

others, al-Harawi in his *Kitab al-maqamat*. He was followed by Ibn 'Arabi, Ibn Sab'in (d. 669/1271) and their pupils as well as Ibn al-Farid and Najm al-Din al-Isra'ili (d. 677/1208).³⁸ To this group Ibn Khaldun uncompromisingly alleges them as being strongly influenced by the extremist neo-Isma'ili Shi'a's idea of incarnation and the divinity of the imam. In addition, their idea of *qutb* (pole)³⁹ is quite closely corresponding to Shi'a's idea about their chiefs (*nuqaba'*). According to Ibn Khaldun, many jurists and muftis rejected this idea.

It should also be noted here that, in trying to give a more clear picture on divine oneness, Ibn Khaldun has inserted a quotation from Abu Mahdi 'Isa b. al-Zayyat.⁴⁰ This quotation includes some passage of al-Harawi's *Maqamat* particularly on the theory of oneness.

SUFISM ASSESSED

Ibn Khaldun recapitulates that the entire discussion of Sufism can be summarised in four main topics. The first topic covers *mujahadat* (strives), *adhwaq* (the tastes), *muhasaba al-nafs* (self-scrutiny or self-examination) in order to obtain the mystical experience. The second topic is *kashf* (revealment) and the perceivable spiritual realities (*al-haqiqa al-mudraka min 'alam al-ghayb*) such as divine attributes, the throne and so on. The third topic is the activities in the various worlds and among the various created things (*al-'awalim wa-il-akwan*) including the kinds of *karamat* (divine grace). The fourth topic is *shatahat* (ecstatic utterances),⁴¹ the expression that are suspect in their plain meaning (*alfaz muhama al-zahir*).

Towards the end of the passage, Ibn Khaldun draws the attention of his reader about the right and true *Sufi* practice, as he himself believes. Again, he recalls his reader to observe the practice and the attitude of the early *Sufis* (*salaf al-mutasawwifa*) as an ideal model. Those early *Sufis* have no desire to remove the veil, or to have such supernatural perception. Their main concern is to follow their models. They always turn away and pay no attention to supernatural perception. They always give priority to religious law (*shari'a*), which is more certain than any mystical experience. They even forbade the prolonged discussion of those matters. Finally, Ibn Khaldun advises that this should be the belief, attitude and practice of all *Sufi* novices (*murid*).⁴²

1. Issawi, Charles, *An Arab Philosophy of History: Selections from the Prolegomena of Ibn Khaldun of Tunis (1332-1406)*, London, 1950. p. 7