. 1-7; al-Muhasibi's biography is given by as-Sulami, Tabaqat, pp. 49-53.
It is quite significant that Ibn al-‘Arīf uses the term manāzil, rather than maqāmāt, to describe the mystical stages. Through an examination of their verbal roots, manāzil can be interpreted as "stations of a descent" while maqāmāt can mean "stations of an ascent".

According to Ibn al-‘Arīf, love causes one to descend from his proud nafs through stages of self-renunciation and "valleys of extinction" that lead to a perfect knowledge of God. For the gnostic so united with God, the mystical stages then become irrelevant; only love remains as a proper state for those select ones in ecstatic union with God. Love is the beginning and the end. As in sees this renunciation of all that is not God as singularly important in the history of Islamic spirituality.  

The primacy of mahābba, as taught by Ibn al-‘Arīf, greatly affected his disciple Ibn Qasī and was to exert an influence on Ibn al-‘Arabī of Murcia, Ibn ‘Abbād of Ronda, and San Juan de la Cruz. The significant defect of Ibn al-‘Arīf’s system has been described as a tendency to quietism (ridā’).  

His militant disciple Ibn Qasī, however, did not succumb to any such defect.

1. Ibn al-‘Arīf, Maḥāsin, p. 16.

2. See ibid., pp. 16-17, and p. 93 (which includes a portion of Q. 3:191 - الذين يذكرون الله قياما ونحور). The concept of ridā’ is closely related to that of tawakkul, absolute trust in God.
XXXVI. LA ÉPOCA DE ALFONSO VII

Signos:
1. Frontera entre la Cristiandad y el Islam en 1128.
2. Frontera alcanzada por Alfonso VII.
3. Territorios heredados y conquistas de Alfonso VII.
4. Reinos en situación de dependencia feudal o vasallaje respecto a Alfonso VII.
Abū al-Qāsim Ahmad Ibn Ḥusayn Ibn Qasī was probably a descendant of the Banū Qasī family, which participated prominently in the muwallad rebellions of 852-912. Ibn Qasī was born in Silves at the beginning of the twelfth century and apparently worked as a tax collector. While still a young man, he seems to have undergone a spiritual change and to have abandoned a life of pleasure for one of austerity. Giving away all his possessions, Ibn Qasī began a series of long pilgrimages throughout al-Andalus. It was during these travels that he began to attract a devoted group of followers who, according to Ibn al-Kaṭīb, surrounded him like "a ring of evil". Both Ibn al-Kaṭīb and al-Marrākūṣī give a highly unfavourable picture of Ibn Qasī; he is seen as a clever religious heretic surrounded by a band of fanatical cut-throats. It is said that his disciples followed Bāṭinī doctrines and the


2. Al-Kaṭīb, ...l'Espagne Musulmane, p. 286, uses the term: دائرة السوء.
philosophic concepts of the Ikwan as-Šafā'. Ibn Qasi proclaimed himself a saint and claimed the following miraculous attributes:\(^1\)

1. Completion of the pilgrimage to Mecca in one night.

2. The power to speak in silence and make his desires known.

3. A supernatural treasury that first produced Almoravid coins and later Ibn Qasi's own coins.

Al-Marrākušī is especially harsh on Ibn Qasi, describing him as one of those petty rulers who attracted the ignorant masses through cunning and sleight-of-hand.\(^2\)

Despite these unsavoury comments, Ibn Qasi seems genuinely to have been part of the mystical heritage of Islamic Spain. Most of the criticism directed against him came from the camp that defeated him. It has frequently been pointed out that "history" is written by those who are victorious.\(^3\) With this in mind, one can begin a more realistic reconstruction of Ibn Qasi and his times. It is

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1. Al-Kaṭīb, ibid., calls these "his false miracles" (ممارسه).


apparent that he made his way to Almería and became one of the disciples of Ibn al-‘Arīf. As such, he formed part of the mystical chain whose links include Ibn al-‘rābī and al-Junayd. Ibn Qasī may also have learned something of Masarrism at Almería and surely became well-acquainted with the teachings of al-Ḡazālī.

Ibn Qasī was a complex, extraordinary man, "...an ambiguous figure who wished to be both politician and Ṣūfī, ..." He was, above all, an enlightened theologian who followed the example of other militant Sufis: he distributed all his goods and undertook pilgrimages as an itinerant mendicant; through his spiritual merits, he attracted disciples (murīdūn) and was able to found a rābīṭa on the coast near Silves. Ibn Qasī became a Sufi shaykh and seems to have propagated mystical teachings and to have explained the works of al-Ḡazālī throughout the Algarbe region.

Ibn Qasī’s religious activities coincided with a period of great political unrest, and his rābīṭa soon became a centre of conspiracy against the Almoravids.

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1. See Ibn al-Ḵāṭīb, ...l’Espagne Musulmane, p. 286.
3. There has been confusion of various sorts involving this rābīṭa. Ibn Ḫalūdūn, for example, mistakenly calls Ibn Qasī’s disciples Murābitūn instead of Murīdūn (see The Muqaddimah, vol. I, p. 323). The precise location of the rābīṭa is not known, but probable sites are discussed by Cagigas, Los Mudejares, p. 308, note 44.
Indeed, Codera has called Ibn Qasī the soul of revolution in the Algarbe.¹ The situation was ripe for rebellion. The Almoravids had alienated many Andalusians through their religious and intellectual intolerance. The orthodox Mālikites had been supported, and their authority led to such outrages as the burning of al-Gazālī's Ḥyā', the expulsion of Mozarabs, and the persecution of Jews. The troubles that began to afflict the Almoravids had military weakness as their root-cause. The African conquerors had hoped to govern Spain through a system of military garrisons. But their failure to reconquer Toledo or to retain the Ebro valley increased Christian pressures on al-Andalus and made the Almoravid detachments increasingly vulnerable. In such an atmosphere of military instability, the results were poor administration coupled with detrimental effects on commerce and industry. The rise of the Almohads as implacable enemies also forced the Almoravids to frequently turn their attention away from al-Andalus to Africa.²

1. ...Almorávides..., p. 33.

2. See González, ...Literatura Arábigo-Española, p. 25; Valdeavellano, Historia de España, pp. 443-444; and Bosch-Vilá, Los Almorávides, pp. 285-303, for their explanations of the Almoravid collapse. On the other hand, Nasr, A History of the Maghrib, pp. 92-118, discusses some of the achievements of the Almoravids. Codera, ...Almorávides..., pp. 215-221, deals with their excellent monetary system.
The Almoravid hold on the Algarbe, besides being obliquely threatened by Almohad successes in the Maġrib, was directly eroded by the incursions of the Portuguese ruler, Alfonso Henriquez. In 1139, Alfonso won the battle of Ourique, paving the way for his vassalage to the Holy See in 1143. This alliance reflects the abiding concern of the Italian city-states in reducing Muslim power in the Mediterranean. In October, 1143, the ranks of the Spanish Reconquista closed a little further; Alfonso VII of León and Castilla seems to have recognised his cousin Alfonso Henriquez as King of Portugal. These developments would lead, by 1147, to Portugal's capture of Santarén, Lisboa, Cintra and Palmela.¹

It has been claimed that Ibn Qasī was one of those muladies who turned to Alfonso of Portugal because of political and religious motivations.² There is some validity in this assertion by the Christian commentators.

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1. See Simonet, Historia de los Mozárabes de España, pp. 766-767, and Valdeavellano, Historia de España, pp. 443-449. Santarén fell on 15 March 1147. In June, Alfonso obtained the aid of a powerful Crusader fleet (French, German, English and Flemish) during his successful assault on Lisboa.

As a member of an old *muwallad* family, Ibn Qasi could be expected to have some contacts in the Christian camp. Alfonso, of course, welcomed any disruption of Almoravid control along his frontier in the Algarbe. It should be remembered, however, that Ibn Qasi only formally allied himself with the Portuguese king in 1151 as a final, desperate measure. In any case, the religious *ribaṭa* at Silves soon took on the military character of a *ribaṭ*, and the mystical disciples of Ibn Qasi developed into a religious militia.¹ Because it was functioning on the edge of both Portuguese and Almoravid control, the *ribaṭ* at Silves enjoyed a relative degree of independence. In such a situation, religious enthusiasm was soon to develop into military endeavour. The deaths of both Ibn al-ʿArīf and Ibn Barrajān at Marrākuş in 1141 obviously exacerbated the explosive passions at the *ribaṭ* of Silves.

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The first military action took place in April, 1144, when the stronghold of Monteagudo was attacked and apparently captured by a follower of Ibn Qasi. The rebellion began in earnest during August, 1144, when the important town of Mértola was besieged by a certain Ibn al-Qābila with seventy murīdūn. This brave and distinguished commander succeeded by a stratagem in capturing the fortress on 14 August 1144. This success served as a catalyst to general insurrection in the Algarbe region. Before the end of August, Sīdrāy Ibn Wazīr took Évora and Beja, while Ibn al-Mundīr gained possession of Silves. By the beginning of September, 1144, Ibn Qasī had occupied Mértola and had assumed the title al-Mahdī bi-Amr Allāh; this was the same designation that had been used by Ibn Tūmart, founder of the Almohad movement. Before entering Mértola Ibn Qasī

1. See Dozy, Notices..., p. 199 and pp. 287-288; also Codera, ...Almorāvides..., pp. 37-38.

2. For biographies, see Dozy, ibid., pp. 202-207 (Ibn al-Mundīr) and pp. 239-241 (Ibn Wazīr). Codera, ibid., pp. 292-293, gives the following details: Ibn Wazīr first rebelled in Évora and then apparently assisted Ibn al-Mundīr, who took the castle of Marjīq (district of Silves) and killed its Almoravid defenders. The Almoravid garrison of Beja then received the amān and fled to Sevilla, allowing Ibn al-Mundīr to enter the city at the head of Ibn Wazīr's troops. It is also known that Ibn al-Mundīr assumed the laqab of al-'Azīz bi-llāh.
had apparently written to the surrounding towns, urging their adhesion to the cause of insurrection. Both Ibn Wazīr and Ibn al-Mundīr hastened to Mértola and pledged their allegiance to Ibn Qasī.

There are several possible explanations for Ibn Qasī's assumption of the grandiose title al-Mahdī. During the previous Taifa period, petty rulers had set precedents by assuming pompous titles and by issuing their own coinage. The period of insurrection initiated by Ibn Qasī would show some of the same characteristics as the Taifa years. Asín has even seen Ibn Qasī's actions as a resurrection of Ismāʿīl al-Ruʿaynī's pretensions to the imamate. There may be some truth in this statement, owing to Ibn Qasī's probable exposure to the radical ideas from Pechina. One should also note the possible influence from Ibn Barrajān, who had been recognised as imām by 130 villages. The fact that Ibn Tūmart and Ibn Qasī used exactly the same title may be attributed to the strong influence of al-ʿAzāzī on both men. It is known that

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1. Al-Maqqārī, ...Mohammedan Dynasties..., vol. II, p. 310, tells us that Ibn Sāhib aṣ-Ṣalāt and other writers described this time as al-fitna at-tāniya. Codera, ...Almorávides..., p. 31, says: "...este período podría llamarse 'Segundo período de reyes de Taifas', ..."


Ibn Qaṣī sent an envoy to the Almohads before his attack on Mértola. Their rejection of his overture probably eased any reservations that he may have held about assuming Ibn Tūmart's title.

The month of September, 1144, was highly eventful for the Algarbe. Following the pact at Mértola, Ibn al-Mundir captured Huelva and received Niebla from Yūsuf al-Biṭrūjī, the Almoravid governor who had passed over to the rebel side. Ibn al-Mundir's burning ambition even pushed him into approaching Sevilla. At this point, however, the Almoravid governor-general, Yaḥyā Ibn Gāniya, hurried to Sevilla and heavily defeated Ibn al-Mundir, who was obliged to retire first to Niebla and then to Silves. Ibn Gāniya subsequently laid siege for three months to Niebla, which had been left in the hands of al-Biṭrūjī. During the same month of September, Alfonso VII was gathering his forces in Toledo for an invasion of al-Andalus.


2. Ibn Gāniya, one of the best Almoravid commanders, is known to have killed Alfonso I of Aragon ("El Batallador") in 1134. In 1143 he was appointed governor-general of al-Andalus. At the same time, his brother, Muḥammad Ibn Gāniya, was governor of the Balearic Islands. See al-Maqqārī, ibid., p. 309; and the article "Banū Gāniya", by A. Bel, in *E.I.*, 2nd ed., vol. II, p. 401.
In January, 1145, a second major focus of rebellion broke out in Almoravid Spain when the qādī Ibn Ḥamdīn\(^1\) revolted at Córdoba. This uprising had been facilitated by the absence of Ibn Ğāniya at the siege of Niebla. It was soon recognised, however, that Ibn Ḥamdīn would need an ally in order to retain control of Córdoba. Ibn Qasī sent both Ibn al-Mundir and Ibn Wazīr as envoys to explore the possibilities of an alliance. Before their arrival, however, Sayf ad-Dawla Ibn Ḥūd (Zafadola) quickly presented himself in the city and obtained the submission of Ibn Ḥamdīn.\(^2\) By the beginning of March the power of Ibn Ḥamdīn had grown to the extent that he was able to eject Zafadola and declare himself Amīr al-Muslimīn wa Nāṣir ad-Dīn. Additionally, he took the laqab of al-Manṣūr bi-illāh. Zafadola, after leaving Córdoba, went on to take Jaén; later, Granada was surrendered to him by the qādī Ibn Aṣḥāb.

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibn Ḥamdīn was the second son of the Córdoban theologian who had burned the works of al-Gazālī in 1109. He served as qādī of Córdoba from about 1135 until 1138, when the office passed to the grandfather of the philosopher Ibn Ruṣd. Ibn Ḥamdīn had been re-elected qādī shortly before he led the uprising of 1145.
\item See Dozy, Notices..., p. 203, for an account of this episode. The astute Sayf ad-Dawla, whose name was corrupted by the Christians to Zafadola, was one of the earliest rebels against Almoravid authority. As an ally of Alfonso VII, he took Rueda in 1129 and handed its castle over to the Emperor in 1131. As early as 1133, some Andalusians had approached Zafadola concerning insurrection against the Almoravids.
\end{enumerate}
The success of Ibn ʿAmidīn was the signal for general insurrection in Almoravid Spain. Ibn al-Ḥājj revolted in Murcia and acknowledged Ibn Ḥamdīn in the Kūṭba during Ramaḍān (March). In the same month, the qāḍī Ibn Ḥāssūn declared Málaga independent.\(^1\) On March 28th, the qāḍī Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz assumed control of Valencia; ten days later, he attacked Ibn Gāniya who had retreated to Játiva with his family. Ominously for the Almoravids, their ruler, Tāshufīn Ibn ʿAlī Ibn Yūsuf, died during the period of these disorders.\(^2\)

A state of anarchy, powered by blind ambitions and regional hatreds, soon developed in Andalusia.\(^3\) The confusion and violence that erupted in the spring of 1145 are especially illustrated by the course of insurrection in Murcia:

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1. Ibn Ḥāssūn took the title Amīr but recognised the authority of Ibn ʿAmidīn. His rule lasted from 1145 until 1153, and Málaga became one of the most stable Taifa of the time. Ibn Ḥamdīn even sought out Málaga as a refuge and died there on 1 November 1151. Málaga passed to the Almohads in 1153 after the suicide of Ibn Ḥāssūn.


1. Ibn al-Hājj revolted in March, 1145.

2. ‘Abd Allāh at-Taqrī (evidently an agent for Zafadola) overthrew Ibn al-Hājj after about a month.

3. The qādī Ibn Abī Ja'far, about a week later, ousted at-Taqrī.

4. At-Taqrī assumed power for a few days during the absence of Ibn Abī Ja'far at the siege of Játiva, held by Ibn Ğāniya.

5. Ibn Abī Ja'far hurried back from Játiva and took control for a second time.

6. Ibn Tahir al-Qaysī gained power.


All of the above changes at Murcia took place during the year 1145.¹

The respective spheres of influence of the Andalusian rebels become clear during the year 1145. Ğarb al-Andalus, instigated into rebellion by Ibn Qasī, came loosely under his control. Al-Andalus al-Awsat was the scene of a confused struggle between the partisans of Ibn Ḥamdīn and those of Zafadola, with Ibn Ḥamdīn eventually emerging as

¹. See Gaspar, Historia de Murcia Musulmana, pp. 161-175.
the strong-man. Sharq al-Andalus came under the nominal control of Zafadola; after his death in 1146, the area was gradually unified under Ibn Mardanish (1124-1172).

About July, 1145, the Almoravid admiral for al-Andalus, 'Ali Ibn ‘Isā Ibn Maymūn, rebelled at Cádiz. He was from a famous family of mariners that had originated in Denia. The episode is all the more interesting because Ibn Maymūn destroyed the ancient Temple of Hercules in the vain hope of revealing its treasury. Ibn Maymūn also set an important precedent for the anti-Almoravid rebels when he went to Fās and personally swore allegiance to the Almohad ruler ‘Abd al-Mu’min.

1. Ibn Hamdīn was recognised by Ibn Wāżīr of Beja, Ibn Qārūn of Jerez, Ibn Aḍḥā of Granada, Ibn Ṭālb of Murcia, and various other petty rulers.

2. Ibn Mardanīsh, known to the Christians as Aben Lob or El Rey Lobo, ruled a vast area of the Levante from about 1147 until his death in 1172. His domain included Carmona, Córdoba, Jaén, Murcia, Valencia, Guadix and Beja. He became something of a legendary figure, a Muslim counterpart to El Cid. In fact, Ibn Mardanīsh often seemed more Christian than Muslim; he had various Christian allies and adopted many of their customs. See Valdeavellano, Historia de España, p. 449, and Nasr, A History of the Maghrib, p. 108.

3. See Huici, Historia...Valencia, p. 116, note 1, for more information on the Banū Maymūn.


5. See al-Maqqrī, ...Mohammedan Dynasties..., vol. II, p. xlix, note 1.
It was apparently during the summer of 1145 that Ibn Wazîr rebelled against the authority of Ibn Qasî. Taking possession of Badajoz and Silves, he acknowledged Ibn Hamdîn of Córdoba as his chief. Ibn al-Mundîr, sent by Ibn Qasî against Ibn Wazîr, was taken prisoner and blinded. Seeing no other alternative, Ibn Qasî crossed the Straits of Gibraltar and appealed directly to ‘Abd al-Mu’min for assistance. After hearing Ibn Qasî’s proposal (and his renunciation of the title al-Mahdi), the Almohad ruler decided to intervene in Spain for two main reasons:

1. The Magrib had now come almost completely under Almohad control.

2. The Almoravids, under the initiative of Ibn Ğaîîya, were showing signs of a revival in al-Andalus.

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3. By the beginning of 1146, the Almoravids (never overthrown in Sevilla) had regained the important cities of Granada and Córdoba. The subsequent death of Zafadola also relieved pressure on the Almoravids. Previously, he had closely besieged the Almoravids holding out in the alcazaba of Granada. Ibn Abî Ja’far of Murcia tried to reinforce Zafadola in this siege but was killed at the battle of Almosala. Zafadola then retired to Jaén, the rebel qâdi Ibn Aghâ fled to Almuñecar, and Granada remained in the hands of the Almoravid Ibn Warqâ.
The year ended with the return of Ibn Ġāniya to the vicinity of Córdoba. Ibn Ḥamdīn led an army out to meet him but was defeated at Écija and pursued as far as Andújar. At the end of January, 1146, the victorious Almoravid general once again entered Córdoba. About the same time, Ibn Wazīr seized Ibn Qasī's stronghold of Mértola. On February 5th, the notorious rebel Zafadola was killed at the battle of Alloch (modern Chinchilla); he was replaced as king of Valencia by Ibn 'Iyād.

The Almohad army, under the qā'id Barrāz Ibn Muḥammad al-Massūfī (an Almoravid deserter), began to land in Spain during May, 1146. Ibn Ğarrūn, ruler of Jerez, Arcos and Ronda, was the first to throw off submission to Ibn Ḥamdīn and pledge allegiance to the invaders. The Córdoban qāḍī, besieged at Andújar, had meanwhile sought the aid of Alfonso VII who forced Ibn Ġāniya to retreat back into Córdoba. On 24 May 1146, the combined forces of Alfonso and Ibn Ḥamdīn entered the city, obliging Ibn Ġāniya to seek refuge in the alcázar. When news of the Almohad landing reached Alfonso, he realised that his position was untenable; he elected to abandon Córdoba to Ibn Ġāniya in return for his tributary vassalage.  

1. See Dozy, Notices..., p. 239.
2. This battle was precipitated by Alfonso's seizure of the castle of Calatrava and by his subsequent raids into the Levante. Along with Zafadola, the father of Ibn Mardanīsh was also killed at Alloch. See Valdeavellano, Historia de España, pp. 447-448.
The advance of the Almohad army proved to be irresistible. After a landing at Tarifa, Algeciras and its surrounding area was quickly secured. Jerez, Arcos and Ronda were delivered without a fight, leaving Sevilla isolated and vulnerable. The Almohad force then began to swing westwards into the Algarbe. Niebla was captured from the tenacious al-Biṭrūjī. Silves was reduced by siege and given over to the puppet governorship by Ibn Qasī. Beja, Badajoz and Mértola were then quick to submit. Late in 1146, the Almohad army encamped for the winter at Mértola. With the Algarbe secured as far as Christian power permitted, attention was turned to Sevilla. Early in 1147, the reinforced army began to advance from the south and west, taking Tejada and Aznalcázar; by January 18th Sevilla had fallen into Almohad hands. 'Abd al-Mu'min sent two of Ibn Tūmart's brothers, 'Abd al-'Azīz and 'Īsā, to govern the city, but they quickly became infamous for their excessive cruelty towards the inhabitants. These brothers even plotted the death of al-Biṭrūjī, who had been granted the amān to reside at Sevilla. Al-Biṭrūjī, however, was able to flee, sought aid from the remaining Almoravids and declared himself in revolt against the Almohads.

The escape of al-Biṭrūjī was followed by a general insurrection against the Almohads. Once again, the

1. See al-Maqqarī, ...Mohammedan Dynasties..., vol. II, p. 11, for Ibn Kaldūn's account of this uprising. See also Codera, ...Almorávides..., pp. 47-50.
Andalusian chieftains showed their resilience and their desire for independence. Almost simultaneously, Ibn Qasī rebelled at Silves, and Ibn Maymūn rose up at Cádiz. The old warrior Ibn Ġāniya captured Algeciras for the Almoravids during the confusion, and he successfully incited rebellion at Ceuta. Ibn al-Ḥajjām, who lost Algeciras to Ibn Ġāniya, then attached himself to the anti-Almohad insurrection at Badajoz. The only ruler who remained loyal to the Almohads was Ibn Ġarrūn of Jerez.

The Almohad capture of Marrākuš in March of 1147 sealed the fate of both the Almoravids and the Andalusian insurrectionists. Following the execution of Iṣḥāq Ibn ‘Alī, the last Almoravid amīr, the Almohads were able to turn their full attention to Spain. Coincident with the triumph in Africa, the cruel brothers of Ibn Tūmart fled Sevilla and joined forces with Ibn Ġarrūn at the mountain fortress of Bobastro. They then fell upon Algeciras and massacred its Almoravid garrison before returning to the Almohad court. Finally, an Almohad army was dispatched under the command of Yūsuf Ibn Sulaymān, who relieved Barrāz as governor of Sevilla. Niebla was quickly

1. These infamous brothers were executed in 1154, after revolting against ‘Abd al-Mu‘min’s establishment of a hereditary dynasty to rule the Almohads (see Nasr, A History of the Maghrib, pp. 109-110).

2. Barrāz was allowed, however, to retain the office of tax-collector at Sevilla.
recovered from al-Biṭrūjī, and Silves was retaken from Ibn Qasī. Despite the winter conditions, Ibn Sulaymān went on to attack Ibn Maymūn at Santa Maria del Algarbe and forced his obedience. Seeing these developments, the rebel Ibn al-Ḥajjām at Badajoz sent envoys of peace and was pardoned. Ibn Sulaymān then returned to spend the winter of 1147-1148 in Sevilla.

The Christians took full advantage of the internal problems afflicting their Muslim opponents. During 1147, Alfonso I of Portugal managed to conquer several towns, including Lisboa. Meanwhile, Alfonso VII of Spain made a deep thrust into Islamic territory and captured Almería on October 17th, 1147.1 Almería had expelled the Almoravids in 1145 but had retained the services of Muḥammad Ibn Maymūn, conqueror of the Balearic Islands and an uncle to Ibn Maymūn of Cádiz. This famous admiral increased the hazards to Christian shipping in the Mediterranean. Not surprisingly, Cataluña, Aragón, Genova and Pisa supported Alfonso's land assault with a large naval force. Unable to oppose such a force, Ibn Maymūn retired to Mallorca,

1. For an account of Almería from 1145 to 1147, see Huici, Historia...Valencia, pp. 116-126. See also al-Maqqarī, Mohammedan Dynasties..., vol. II, p. 311; Valdeavellano, Historia de España, pp. 449-451; and Codera, Almorávides..., pp. 135-138, for details of the Christian conquest. Information from Christian chronicles is found in Huici, Crónicas Latinas..., vol. I, p. 70 and pp. 346-347.
where Muḥammad Ibn Ğaniya (brother of the Almoravid general) still held power. These developments allowed Ramón Berenguer IV, Count of Barcelona and regent of Aragón, to capture Tortosa, Miquinenza, Lérida and Fraga during 1148-1149. The subsequent Treaty of Tudején (27 January 1151), signed by Alfonso VII and his brother-in-law Count Berenguer, gave further unity and impetus to the Christian Reconquista.

Alfonso, after the capture of Almería, proceeded early in 1148 to lay siege to Córdoba, held by his rebellious vassal Ibn Ğaniya. The old Almoravid commander turned to the Almohad general Barraz for assistance. An agreement was reached whereby the Almohads received Córdoba and Carmona while Ibn Ğaniya became governor of Jaén. Following this settlement, Ibn Ğarrūn joined forces with al-Biṭrūjī; this army was further strengthened by Almohad troops under Yahyā Ibn Yaḡmūr, and the combined army entered Córdoba without opposition.

1. Ibn Ğaniya was Almoravid governor of the Baleares from 1126 until he declared his independence in 1146; he then ruled the islands until 1155. The Banū Ğaniya retained a fitful hold on the Balearic Islands until the Almohad conquest of 1203.
2. See Valdeavellano, Historia de España, pp. 452-453.
3. Ibn Ğaniya still held Córdoba in the name of the Almoravids, as the numismatic evidence confirms; see Codera, ...Almorávides..., p. 392.
4. See Ibn Kaldūn’s account of this affair in al-Maqqarī, ...Mohammedan Dynasties..., vol. II, p. lii.
It was during 1147-1148 that Ibn Mardanish consolidated his hold over most of south-eastern Spain. When Ibn 'Iyād died of wounds, he assumed control of Valencia. Murcia, ruled semi-independently by Ibn 'Ubayd after the death of Ibn 'Iyād, finally recognised the authority of Ibn Mardanīsh in October, 1147. With his position consolidated, El Rey Lobo then made treaties with Pisa (January, 1149) and with Genova (June, 1149). These Italian city-states were obviously interested in securing their beach-head at Almería.\(^1\) In 1151, Ibn Mardanīsh took Guadix, whose brilliant court of poets and scholars included the famous Ibn Ṭufayl.

Final Almohad subjection of the Algarbe rebels came in the year 1150. Apparently, Ibn Ğarrūn convinced the "Taifas del Algarbe" that further resistance was hopeless.\(^2\) Escort by Ibn Yağmûr, these petty rulers went to Salé and swore a formal oath of allegiance to ‘Abd al-Mu‘min. The Almohad ruler then took the precaution of keeping most of the former rebels at his court in Marrākuš, far from the temptations that al-Andalus frequently presented.\(^3\) Of all the principal rebels,

1. It is also known that Pisa signed a treaty of peace in 1150 with Ibn Ğaniya of Mallorca.
2. See Valdeavellano, Historia de España, p. 452.
3. See al-Maqqari, ...Mohammedan Dynasties..., vol. II, p. liii.
only Ibn Qasī refused to renounce his pretensions of independence. In desperation, he seems to have turned to the Christians of Coimbra for support against the Almohads. This plan provoked Muslim distrust to such an extent that a conspiracy developed under the leadership of Ibn al-Mundīr. As a consequence, Ibn Qasī was assassinated in Silves by his former supporters during August, 1151. His head was then displayed on a lance which had been a gift from his Portuguese allies.\(^1\) The ambitious Ibn al-Mundīr, despite his blindness, then ruled Silves for a short time until the suspicious Almohads called him to Sevilla.

Al-Andalus, excepting the lands of Ibn Mardanīsh, was completely subjugated to the Almohads by about the year 1157. The most salient points of that conquest follow:

1153: Málaga taken after the suicide of Ibn Ḥassūn.

1153: Naval forces made a devastating raid on Almería.\(^2\)

1155: Submission of Granada by the Almoravid qāʾid Ibn Warqā.

1157: Almería captured; Alfonso VII died while retreating.\(^3\)

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1. See Codera, ...Almorávides..., pp. 50-52, for an account of Ibn Qasī's end.


The book of removing the two shoes and acquiring illumination from the position of the two feet.
كتاب حلّ العلل وجمع المعاني

وابن سهلام

وصف الشيخ الأمام

أحمد بن محمد

المكي المغربي

وعلى كلامه

محمود بن محمد

الجري

1172
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* * * * *
DESCRIPTION OF THE MANUSCRIPT

The only extant copy of Ibn Qasī’s Kitāb Kal’ an-Na’’ayn wa Iqtibās al-Anwār min Mawdī` al-Qadāmayn is contained in the Istanbul MS., Sîleymaniye, Şehid Ali Pasa No. 1174,¹ which was used in microfilm. It appears that the folios have been numbered after the manuscript was written. Ibn Qasī’s work appears on folios 2a – 88b, followed by Ibn al-‘Arabī’s commentary on folios 89a – 175a. According to the colophon on 175b, the work was copied by a certain ʻ Omar ʻ Al-‘ Inasī ² and completed on 15 Jum. I, 741 A.H. (6 November, 1340 A.D.); the hand is a small, cursive Naskī of moderate calligraphic standard.

TITLE, f. 2a

The title of the work derives from the story of Moses and the burning bush,³ contained in Qur’ān 20:12: "Moses, I am your Lord. Take off your sandals, for you are now in the sacred valley of Towah." This passage, in turn, harks back to Exodus 3:5: "God said, ‘Come no nearer; take off your sandals; the place where you are standing is holy ground.’" The title is to be understood in a mystical sense, Ibn Qasī apparently likening

2. The correct transcription is uncertain.
3. God appeared in this form, because Moses was looking for fire; cf. Ibn al-ʻArabī, The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 115.
the early life of Moses to the period of Sufi apprenticeship. Moses removed his slippers when he received his call directly from Yahweh in the form of the burning bush. The removal of shoes is, therefore, symbolic of the culminating step for a Sufi-fusion with God (wasl). It means the abandonment of concepts of time and place—that is, "how and where" (الكيف و الآين) and especially the abandonment of desire (الإرث).

Moses has played a significant role in the development of Sufi doctrines. Al-Hujwirî, for example, makes the following remark in his discussion of spiritual perfection (tamkîn): "Similarly, when Moses attained to tamkîn, God bade him put off his shoes and cast away his staff (Kor. xx, 12), these being articles of travel and Moses being in the presence of God. The beginning of love is search, but the end is rest..." Following such passages as Qur'ân 18:65-82, Moses has even been linked with al-Kîdîr, the mysterious patron of all Sufis.

1. Palmer, Oriental Mysticism, p. 81, defines wasl as: "Meeting. The unity of God, also the mean between the external and the internal. Seeing God face to face."

2. Kashf al-Mahjûb, p. 372. See also Q. 7:143 for another account of Moses' meeting with God.

3. Cf. Ibn al-'Arabl, Sufis of Andalusia, p. 157, note 2, which sees al-Kîdîr as gnosis (ilm ladunnî) and Moses as the exoteric dispensation (sharî'ah). See also The Wisdom of the Prophets, pp. 103-108.
Due to his influence upon Ibn Qasī, the approach of al-Gazālī to Moses is especially worthy of examination. In the Miṣkāt al-Anwār, he deals specifically with Qur’ān 20:12, saying that the sacred valley represents the first stage of mystical transcendence. This statement is remarkably similar to Ibn al-‘Arīf’s description of a descent into the valleys of al-fanā’. As for removal of the two sandals, al-Gazālī says that this should be understood as renunciation of the two worlds: "I assert, ..., that Moses understood from the command ‘Put off thy shoes’ the Doffing of the Two Worlds, [the Material and the Spiritual] and obeyed the command literally by putting off his two sandals, and spiritually by putting off the Two Worlds."  

INTRODUCTION, ff. 2b – 6b

The author says that everything has two faces or aspects, the superficial (zāhir) and the hidden (bāṭin). In addition to these two faces, everything has two sides: goodness (kayr) and evil (sharr). This statement applies

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2. See above, p. 36. Ibn al-‘Arīf, in his discussion of tawakkul, specifically uses the examples of Moses and Rābi‘ah al-‘Adawiya; see Mahāsin, p. 36.

3. Mishkāt al-Anwār, p. 77; cf. p. 79. See also the chapter entitled "Fundamental Examples of Symbolism: especially from the Story of Moses in the Koran." (pp. 73-77)

even to the Qur'an and to God. Specifically, zahir can describe the apparent sense or literal meaning of the Qur'an and Hadīt, while batin is used for their esoteric interpretation. Ibn Qasī makes this point on f. ṣa with a portion of Qur'an 17:82: [The revelation is] "...a balm and a blessing to true believers, though it adds nothing but ruin to the evil-doers." The Qur'an, therefore, is simultaneously goodness for the believers and evil for the unbelievers.

Zahir and batin are two of the most important concepts in Sufism and have been dealt with by some of the greatest masters. Al-Hujwīrī said: "The outward and inward aspects cannot be divorced. The exoteric aspect of Truth without the esoteric is hypocrisy, and the esoteric without the exoteric is heresy." ¹ The Sufis place particular emphasis on the divine attributes, and it is especially interesting that God is both az-Zahir and al-Bāṭin.² Al-Gazālī was

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2. Cf. Q. 57:3 - "He is the first and the last, the visible [az-zahir] and the unseen [al-bāṭin]. He has knowledge of all things." Ibn al-'Arabī, on pp. 16-17 of The Wisdom of the Prophets, apparently had this ayā in mind when he described God as: the First (al-Awwal) and the Last (al-Ākīr); the Exterior (az-Zahir) and the Interior (al-Bāṭin). Furthermore, humans were given the qualities of fear (al-kawf) and hope (ar-raja'); reverent awe (al-hayba) and intimacy (al-uns). See also ibid., pp. 36-37.
particularly aware of this paradox in his *Al-Maqṣad al-Asnā*: "Praise, then, be to the One who is concealed from mankind by His light, the One who is hidden from them by the degree of His manifestness." ¹

Ibn Qasī explains that his work was written as he felt and experienced it, and not consciously and rationally.² Thus, he says that the order in which his work appears would be more systematic if the contents were arranged according to their importance, whereby, for example, the materials in 16b - 60a should be at the beginning. This preferred arrangement has been shown in the Table of Contents as Part IIIa, Part I, Part II, etc. The writer asks God to protect his book from all those who are not mystics, and adds that although the apparent meaning of his work will appear to be heretical and in conflict with the apparent meaning of the Qur‘ān, in reality, however, the work is internally consistent with the Qur‘ān. Ibn Qasī uses the story of Joseph as a basis for the organisation of his argument (see sura 12), and claims that, like this sura, the *Kal‘an-Na‘layn* is a true work. He gives the following advice to his readers:

₁ Ninety-Nine Names of God in Islam, p. 112.

² This process has been described as "automatic writing"; see p. 17 of "Sīfs" by R.A. Nicholson in *E.I.*, 1st ed., vol. XII, pp. 10-17.
1. Don't discard it (as Joseph was thrown into a well).
2. Don't value it cheaply (as the merchants bought Joseph).
3. Don't try to prostitute it (as the Egyptian's wife attempted to seduce Joseph).
4. Don't reveal it to unbelievers¹ (like the dreams of Joseph).

THE TINKLING OF THE BELL, ff. 6b - 9a

The following Ḥadīt is given at the beginning of f. 7a: "...like the ringing of a bell..."³ This passage refers to the tinkling bell that often accompanied the Prophet's inspiration,⁴ and it is given a symbolic interpretation by Ibn Qasī. It is

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1. Cf. al-Ḡazālī, Mishkāt al-Anwār, p. 44: "...the Mysteries must from the gaze of sinners be kept inviolate."

2. The letter ن is a mystical symbol for half the Universe, with the dot representing Muḥammad. Ibn Qasī uses the ٔ in throughout his text as a sort of esoteric "amen". See below, p. 94, for a discussion of ٔ in relation to Q. 68:1.

3. This is a portion of the following Ḥadīt:

4. E. Sell, "Inspiration (Muslim)", Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. VII, p. 355, gives the following: "Gabriel sometimes made his message known through the tinkling of a bell, a mode of operation which had a most disquieting effect on the Prophet. His body became agitated, and even on a cold day the perspiration rolled off him."
implied that the mystical apprentice must cleave to the tinkling of the bell, despite a lack of comprehension. One will eventually understand, simply by staying close to the master's "tinkling"; the sound is likened to a seed that sprouts and later gives fruit. The outside meaning of the Qur'an is said to be a "tinkling"; only the eye of an illuminated heart can give an easy rendering of its hidden meaning. It is claimed that the writer's group of mystics is capable of interpreting hidden meanings, and is thus able to explain the tinkling.¹ Part of this explanation seems to include a definition of God's three aspects: spiritual energy (e.g., angels); God as reason (e.g., the prophets); God as truth (al-Haqq).

The cornerstone² of this chapter is presented on f. 7b: الدَّنَاَيْنِ ۤ ۤ ۤ وَ ۤ ۤ ۤ ۤ الرَّفَائْنِ ۤ ۤ وَ ۤ ۤ ۤ ۤ الحَفَائِنِ "Atoms, souls and truths".³ Here begins a profound discussion of great importance to the whole philosophy of Ibn Qasī. Man's relation to God is seen as clearly pantheistic; God constitutes all atoms so God is really everything that

¹. Compare St. Paul's description of incomprehensible percussion as presented in I Corinthians 13:1: "I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal."

². Ibn Qasī uses the word ۤ ۤ ۤ ۤ ۤ at this point. Since ۤ ۤ ۤ ۤ means a "support", cornerstone seems appropriate here.

³. See Burckhardt, ...Sufi Doctrine, 1963 ed., p. 34, for a discussion of al-haqaqīq and ad-daqaqīq.
exists. Revealing Neoplatonic influences, the writer also says that the shape of things is determined by reason. Under the external appearance of matter, however, God is always to be found. As noted above, the spirit of God is revealed through the angels, and His "reason" is revealed through the prophets. But only the mystical path can reveal the absolute hidden reality of God - the Truth.

The whole of Qur'ān 13:15 is quoted on f. 8a:

"All who dwell in the heavens and on earth shall prostrate themselves before Allah, some willingly and some by force; their very shadows shall bow to Him morning and evening."

This aya seems closely linked with the previous discussion of "Atoms, souls and truths", because it confirms the power of God over all men and "their shadows". Here, "shadows" has the specific meaning of posterity or descendants. So, God has absolute authority over all the sons of Adam, who come from one atom and one soul, as an entire crop comes from one seed. All future souls ("shadows") are latent inside the atoms, that is, latent inside God and so subject to Him. As for "truths",

1. Cf. Q. 4:1 - "Men, have fear of your Lord, who created you from a single soul."
they are seen as steps of the mystical path. This is the road that leads from supposed reality to the hidden essence of reality - to the absolute Reality, which is God.

On f. 8b the previous discussion is summarised as:
كلّ باطن حقيقة لكلّ ظاهر "There are hidden truths behind all outside facts". The subsequent analogy is then made in relation to this statement. The earth and the sky were first united and then separated by God, leaving them tied by air. God and Adam were first united and then separated at Creation; they are still tied by the hidden reality of Truth. It is the goal of every mystic to attain this Truth.

THE HUMAN CARPET AND THE TRANQUILLITY OF THE SELF,
ff. 9a - 13a

This chapter opens with a portion of Qur'ān 7:172 -

واذّاخذ ربك من بنى ادم من ظّورهم ذرّىهم و اشتههم على نفسهم لست بريكم قالوا بلى نبدينا

"Your Lord brought forth descendants from the loins of Adam's children, and made them testify against themselves. He said: 'Am I not your Lord?' They replied: 'We bear witness that you are.'" 1

The remainder of the āya (not included in the manuscript) explains the reason why God exacted such a pledge: "This He did, lest you (mankind) should say on the Day of Resurrection: 'We had no knowledge of that,'..." So Ibn Qasī's theme is that God took all humanity (atoms and souls) from the backbone of Adam in order to receive their pledge of allegiance. The general Sufi interpretation of human genesis is that Adam was the original spirit (rūḥ); the original soul (nafs), in the form of Eve, came from Adam. Rūḥ and nafs then combined to produce the heart (qalb). Al-qalb is the supra-rational organ of intuition, corresponding to the physical heart as thought corresponds to the brain. As-Suhrawardī offers the following summary: "Like to their issuing from rūḥ and nafs, came into existence the atoms of progeny (which were a deposit in Adam's backbone) by the union of Adam and Havvā."¹

The "human carpet" then refers to the a priori submission of all men to God. The imagery seems to be that of the carpet of humanity covering the earth and simultaneously acting as a prayer carpet for worshipping God. Tranquillity of the self comes from this complete submission to God and from the knowledge of His absolute reality.

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¹ The 'Awārifu-l-Ma'ārif, p. 78. An enduring Muslim belief was that semen came from the backbone; this idea even showed up in the anatomical drawings of Leonardo da Vinci.
This chapter deals with Creation and with Muḥammad. The days needed to create the world were six, followed by one day of rest. The days of Creation are then related to the succeeding prophetic ages of the world; Muḥammad represents the sixth and final prophetic age. The Day of Judgment is seen as the seventh period—a day of eternal rest (or eternal punishment). The Sufis go beyond this orthodox interpretation; they relate the six days of Creation to the six stages of the mystical path. For them, the seventh "day" is the mystical unity with God.

The following unaccredited Ḥadīth appears on f. 16a:

This passage, dealing with the secrets of growth and decay initiated by Creation, is followed by Qur’ān 56:10-11:

1. Q. 7:54 says: "Your Lord is Allah, who in six days created the heavens and the earth and then ascended His throne..." Cf. Q. 57:4 - "He created the heavens and the earth in six days and then mounted His throne."

2. The mystical stations normally number in excess of ten. Ibn Qasī, however, is apparently following the practice of considering the stations in pairs, thus giving twelve manāzil to his system. The seventh "day", related to mystical unity, is significant in that seven usually represents infinity.
(foremost shall be those!). Such are they that shall be brought near to their Lord..."

The central theme of this chapter is the sublime tranquillity that is granted by God to his elect.1 Recounting the story of Moses, Ibn al-‘Arabī expands beyond the literal meaning of the ark (at-tābūt) which bore him on the Nile. What seems to be indicated is the Ark of the covenant, wherein dwells the Lord and His peace (sakīna).2 One of the clearest manifestations of sakīna derives from another revelation granted to Ibn al-‘Arabī:

The Seven Persons. I met them at Mecca, may God benefit all Muslims by them. I sat with them at a spot between the wall of the Hanbalites and the bench of Zamzam. They were indeed the elect of God. So overwhelmed were they by holy Tranquillity (sakīnah) and awe that they did not even blink their eyes. When I met them they were in a state of contemplation. No word passed between me and them on any matter, but I saw in them an almost unimaginable calm.3

1. Cf. Q. 48:4 - "It was He who sent down tranquillity [as-sakīna] into the hearts of the faithful so that their faith might grow stronger."

2. The Arabic as-sakīna corresponds to the Hebrew shakhīna; see Ibn al-‘Arabī, The Wisdom of the Prophets, pp. 97-98.

This chapter represents the real beginning of Ibn Qasim's work; as explained previously, the first four chapters are to be considered as Part IIIa. The sovereignty of God is seen as "rays of heaven" and is based on the submission of the sons of Adam to God.\(^1\) The proof of God's power, even over death, was given to Abraham in the miracle of the revived birds.\(^2\) Inside Sufi hearts, there are rays that lead to the light of God. With other men the case is reversed; the rays of heaven must descend upon human hearts in the form of divine grace.

On f. 17a there begins a discussion of the بُنى النجاة "wide roads between two mountains".\(^3\) This phrase apparently refers to the leap that a mystic attempts

\(^1\) See above, pp. 72-73; cf. the expression of God's sovereignty in Q. 36:83 - نسيحان الذي بيده ملكوت "Glory be to Him who has control of all things."

\(^2\) Q. 2:260 - "When Abraham said: 'Show me, Lord, how You raise the dead,' He replied: 'Have you no faith?' 'Yes,' said Abraham, 'but I wish to reassure my heart.' 'Take four birds,' said He, 'draw them to you, and cut their bodies to pieces. Scatter them over the mountain-tops, then call them. They will come swiftly to you. Know that Allah is mighty and wise.'"

\(^3\) This phrase is used in Q. 71:20 - لسلكا منها سلا نجاة "...so that you may traverse its spacious paths." Note that the سلدا in the manuscript's النجاة is apparently incorrect.
between two mountains - the mountains being symbols for man and God. Orthodox religion, on the other hand, follows a narrow path - perhaps never ascending the mountain that is God. The mystics, therefore, pursue the wide, ecstatic road to God; they avoid the narrow path of orthodoxy that usually leaves one only in the shadow of the Mountain.¹

The nocturnal journey of Muḥammad (العَرَاج) and the celestial visions that he saw are then recounted. Between the various heavens there are curtains; common men see these curtains as obstacles between themselves and God. For the mystics, on the other hand, these curtains represent steps towards God. During the miʿrāj, the curtains of heaven were progressively opened; when all the veils were finally lifted, the Prophet saw himself, that is, he became God. This is the mystical union with God that is reflected by Muḥammad's saying: "You who look at me, look at God."²

¹. On this point, an interesting comparison can be made with the Christian doctrine of a difficult, narrow path to God; this concept represents a moral and ethical approach to salvation, and is based on such passages as Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter by the narrow gate. The gate is wide that leads to perdition, there is plenty of room on the road, and many go that way; but the gate that leads to life is small and the road is narrow, and those who find it are few."

². See Palmer, Oriental Mysticism, p. 52. This is the Islamic Logos doctrine, with Muḥammad seen as the Perfect Man and animating principle of the whole universe. The essential Idea (ḥaqīqa) of Muḥammad, as a channel for divine grace, became especially important to the Sufis; "... during the Middle Ages the Person of Mohammed stands in the very centre of the mystical life of Islam." (Nicholson, ... Personality in Sifism, p. 63)
The title of this chapter, al-Malakūtiyyāt, derives from Islamic cosmology. Paradise is generally regarded as a pyramid or cone in eight levels, with a lotus tree (سورة المنبتة) growing at the very top. "Above the pyramid lie the worlds of dominion (mēlakūt) and power (djabarūt), the Throne and the Tabernacle of God." It is appropriate to remember that one of the attributes of God is al-Malik, the King; al-Qazālī has this to say: "Al-Malik is the one whose essence and attributes are independent of all existing things, but everything in existence is dependent upon (in need of) Him." This statement is compatible with the pseudo-Empedoclean position of Ibn Masarra regarding a spiritual material common to all things, except God. The Muʿtazilite concept of a return to the original home of the soul may also have influenced Ibn Qasī: "May your soul awake from the sleep of negligence and the slumber of ignorance, and may you live the life of the happy wise men, and may you be elevated in knowledge(s), and may your mind (himmah) ascend towards the Kingdom of Heaven, and may you in the other world be among the blessed."

2. See "Djanna" in the Shorter E.I., p. 88.
3. ...Names of God..., p. 18.
THE QUALITY OF WONDER AND SILENCE, ff. 20b - 31a

Wonder and silence represent attitudes that are necessary for attaining the mystical union with God. Adam had these virtues, and he subsequently became the vicar of God, الخليفة (see f. 20b). The prophets who followed Adam were also characterised by wonder and silence.

Ibn Qasī enumerates nine heavens, associated with the nine prophets. This was "standard" Sufi cosmology, as later taught by Ibn al-'Arabī in the East. There are covers between the eight levels of paradise, with lights emanating from higher to lower heavens. Above the peak of the eighth heaven is the Throne of God (العرش), sometimes considered as the ninth heaven. For the mystic, the Throne of God is one's decision to be nothing - thus becoming everything in God. On f. 22a an unauthenticated

1. Cf. Ibn al-'Arabī, The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 12, and Q. 2:30 - "...I am placing on the 'earth one that shall rule as My deputy,'...


3. Al-'Arā has been shown to be synonymous with Kursī, a word found in Q. 2:256 and 38:33. See Cl. Haart, "Kursī", E.I., 1st ed., vol. II, p. 1156.
Hadit describes God's creation of the Throne:

"An addition: The saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him) was that God created the Throne with four legs."

These four legs (or parts) most likely refer to the four primal elements of earth, air, fire and water. The Sufi concept of al-‘Arš seems to be simultaneously literal and figurative. On one hand, the belief is that God is actually sitting on his Throne.¹ On the other hand, the Throne represents the abstraction of Primal Intelligence holding sway over all hearts.² Most important for the Sufi, al-‘Arš is the inward qibla, an orientation to the mystery of Divine contemplation.³

THE DEEP MOUNTAIN-PASS, ff. 31a - 32a

الفج العميق ن

The subject of this chapter was introduced previously in the chapter on al-Malakūtiyyat as:

السُّلّ النجَّاج

The present chapter is entitled النجّ الّعَميق. Whereas

1. On this point, the Sufis seem to agree with the orthodox Mālikites; see as-Suhrawardī, A Sufi Rule for Novices, p. 28, Q. 7:54, and Q. 20:5.

2. See as-Suhrawardī, The ‘Awārifu-l-Ma’ārif, p. 122, for a discussion of the Throne as the universal qibla.

3. See al-Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Mahjūb, p. 300. This may explain why some of Ibn Masarrā’s disciples apparently adopted a qibla away from the Ka’ba.
the plural \textit{al-fijjāj} was previously employed, we now have the singular \textit{al-faj}.\footnote{1} (with the adjective \textit{al-‘amīq}). \textit{Al-‘amīq} is especially interesting because it means "deep" or "profound", both in a physical and emotional sense. The reader is thus given the image of an enormous crevice between two mountains, symbolising the psychological abyss that separates man from God.\footnote{2}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item The MS. has no \textit{sadda} on the \textit{jīm} here; the plural is given as \textit{najjā}. Lane (p. 2339) gives the correct forms: "\textit{jīm}. A wide road between two mountains;... and \textit{najjā} signifies the same... (plural) \textit{najj}..." \textit{Fajj} appears once in the Qur’ān (22:27), while its plural is used twice (21:31 and 71:20).
  \item Cf. Ibn al-‘Arīf, \textit{Muhāsin}, chapter 10, for the story of a mountain hermit who descends into a crevice in order to taste God’s purest love.
  \item See above, p. 36. Even earlier, al-Gazālī had discussed the spiritual symbolism of the Mountain and its Valleys; see \textit{Mishkāt al-Anwār}, p. 74.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
both Ibn Qasī and Ibn al-‘Arif: "...the ultimate goal of the mystic, according to al-Junayd, is to achieve this condition of self-destruction (fanā’) as the prelude to its restoration to its original condition of eternity (baqā’), from which creation in time has robbed it." ¹

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE FOUNDATION AND THE HOPING FOR DEANTHROPMORPHISM AND SANCTIFICATION, ff. 32a - 34b

Ibn Qasī then makes a very clever construction; the word لو ("if") has apparently been transformed into لو , literally "if-ing", i.e., "hoping". ³ This


2. Cf. Matthew 10:39 - "By gaining his life a man will lose it; by losing his life for my sake, he will gain it.'"

3. Because there are no diacritical marks in the manuscript, لو has been assumed to be lawlawa, which translates to "if-ing" or "wringing" [the soul?]. Ibn Qasī may even be playing on the word "pearl" (lu’lu’a); as-Sabistānī, Gulshan I Rāz, p. 56, for example, compares the tenets of orthodox Islam to shells that may produce pearls of knowledge of the Truth, so arriving at sanctification (taqdis).
mystical "if-ing" means forgetting the self, so that
ultimately one neither hopes nor wishes for anything. The
normal concept of lawlawa is given by as-Suhrawardî: "Do
not say: 'If it were' (law), because law starts the action
of Satan."¹ So law can imply dissatisfaction with the
divine decrees and should be avoided by the ordinary Muslim.
But the Sufi method of lawlawa is a hoping that leads to an
elimination of hoping, once union with God has been achieved.
Ibn Qasî is evidently following the teaching of Ibn al-‘Arîf
concerning the importance of law to mystical illumination:

If it were not for the darkness of the physical
world, the light of the divine mysteries would
appear. If it were not for rebellion by one's
own self, the veils [between God and man] would
disappear. If it were not for worldly attrac-
tions, it is certain that spiritual realities

¹. A Sufi Rule for Novices, p. 71. As-Suhrawardî
obviously had the following Hadît in mind:

اللهُ، اللَّهُ يُفَتحُ ، يُفَتحُ عَمَلُ الشَّيْطَانِ ، مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ
باب ما يجوز من اللْوُ فيَّ اللَّوُ ، اللَّوُ فيَّ اللَّوُ
بلا حَجَمٍ لَّوُ فيَّ اللَّوُ ، اللَّوُ فيَّ اللَّوُ

². Ibn al-‘Arîf, Mahasin, p. 76.
would be revealed. If it were not for human concepts of cause and effect, divine powers would appear. If it were not for hypocrisy, absolute knowledge would be pure and clear. If it were not for greed, the love of God would become deeply-rooted. If it were not for worldly attachments, the fire of passionate love for God would blaze up in human spirits. If it were not for the remoteness of the slave, he would see his Master. If the veils of the body and reason were torn away, and if hindrances were removed by cutting off earthly attachments, it would be as the poet said:...

If all desires are completely wrung out of the nafs, one reaches the states of tanzih and taqdis. Tanzih is generally considered to be the affirmation of the absolutely transcendent nature of God and is diametrically opposed to taṣbīh,¹ the attachment of material attributes to God. While Mālikite theology showed a marked tendency towards anthropomorphism, the other Sunnite schools have generally sought a middle way between tanzih and taṣbīh. The mystics, on the other hand, lean towards tanzih but recognise its limitations:

1. Taṣbīh should not be confused with tasbīh, the action of glorifying God. Cf. Ibn al-'Arabī, The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 13, for the different attitudes of Adam and the Angels regarding taṣbīh.
"From blindness arose the doctrine of 'Assimilation', [taşbīḥ]

From one-eyedness that of God's remoteness. [tanzīḥ]"¹

Ultimately, the Sufi sees taşbīḥ as the complement of tanzīḥ,² as previously bātin was shown to be compatible with zāhir. The manifestations of God only serve to affirm His perfection and transcendence.³ With the fulfilment of tanzīḥ, the mystic reaches taqḍīs, the mystical union with God.⁴

1. Aš-Šabistari, Gulshan I Ṭabī, p. 10. Similarly, al-Mujiwīrī, Kashf al-Mahjūb, p. 270, gives the following: "To infer the existence of God from intellectual proofs is assimilation (taşbīḥ) and to deny it on the same grounds is nullification (taʾfīl)."

2. This interpretation can be derived from Q. 42:11, "Nothing can be compared with Him. [tanzīḥ] He alone hears all and sees all." [taşbīḥ] See also Affifi, ... Ibn al-'Arabī, "Transcendence and Immanence" (pp. 18-21), for Ibn al-‘Arabī’s approach to tanzīḥ and taşbīḥ.


4. Ibn al-‘Arabī describes tanzīḥ at-taqḍīs in several sections of his Futūḥāt; see vol. III, pp. 85, 126, and vol. IV, p. 177. But he does not exclude the importance of taşbīḥ: "The exoterist who insists uniquely on the Divine transcendence (at-tanzīḥ) (to the exclusion of the immanence) (at-taşbīḥ) slanders God and His messengers..." (The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 32)
AN EXAMPLE FOR DECODING THE SECRETS OF ATOMS AND CLEARING AWAY THE MYSTERIES OF SOULS, ff. 35b - 36a

As explained in the chapter entitled "The tinkling of the bell", ad-daqā'iq ("atoms") represent the sons of Adam, and ar-ragā'iq ("souls") represent all human spirits. The example given in this chapter is that at night God comes to give us goodness. This "night", however, is given a mystical interpretation; it makes everything dark except the illuminated soul of the mystic. Ibn Qasī says that there is a unity of these mystical souls, as there is also a unity of all light.

The Sufis have often associated their mystical illumination with light. Al-Qazālī, for example, wrote his famous treatise, Miṣkāt al-Anwār, as an interpretation of Qur'ān 24:35 -

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. His light may be compared to a niche that enshrines a lamp, the lamp within a crystal of star-like brilliance. It is lit from a blessed olive tree neither eastern nor western. Its very oil would shine forth, though no fire touched it. Light upon light; Allah guides to His light whom He will. Allah coins metaphors for men. He has knowledge of all things."

1. Ibn Qasī, in fact, uses the term ...Iqtibās al-Anwār... in the title of his work.
As-Suhrawardi al-Maqtul, put to death at Aleppo in 1191, was the most famous exponent of the mystical conception of God as light. Some Sufis have even reconciled darkness (mystical poverty) with their concept of light (mystical intuition):

"Blackness of face in both worlds is poverty, blackness is most precious, neither more nor less. What shall I say? since this saying is fine, 'A light night that shineth in a dark day'."¹

The approach of Ibn Qasim seems similar to that of Šabistari: the mystical "night" is really illumination, because it reveals the Truth. The "day" of visible phenomena is, on the other hand, something that obscures the hidden Reality. Ibn al-'Arif expressed the same idea in his Mahasin:

وَلَوْ لَا ظُلْمَةَ الكُونِ لَظَهَرَ نُورُ الغَيْبِ

And if it were not for the darkness of the physical world, the light of the divine mysteries would appear.²

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2. Translated from the original Arabic in Mahasin, p. 76. See above, p. 83.
The Sufis frequently say that various gems have occult qualities.¹ The hidden characteristic of the emerald is the virtue of "listening and following"; by this method the mystic comes to the treasure that is God. Adam, for example, became the "caliph" of God by listening and following; he subsequently taught this method to the angels, who passed on the knowledge to the prophets. This example of "listening and following" helps to explain the extreme devotion of Ibn Qasī’s revolutionary followers. As-Suhrawardī explains the master-disciple relationship as follows: "The murı̄d should not leave his shaykh before the eye of his heart opens. The distinctive mark of the murı̄d is ‘to listen and obey’."²

Folio 37a deals largely with al-Miʿrāj, the nocturnal journey of Muḥammad to the seven heavens, made on the 27th of Rajab from Jerusalem. As explained previously in the chapter "al-Malakūtiyāt", Ibn Qasī gives a mystical interpretation of al-Miʿrāj.³

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1. Burckhardt, on p. 2 of his introduction to Ibn al-ʿArabī’s The Wisdom of the Prophets, gives the following: "The incorruptible character of the precious stone corresponds to the unchanging nature of Wisdom."


The concluding passage of the previous chapter deals with ملك الموت - the Angel of Death. The present chapter continues this theme in relation to mysticism, with the Sufi شيخ being compared to the Angel of Death. Whereas the Angel brings physical death, the mystical master teaches one to kill the desires of the self. In this way, the Sufi reaches the platform where the very self dies. This platform is associated with the Throne of God, because it represents mystical union. In this condition, of course, physical death becomes irrelevant, and the possibilities for revolutionary fervour are obvious. For his mystical disciples, the power of the master actually comes to eclipse the power of the Angel of Death.

This chapter begins with the opening of Qurʾān 3:185; كل نفس ذات الموت "Every soul shall taste death". Ibn Qasi probably makes use of this Ḥiyā in order to exploit the mystery inherent in the word nafs. According to context or interpretation, nafs can mean soul, psyche, spirit, essence, mind, life, or human being. At Creation, there was a conjunction of soul (nafs) and spirit (رهو) which produced the human heart (قلب); this
was the Merciful Breath (*an-nafas ar-raḥmānī*), considered to be the manifesting power of God. This combination of *nafs* and *rūḥ* in man is a divine mystery that has attracted the attention of many Sufis. Al-Kalābādī, for example, makes his point by a subtle play on words: "The majority are agreed that the spirit is an object [ma‘nā] through which the body lives. One Sufi said: 'It is a light, fragrant breath (rūḥ) through which life subsists, while the soul (nafs) is a hot wind (rūḥ) through which the motions and desires exist.'" Owing to the complexity of human motivations, the soul has frequently been sub-divided. It may, for example, either command or forbid, and this duality is expressed by the proverb: "Such as one who consults his two souls". Ibn al-‘Arabī eventually developed four degrees of the *nafs*. But the

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2. The *Doctrine of the Sufis*, p. 52.

3. Cf. Lane, p. 2827.

4. Ibn al-‘Arabī, ibid., p. 142, gives the following summary:
   1. *an-nafīs al-hayawānīya*, the animal soul
   2. *an-nafīs al-ammāra*, the egoistic soul which commands; cf. Q. 12:53
   3. *an-nafīs al-lawwāma*, the soul that blames through consciousness; cf. Q. 75:2
divine secrets of the nafs remain, as as-Suherawardi explains: "The maʿrifat of nafs is in all qualities difficult, for nafs hath the nature of a chameleon.... The recognising of nafs in all its qualities, and reaching to a knowledge of it is not the power of any created thing." ¹

Ibn Qasī takes full advantage of the ambiguity inherent in nafs, as he once again presents a hidden meaning from the Qurʾān. The external idea of the āya that opens this chapter is clear: all human beings will eventually die. It must be remembered, however, that a mystic usually associates the nafs with desires and appetites. For most men, the end of desires and appetites comes with the end of life. For the mystic, however, the self can be killed while the body still remains physically alive. The example presented by Ibn Qasī is that of Abraham being put into the fire.² Fire is one of the most paradoxical of all symbols, being associated with both death and rebirth. In the case of Abraham, he was saved from physical death,³ but not from annihilation of the self (fanaʿ).⁴ Through this experience, Abraham attained

1. The 'Awārifu-l-Maʿārif, p. 73.
3. Q. 21:69 says: "'Fire,' We said, 'be cool to Abraham and keep him safe.'"
4. Nicholson, on p. xxi of his introduction to Kashf al-Mahjūb, gives the position of al-Hajwīrī: "He compares annihilation (fanaʿ) to burning by fire, which transmutes the quality of all things to its own quality, but leaves their essence unchanged."
the absolute Reality in a single leap, thus becoming the real Abraham. Consequently, Ibn Qasî stresses that all mystical disciples should remember Abraham and should try to approach his experience of fana'.

PROOF AND EXPLANATION, ff. 44b - 45a

This chapter, using previously presented ideas, gives more examples from Muhammad's Mi`raj. The Prophet moved through the various heavens by the method of "listening and following". As he progressed, the "tinkling of the bells" subsided, indicating increased clarity and revelation.

1. Ibn al-`Arabî, The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 40, gives the following: "Abraham is called (in the Koran) the 'Intimate Friend' (of God; Khaliﬂ Allah) because he 'penetrated' and assimilated the Qualities of the Divine Essence, like the colour which penetrates a coloured object, in such a manner that the accident is confused with the substance, and not like something spread out which fills a given space; or again, his name signifies that God (al-`haqq) has penetrated essentially the form of Abraham." Page 45 of this work refers to Ibn Masarra and his pairing of Abraham with the angel Michael; see above, p. 10. Cf. al-`Gazâlî, Mishkât al-Anwâr, pp. 8, 71-73, and 97.

2. Evidently because of this repetition, there have been claims that this chapter was a later addition to the Kal` an-Na'layn. This section was, however, most probably part of the original work. See Ibn al-`Arabî's comments on ff. 147b-148b.

3. Cf. f. 45a: سكن لصلصة الأجراس
The curtains of the heavens were withdrawn in stages to finally reveal the Truth. As previously explained, the Truth is simultaneously God and Muḥammad.

The word used for "proof", furgān, is of special importance. It may also be translated as discrimination, separation or salvation. Interestingly, al-Furqān is another name for the Qurʾān, meaning The Proof or The Evidence or even The Salvation. Ibn Qasī apparently sees furqān as mystical illumination, in much the same way as as-Sarrāj. "For as-Sarrāj, the true meaning of 'lights of the hearts' was the cognition (maʿrifah) of the furqān and clear insight (bayān) from God, as the word furqān in Qurʾān 8:29/29 was explained by the commentators as 'a light placed in the heart, so as to decide between truth and untruth.'" 4

2. See above, p. 77.
4. Rosenthal, Knowledge Triumphant, p. 162. Cf. Q. 8:29 - "Believers, if you fear Allah He will give you guidance [furqān]..."
This chapter follows previous examples of ta’wil, the mystical practice of interpreting the Qur’ān allegorically. The present Ēya ("N. By the Pen, and what they write,...") has lent itself to a variety of interpretations. The consonant Ṣūn seems especially difficult to define.¹ Sale, for example, offered all of the following as possible meanings for Ṣūn: inkhorn; fish; whale; Behemoth; table of divine decrees; one of the rivers in paradise.²

Ibn Qasī employs the Ṣūn as an esoteric symbol throughout his Kal‘an-Na‘layn. In this particular chapter, the consonant refers to the story of Jonah;³ more precisely, Ṣūn is the actual whale that swallowed him. Indeed, Qur’ān 68:48 mentions Jonah as صاحب البحر - "he of the whale". Ibn Qasī says that people in paradise are given whale’s liver to eat; in a like manner, Jonah was purified by eating from inside the whale. Following this analogy,

1. There are various theories about the mysterious consonants that open several suraw of the Qur’ān. The Sufis frequently use these consonants as points of departure for esoteric interpretations.

2. Cf. the notes to Sale’s translation of Q. 68:1. See also Palmer’s explanation of this Ēya on p. 34 of Oriental Mysticism.

3. Jonah is especially important to the Sufis. Brown, for example, describes the pledge (mubāya‘a) of the Qadarite murīd to his muršid, who recites from the Qur’ān, including the entire tenth sûra (Yūnus). See The Darvishes, p. 111.
everything written, especially the Qur'ān, must be examined for its internal meaning. Ibn Qasī also cites the anger of Jonah, which is seen as meritorious in that it represents a struggle against the self. Jonah's anger led him to be swallowed by the whale, and this in turn led to his attainment of the Truth.¹

The commentary of Ibn al-‘Arabī more or less corresponds to the statements of Ibn Qasī. He gives Nūn as meaning: inkpot; whale; and fish. The reference to inkpot is especially significant, and Ibn al-‘Arabī indicates that Qur'ān 68:1 refers to the group of divine pens that record human sins. This writing, like the words of God, is endless.²

THE NOTEWORTHY SECRET OF THE SUPREME PEN AND THE PRESERVED TABLET, ff. 46a - 46b

الـٰلـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّـّ~

In general Sufi terminology, the Supreme Pen (al-Qalam al-'A'la) is analogous to the First Intellect (al-‘Aql al-Awwal) or the Universal Spirit (ar-Rūḥ al-Kullīya). God uses the Supreme Pen to inscribe all destinies on the

1. Cf. Q. 21:87 - "And of Dhul-Nūn: how he went away in anger, thinking We had no power over him. But in the darkness he cried: 'There is no god but You. Glory be to You! I have done wrong.'"

2. See below, p. 99.
Guarded Tablet (al-Lawḥ al-Mahfūz) which corresponds to the Universal Soul (an-Nafs al-Kulliya).\(^1\)

This chapter refers once again to a stage of Muhammad's nocturnal journey. During his passage through the heavens, the Prophet could hear the Supreme Pen writing the Truth. The writing of this Pen represents mystical progression; it is the Pen that inscribes the Truth on the nafs. At the end of the mystical path neither Pen nor Tablet exists; only the Truth remains. On f. 46a Ibn Qasī gives a [concise] summation of his mystical philosophy in reference to the Pen and the Tablet:

لا أعلم من اللم و لا أحفظ من اللوح
و اللم عالم التنفيذ والتغدير و لا
التدوين و التسلي و حفظة التصريف

There is nothing more knowledgeable than the Pen, and there is nothing that preserves [knowledge] more than the Tablet. The Pen refers to: the realm of divine execution and judgment; the host of angels engaged in writing and compiling; and the keepers of the final compilation.\(^2\)


This extensive chapter generally deals with listening and obedience - the essence of the mystical path. Although a series of spiritual exercises are prescribed, no specific stages of the Sufi way are mentioned. This is in contrast to the definite mystical stations given by Ibn Qasī's master, Ibn al-‘Arīf, in his Maḥāsin al-Majālis. It should be remembered, however, that Ibn Qasī's work is ecstatic rather than rational. We were reminded in the introduction that the book was done under inspiration - not in a conscious, orderly manner.

THINGS PERTAINING TO PARADISE, ff. 60a - 74b

This chapter presents the ways to Truth and deals with understanding the hidden meanings of the external aspects of religion. Specifically, the eight heavens of paradise are presented as corresponding to the eight great prophets of Islam: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Jesus, and Muḥammad. The ninth heaven corresponds directly to God and so to the Truth.


Ibn Qasī's approach can be compared to the summation of Persian mystical cosmology as given by Palmer, who describes a hierarchy of nine heavenly spheres. Each of these heavens possesses a Soul and an Intelligence, with the Intelligence of the highest heaven (al-ʿarṣ) being the Primal Intelligence. Palmer, following the upward progress of man, gives the residents of the various heavens:

1st: Mímin, "Believer"
2nd: 'Abid, "Worshipper"
3rd: Záhid, "Recluse"
4th: 'Arif, "One who knows"
5th: Welí, "Saint"
6th: Nebí, "Prophet"
7th: Rusúl, "Apostle"
8th: Ulu 'l Azm, "One who has a mission"
9th: Khatm, "The Seal"

This chapter is entitled simply ar-Rahmāniyyāt, a derivation from ar-Rahmān, "The Merciful", one of the most frequently mentioned attributes of God. This name of God, despite any apparent limitations, really indicates the infinite Mercy of God that was the cause of Creation.¹

The present chapter is specifically tied to Qur'ān 31:27-28, which partially appears in the middle of f. 75a:

27 - "If all the trees in the earth were pens, and the sea, with seven more seas to replenish it, were ink, the writing of Allah's words could never be finished." ²

28 - "He created you as one soul, and as one soul He will bring you back to life."

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1. Cf. Burckhardt, ...Safi Doctrine, 1963 ed., p. 49. Ibn al-'Arabī, The Wisdom of the Prophets, pp. 124-125, cites Q. 40:15 and Q. 20:4 before relating Mercy to the Throne: "...all that the Throne englobes is reached by the Divine Mercy (rahmah), conforming to the Word (hadith qudsī); 'My Mercy englobes all things', so the Throne englobes all things. It is from the principle of this revelation of rahman on the Throne which englobes all (ar-'arsh al-muhīt) that the Divine Mercy is spread to the interior of the earth..." [All transcriptions are sic]

2. Cf. Q. 18:109: "Say: 'If the waters of the sea were ink with which to write the words of my Lord, the sea would surely be consumed before His words were finished, though we brought another sea to replenish it.'" See also Ibn al-'Arīf's Maḥāsin, p. 103.
The first ḍa'ā above deals with the limitless words of God; the use of the word "seven" is especially symbolic of no limit. The second ḍa'ā says that creating or resurrecting all humanity is as easy for God as the creation or resurrection of a single human being. Following these verses, limitless words and limitless power become parallel lines of Truth for the mystical disciple; limitless words correspond to listening and limitless power to seeing. Most importantly for the mystic, seeing is inseparable from, and leads progressively to, the One that is seen.

SESAME, ff. 78a - 81b

A sesame seed is, for Ibn Qasī, symbolic of the small amount of Truth revealed to him. The writer hopes, nonetheless, that this "sesame" might serve the reader as a window to the Truth. This symbolism of the sesame seed tends to remind one of the Christian parable of the mustard seed.¹

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¹. Cf. Matthew 13:31-32: "'The Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard-seed, which a man took and sowed in his field. As a seed, mustard is smaller than any other; but when it has grown it is bigger than any garden-plant; it becomes a tree, big enough for the birds to come and roost among its branches.'"
On f. 78b of this chapter, the seemingly unrelated topic of prayers (الصلاة) is presented. Here, prayer is seen as self-revision and self-discussion; as such, it temporarily removes one from susceptibility to the desires of the self. Ibn Qasi is really describing the subtle, inverse relationship of ritual purity to mystical purity. As the mystic gradually succeeds in destroying his selfish desires, prayer becomes less and less necessary. For one who has reached the Truth, prayer has become unnecessary and, indeed, irrelevant.

1. Purity, the pervading theme of this chapter, is first indicated by the word sesame (as-simsima), which normally has masculine gender in Arabic. Ibn Qasi may have had the following Tradition in mind: "Three things of your world, amongst all that it contains in triple, have been made worthy for me of love', that is to say, women, perfume, and prayer..." (Ibn al-'Arabi, The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 117). On p. 123, Ibn al-'Arabi notes that the Prophet used the feminine collective to describe these things, even though perfume is masculine. In the case of Ibn Qasi, he presents sesame (feminine) and prayer (feminine) in this chapter; the next chapter includes perfume (masculine).

2. Cf. Guillaume, Islam, p. 145: "One of the Persian mystics, Abū Sa'īd (d. A.D. 1049), regarded the şari'a as superfluous to those who had attained the goal of the mystic Path. He would not allow his disciples to go on pilgrimage to Mecca, and is said to have forbidden the dervishes to interrupt their dancing when the Muezzin called to prayer. Here there is a clear departure from the practices of the early Sufis, who faithfully observed the Sunna in these matters."
THE TOOTH-STICK, PERFUME, CLOTHING, AND DECORATION,
ff. 81b - 82a

السواك، الطب، التباب، الزينة

The items presented in this short chapter are all symbols for mystical purification.¹ Outwardly, the mouth is cleansed by a tooth-stick; inwardly, bad words are remedied by silence. Perfume² rids the body of bad odours, indicating that chastity is the remedy for carnal desires. Clothing covers the body of a man, but the "dress" of a mystic is the Path. Decorations make a man appear brilliant, but true brilliance belongs to the šayk; he so illuminates his brothers that they radiate like shining jewels upon the mystical apprentices.

1. Cf. al-Hujwīrī, Kashīf al-Mahjūb, p. 291: "Purification is of two kinds: outward and inward... The Sūfis are always engaged in purification outwardly and in unification inwardly." See also Q. 2:222 - "Allah loves those that turn to Him in repentance and strive to keep themselves clean." The Sūfis seek the hidden meaning of this āya, which outwardly refers to menstruation.

2. Cf. the esoteric implications of perfume as discussed by Ibn al-'Arabī on pp. 124-127 of his Wisdom of the Prophets.
The theme of this chapter revolves around the implications of zakāt, the obligatory alms prescribed by Islamic law. The importance of zakāt lies in its simultaneous capacity for internal and external purification. Ibn Qasī gives specific consideration to the body and to religion. Regarding the body, he advises purification from all material things as if they were dirt; this idea is tied up with traditional donations to charity. As for religion, Ibn Qasī proposes purification of its external appearance by means of its internal essence; his methodology involves esoteric interpretations of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth.

1. Cf. al-Gazālī, The Mysteries of Almsgiving, p. 25: "...the verbal expression of the unity of God is of little value by itself. The degree of the person's love is tested when he parts with his beloved. Property and wealth are much loved by all people because they are the means by which they enjoy the pleasures of this world, and because of them they love life and hate death, although through it they will meet [God] the beloved. As a proof of the truthfulness of their claim that they love God they have renounced property and wealth, the objects of their [earthly] attention and devotion."
FASTING, ff. 82b - 84b

For the orthodox Muslim, fasting during the month of Ramadān is one of the five principal religious obligations. For various Sufis, fasting became especially important for its value to mystical purification. For Ibn Qasī, Ramadān is symbolic for the time when all people will congregate in the Truth; he sees fasting as a veil that obscures selfish desires, thus giving a clearer view of the Truth.

1. Cf. al-Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Mahjūb, p. 36: "...God commands His servants to fast, and when they keep the fast He gives them the name of 'faster' (ṣā'īm), and nominally this 'fasting' (sawm) belongs to Man, but really it belongs to God. Accordingly God told His Apostle and said: All-sawm lī wā-ṣana ajżā bihi, 'Fasting is mine,' because all His acts are His possessions, and when men ascribe things to themselves, the attribution is formal and metaphorical, not real." Al-Gazālī, The Mysteries of Fasting, p. 5, further explains that fasting belongs to God in two respects: unlike other forms of worship, it is concealed from men; and it defeats Satan, who works through human appetites. Ibn al-'Arabī, Sufis of Andalusia, p. 56, describes Sufi interpretations of faqr (poverty), i'tikāf (secluded prayer), and tahajjud (nocturnal vigil) - all associated with the Fast of Ramadān.
ON PAYMENT OF ZAKĀT IN LIEU OF FASTING,
ff. 84b - 85a

It may not be possible for a Muslim to fast during Ramadān, due to pregnancy, hospitalisation and so forth. In these circumstances, zakāt must then be paid in lieu of fasting.¹

Fasting for the mystic, however, is not a consciously desired abstinence; it is rather related to the concept of zakāt as purification. For Ibn Qasī, mystical "fasting" corresponds to a stage of illumination or revelation. The Day of Doom is symbolically linked to his interpretation of fasting; by the light of Truth a mystic is "resurrected" from the death of self, thus becoming truly alive in the absolute reality of God. Eating after the fast of Ramadān is compared to the Truth that was given to Jonah after his anger.²

1. Cf. al-Gazālī, "The Duties Attending the Breaking of the Fast", pp. 14-16 of The Mysteries of Fasting. These duties (lawāsim) are four in number: qaḍā', making amends; kaffāra, atonement; fidya, expiation; abstinence from food and drink.

This chapter deals with the Night of Power,\(^\text{1}\) when the Prophet received his call and the first verses of the Qur‘án were revealed. Ibn Qasî says that the Night of Power means that the mystic comes to Truth by first enduring suffering and darkness. Following ëya 97:3,\(^\text{2}\) he says that the Night of Power is better than a thousand months because Truth is revealed.

The important point is that night is symbolic for potentiality because of the possibilities that it contains for manifestation. The mystical "night" is one of suffering until an awareness of its potentialities is recognised; with this recognition of its power, the night takes on the characteristics of perfect receptibility and peace.\(^\text{3}\)

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1. Cf. sura 97. Palmer, Oriental Mysticism, p. 36, associates this sura with the power of Primal Intelligence (al-‘Arş).

2. Q. 97:3 - "Better is the Night of Qadr than a thousand months." Cf. Q. 22:47 - "Each day of His is like a thousand years in your reckoning."

Ibn Qasī uses this last chapter for some short, closing remarks about his process of mystical revelation:

I pulled away the veil,¹ and I lifted the curtain.
I indicated the hidden secrets² in the stored-away books.

1. Cf. al-Hujwīrī, Kashf al-Mahjūb, pp. 8-9: "From the standpoint of Unification (tawhīd) it is polytheism to assert that any such veils exist, but in this world everything is veiled, by its being, from Unification, and the spirit is held captive by admixture and association with phenomenal being. Hence the intellect can hardly comprehend those Divine mysteries, and the spirit can but dimly perceive the marvels of nearness to God." Q. 42:51 says: "It is not vouchsafed to any mortal that Allah should speak to him except by revelation, or from behind a veil, or through a messenger..."

2. Ibn Qasī frequently employs the word sīr, literally "secret". Nicholson, translating al-Hujwīrī's Kashf al-Mahjūb, variously describes sīr as "heart" (p. 333), "spirit" (p. 373), or "concealment of feelings of love" (p. 385). Arberry's translation of al-Kalābūdī refers to sīr as "conscience" (p. 76). Finally, Burockhardt gives the following in his glossary to Ibn al-'Arabī's The Wisdom of the Prophets: "sīr: secret, mystery. In Sufism, as-sīrīr denotes also the intimate and ineffable centre of the consciousness, the 'point of contact' between the individual and his Divine principle..."
Ibn Qasi says that he came close to what orthodox Muslims would call heresy, and even admits to questioning fate itself. Once again, he says that the knowledge in his book is not for the people in general, but rather for the esoteric instruction of a select few. The book ends with the customary praise of God and the invocation of peace upon Muhammad, his family and his Companions:

و صلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى إله صحبه أجمعين
XXXII. ALMORVIDES Y ALMOHADES

By the middle of the eleventh century, Occidental Islam seemed to have suffered an irreparable decadence. In the western Mağrib, the disappearance of Fāṭimid influence made way for a reversion to chronic and debilitating tribal rivalries. In al-Andalus, the caliphate of Córdoba, after more than twenty years of civil war, was declared to be ended in 1031, leaving an enormous political and religious vacuum in Western Islam. The subsequent formation of petty kingdoms in Andalusia exacerbated the whole situation. While these Taifa courts became renowned for the brilliance of their resident scholars, they only accelerated the political and religious disintegration of Islamic Spain, a condition made all the more perilous because of the growing momentum of the Christian Reconquista. The intellectual sophistication of the Taifa kingdoms, during a period of political decay, has appropriately been compared with the Italian principalities of the sixteenth century.

1. Bosch-Vilá, Los Almorávides, p. 298, gives the following description: "Es una historia de tribus sin Norte fijo, agitadas por el jāri’yismo y la ši’īa, [sic] y sólo medio illuminada por el foco iḍrīsī de Fez."

Just when no new forces seemed evident in Western Islam, there occurred simultaneous invasions of the Maqrib about 1050. The Arabian bedouins of the Banu Hilal and the Banu Sulaym invaded from what was then Fatimid Egypt, and the Sahhaja nomads left the Sahara and began to conquer the western Maqrib. These simultaneous invasions were disconnected events, except that both movements were carried out by nomadic tribes displaced by the collapse of Fatimid influence in North Africa. The difference in the character of the two invasions can be explained mainly in terms of the religious discipline to which the Sahhaja, unlike the Arabian, tribes were subjected by their leaders. These Sahhaja Berbers were forming what was to become the Almoravid state.

The nomadic Sahhajas had traditionally depended on trade with the Sudan for most of their livelihood; the commerce usually involved the exchange of salt for Sudanese gold. By the 11th century, however, this vital trade was threatened by incursions from the Zanata Berbers and the Soninke state of Ghana. It was

1. The Arabian bedouins were actually enticed by the Fatimid caliph, who feared their power, into invading the eastern Magrib and punishing the rebellious Zirids.

precisely at this time of political and economic peril that a religious movement succeeded in revitalising the Ṣanhāja nomads. A chief from the Jaddāla tribe, Yahyā Ibn Ibrāhīm, went on the pilgrimage to Mecca in 1035. Intent on reverting the Ṣanhājas to the strict tenets of Islam, this chief returned in the company of a religious scholar called 'Abd Allāh Ibn Yāsīn. The approaches of the two men failed, however, and they retired with a few disciples to an island, where they hoped to seek their own salvation. A rābiṭa was founded, and this institution began to attract other followers from among the various Ṣanhāja tribes. Following a strict religious discipline and preparing themselves for a holy war, the men of this community formed the original core of the al-Murābitūn. By 1042, Ibn Ibrāhīm had about 3,000 warriors under his command, and he began a campaign against fellow Ṣanhājas whom he considered as apostates.

The essential point to remember is that the Almoravid movement was originally based on strictly religious motivations. It has even been speculated that Ibn Yāsīn was a Karajite, which would certainly

1. The principal groups were the Lamtūna, Jaddāla, Massūfa, Guzūla and Lamṭa.

2. The Spanish Almorávide is a corruption of this Arabic original. The association of the Almoravids with an actual rābiṭa has been questioned by P.F. de Borjes Farias; see his article "The Almoravids:..." in Bulletin de l'Institut français d'Afrique Noire, vol. 29B (1967), pp. 794-878.
account for his religious zeal and the stress he placed on the jihad. The Ṣanḥāja tribes were gradually brought over by the Almoravid warriors, who generally refrained from taking spoils of war. This religious unification proved to be the vehicle for great political and economic expansion. After securing the western Sahara, the Almoravids turned their attention to the fertile plains of Morocco, held by their old enemies, the Zanāta Berbers. The Zanātas, separated by prevailing clan rivalries, were never able to present a united front to the advancing Almoravids. Furthermore, the nomadic Ṣanḥājas, accustomed to a hard and precarious existence, always held a great advantage over the sedentary Zanātas. The rapid

1. See Nasr, A History of the Maghrib, p. 95, note 2. This speculation seems all the more plausible if one considers the extensive influence of the al-Ībāḍīyya in western and central Sudan during the 11th century. In any case, it is known that Ibn Ḫāsin was associated with the Mālikites before his recruitment by Ibn Ibrāhīm.

2. See Bosch-Vilà, Los Almorávides, p. 299. Designation of the Zanāta as sedentary may cause some confusion and so requires elaboration. Ibn Kaldūn divided the Berbers into three major groups: Zanāta, Ṣanḥāja, and Maṣmūda. The Zanātas were predominantly nomadic until their co-operation with the Arabic conquerors made many Zanāta tribes progressively more sedentary. The widely dispersed Ṣanḥāja have two major groupings: the sedentary Kabylia and the nomadic Zanaga of the western Sahara. The Maṣmūda were the only completely sedentary Berbers of Morocco, living originally in the High Atlas mountains. Cf. Nasr, ibid., p. 9.
pacification of Morocco by the Almoravids was also facilitated by reduced taxation and by the unifying influence of the Mālikite theologians.

Political consolidation of the Almoravid empire ultimately proved to be impossible. For the Mağrib, a Berber national consciousness never developed under the Almoravids; the Şanhājas of the desert were strangers in Morocco, and they were bitterly resented by the conquered Zanāta tribes. So the Almoravids were never able to permeate Morocco with their religious and political ideologies. This basic weakness, coupled with the extended campaigns in al-Andalus, eventually led to the destruction of the Almoravids by the Maşmūda Berbers.

In the case of the Maşmūda, their vehicle for political domination of the Mağrib was also originally in the form of a religious crusade. The principal figure in this movement was Ibn Tūmart; as a young man, he had travelled in the East and had been strongly influenced by al-Ǧazālī and the Ašʿarites. Returning to his homeland, Ibn Tūmart found the disciple who was to be his successor: ‘Abd al-Muʿmin of the Kīmiyya Berbers. Once in Almoravid territory, Ibn Tūmart began to preach openly against the authorities and their support for the Mālikite theologians; he especially condemned literal interpretation of the Qurʾān that led to giving material attributes to God.¹ The basic message of Ibn Tūmart was

1. Ibn Tūmart used the term tajṣīm, "embodiment", to describe this doctrine. The theological term for anthropomorphisation of God is taṣbīḥ.
tawhīd, the unity of God's attributes, as elaborated principally by the Mu‘tazilites. Banished by the Almoravids, Ibn Tūmart retired to the mountainous country of his tribe, and there fanned the smouldering resentment that the Maṣmūda Berbers held for the Ṣanḥāja Almoravids. Calling his enemies mujassim (anthropomorphists), the followers of Ibn Tūmart took the name of al-Muwahhidūn¹ (the Unitarians) and began a holy war. The Almohad movement, despite its undoubted religious impetus, was becoming the dominant political force in North Africa by about the year 1140.

The career of Ibn Qasi corresponds exactly to this period of confrontation between the Almoravids and the Almohads. Before 1140, Ibn Qasi had established his rābiṭa near Silves; like Ibn Ibrāhīm of the Almoravids and Ibn Tūmart of the Almohads, his original motivations seem to have been essentially religious. Similarly, Ibn Qasi's religious organisation developed into a political force. The relevant question is then why the murīdūn of Silves had such fleeting success when measured against the Almoravids or the Almohads. Ibn Kaldūn gives an essential portion of the answer: "(Ibn Qasi) had some success, because the Lamtūnah (Almoravids) were pre-occupied with their own difficulties with the Almohads. (But) there were no groups and tribes there to defend him."² This lack of a tribal base was obviously a

¹ Al-Muwahhidūn has been corrupted to the Spanish Almohade.

great disadvantage. The muwallad insurrections of ninth century al-Andalus, directed against the Umayyad elite of Córdoba, still reflected tribal divisions and so managed to last for about thirty years. With the fall of Córdoba and its Arab aristocracy, however, the neo-Muslims of al-Andalus lost all possibilities for sustained, cohesive action. The result for Islamic Spain was a fatal disability. Petty rulers proliferated, and Andalusia became progressively more defenceless against both Christian and African incursions.

With these general considerations in mind, some specific comparisons can be made between Ibn Qasī and his North African adversaries. Ibn Ibrāhīm, Ibn Tūmart and Ibn Qasī were all leaders of religious disciples who developed into military forces. The Almoravids, from their very name, are particularly associated with a rābiṭa, and the most frequent development of a rābiṭa was into a ribāṭ, as religious conviction was transformed into the action of a holy war. The concept of jihād was especially vigorous among the Almoravids and the Almohads. Ibn Ibrāhīm, possibly influenced by the Kārijites, was zealous in attacking the laxity of his own tribe. Later, Ibn Tūmart declared his own jihād against the Almoravids. For Ibn Qasī, however, the essential meaning of jihād was ascetic combat,¹ and he evidently did not use the term to

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¹ Ibn al-‘Arīf specifically uses the word mujāhada to describe ascetic combat against the desires of the self; see Mahāsin, p. 85.
describe his military activities. Similarly, economic factors are of only secondary consideration for an examination of Ibn Qasī's insurrections. By contrast, powerful economic motivations assisted the rise of both the Almoravids and the Almohads. Threats to Sanhāja trade managed to unify all the affected tribes under the leadership of the Almoravids. With their subsequent expansion out of the Sahara, the fertile plains of Morocco became an irresistible attraction. Later, the Maṣmūda Berbers found the Almohad movement useful for descending from the Atlas mountains into those same fertile lowlands.

Ibn Qasī lived during the final decadence of Islamic Spain; this fact alone helps to explain his political failure. Paradoxically, this same decadence had also facilitated his rise. From the ninth century onwards, al-Andalus had been swinging between stability and instability. The school of Ibn Masarra arose during the disturbed period of the muwallad insurrections, and he was forced to retreat into the Sierra. Social stability and its resulting tolerance ensured the survival of Masarrite ideas during the tenth century. But the fitna of Córdoba and the subsequent disunity of the Taifas produced an almost fatal radicalisation of Masarrism under Ismā'īl al-Ru‘aynī. The later school of Ibn al-‘Arīf grew up within the stability offered by the city of Almería. With the
growing conflict between the Almoravids and the Almohads, however, Islamic Spain was once again thrown into turmoil, and Andalusians like Ibn Qasī were given the opportunity for insurrection.

Circumstances seem to have forced Ibn Qasī into the role of political leader. The rābiṭa at Silves, originally the isolated home of the murīdūn, increasingly became a rallying-point for dissident elements. Ibn Qasī may even have begun the practice of admitting lay brothers into the rābiṭa in the hope of retaining some control over the situation. But the evidence is that Ibn Qasī never really had effective control over the Algarbe insurrections which he came to symbolise, nor did he personally engage in any military actions. The conquest of Mértola is associated with Ibn Qasī, but this city was actually taken by Ibn al-Qābila and seventy "murīdūn", who were probably experienced military men rather than mystical disciples. The other insurrections of the Algarbe were led by opportunistic chieftains who only superficially pledged allegiance to Ibn Qasī at Mértola. Consequently, Ibn Qasī never had any comprehensive political control of the Algarbe, and rebellions like that of Ibn Wazīr soon

1. Al-Ǧazālī applied the term rukṣa to the relaxation, under pressure of circumstances, of certain Sufi rules. Ibn Qasī, like as-Suhrawardī, may have used rukṣa to justify lay members (mutilabihūn) of his religious community; cf. as-Suhrawardī, A Sufi Rule for Novices, pp. 18-19.

2. See the account in al-Kaṭīb, ...L'Espagne Musulmane, pp. 287-288.
forced him to seek aid from the Almohads. The astute Ibn al-Mu’mín recognised the political weakness of Ibn Qasî but, nevertheless, appointed him as puppet governor of Silves because of his residual spiritual influence. With the subsequent Andalusian insurrections against the Almohads, Ibn Qasî, alone among all the rebels, refused to surrender. He may have feared, with good reason, deportation away from his rābiṭa to Marrākuš. Ibn Qasî always seemed intent on preserving his spiritual community at all costs, and in this case he turned to the Portuguese Christians for assistance. The popular nature of the conspiracy that led to his death is easy to imagine, but it must be clearly stated that Ibn Qasî died defending his murādûn and not by their hands, as some accounts suggest. ¹

The importance of Ibn Qasî to Sufism is indicated in the twentieth chapter of his Kal’ an-Na‘lâyın, "as-Simsima". Like a tiny sesame seed, the mystical life of Ibn Qasî was destined to flourish into something much greater; he was the last important Andalusian Sufi before the appearance of the Šayk al-Akrbār, Ibn al-‘Arabî of Murcia. As detailed in the present study, Ibn al-‘Arabî acknowledged his debt to Ibn Masarra and Ibn al-‘Arîf, both masters of Ibn Qasî. But there are even more specific links. Most of Ibn al-‘Arabî’s early studies were undertaken in Sevilla, a city that followed the mystical traditions of Ibn Barrajân, Ibn Qasî’s fellow disciple at Almería.

¹ See especially al-Marrākušî and Ibn al-Kaṭîb in the sources cited above, p. 39.
Ibn al-‘Arabī’s first esoteric master at Sevilla was Abū Ja‘far al-‘Uryanī, a native of the Algarbe;¹ this šayk, definitely familiar with the teachings of Ibn al-‘Arīf, probably knew his fellow Sufi and countryman Ibn Qasī. When Ibn al-‘Arabī journeyed to the Maḡrib, it is known that he studied the Kal‘ an-Na’lāyn in Tunis with one of Ibn Qasī’s own sons.² Returning from Africa in 1198, it is also known that he visited the Sufi community at Almerīa and there wrote his Mawāqī‘ an-Nujūm.³ Finally, Ibn al-‘Arabī’s commentary on the Kal‘ an-Na’lāyn is conclusive proof of Ibn Qasī’s influence on the greatest of all Sufi masters.⁴

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1. Abū Ja‘far was a native of al-‘Ulyā’ (modern Loulé), a town to the west of Faro. Cf. Asín, Abenmasarra..., p. 114, note 2; and Ibn al-‘Arabī, Sufis of Andalusia, pp. 63-69.

2. Cf. Schimmel, Mystical Dimensions of Islam, p. 264; and González, ...Literatura Arábigo-Españoλa, pp. 230-241. Specific reference is made to the Kal‘ an-Na`lāyn in Ibn al-‘Arabī, The Wisdom of the Prophets, p. 39, which mistakenly gives the author as "Imam Abu-l-Qāsim ibn Fāsi".

3. See Ibn al-‘Arabī, Sufis of Andalusia, p. 32. The Sufi master of Almerīa at this time was Abū ‘Abd Allāh al-Ḡazālī, a direct disciple of Ibn al-‘Arīf.

4. There are two surviving MSS. of this commentary: Şehîd Ali Fâsî, No. 1174 (ff. 89a-175b), and Aya Sofya, No. 1879.
So the mystical legacy of Ibn Qasī is primarily associated with the influence of Ibn al-‘Arabī. In a very real sense, Ibn al-‘Arabī rescued Islamic mysticism from the political disintegration of the West. He left Spain and eventually managed to permeate the mystical life of the East with his pantheistic Sufism.¹

Finally, Ibn Qasī may have had some residual influence on the West during the 13th century. During this period in al-Andalus there were Sufi centres in Sevilla, Córdoba, Almería and Málaga. These mystical schools, existing at a time of great social and political decay, tended not to be innovative and looked instead to past masters such as Ibn al-‘Arīf for spiritual guidance.²

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1. This transmission was largely due to Ibn al-‘Arabī's disciple Ṣadr ad-Dīn al-Qunawī, who had links with some of the most eminent Persian Sufis. See Ibn al-‘Arabī, Sufis of Andalusia, p. 49.

2. Ibn al-Mar’ah Ibn Dahhāq (d. 1214) of Málaga, for example, is known to have written a commentary on Ibn al-‘Arīf's Maḥāsin; see Massignon, Recueil..., p. 70. The absence of Ibn al-‘Arabī in the Islamic East also forced Andalusian Sufis of the time to rely heavily on past masters.
Despite a lack of specific information, it seems probable that Ibn Qasī's mystical influence likewise continued to be felt in Islamic Spain during the thirteenth century. There are also indications that Ibn Qasī's family fled to North Africa and there managed to disseminate his doctrines, which may have found acceptance in the popularised Sufism of Abū Madyan.¹

1. Abū Madyan (c. 1126-1197) was born near Sevilla and obviously came under the indirect influence of Ibn Barrajān. Abū Madyan formulated a composite, unsophisticated Sufism that gained great popularity when introduced into the Mağrib. See Smith, Rābi'ā the Mystic, p. 193.
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