

## Acknowledgements

In carrying out this study I received valuable guidance, assistance and support from various people to whom I now have the pleasure of extending my deepest thanks. First and foremost, I would like to thank the late Dr. Leonard Lewisohn (d.2018) for his invaluable guidance, advice, and encouragement. I am indebted to his insightful critiques. I am also thankful for the assistance I received from Dr. Semih Ceyhan, and for his generosity and the countless meetings and insightful conversations we had while I was conducting my research in Istanbul. I also wish to thank Dr. Asghar Seyed-Gohrab for his kind support and Dr. Bilal Kuşpınar for his help. I am grateful for the financial support I received from the Soudavar Memorial Foundation, which allowed me to pursue my research and field trips to Turkey, Sarajevo and Iran. Special thanks go to Dr. Mohammad Estelāmī for his sincere encouragement and valuable advice. I am especially grateful to Adam Gacek for his courses on Islamic manuscripts, offered at McGill University. They were instrumental in teaching me how to evaluate and work with complicated and often hard-to-read manuscripts.

I am very appreciative of the help and assistance I received from the staff members of the following manuscript libraries in Turkey: in Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Hacı Selim Ağa Kütüphanesi, ISAM: Center for Islamic Studies, Istanbul Üniversitesi Merkez Kütüphanesi, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Halk Kütüphanesi, Millet Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi and Beyazıt Devlet Kütüphanesi; in Konya, Mevlânâ Müzesi; in Ankara, Melli Kütüphanesi; and in Bursa, İnebey Yazma Eser Kütüphanesi. I am likewise grateful to the staff of: the Kitābkhānah-yi Majlis in Tehran, Iran; The Centre for the Great Islamic Encyclopaedia (Markaz-i dā'irat al-ma'ārif-i buzurg-i Islāmī) and the Kitābkhānah-yi Āstān-i Quds-i Raḡavī in Mash'had, Iran; the Royal Library of Copenhagen, Denmark; and the Ghazi Husrev Beg Library in Sarajevo. I am indebted to the staff of the library of the Institute of Islamic Studies in Montreal, and particularly to the late Stephen (Steve) Mellier (d.2015) for their friendship and the help they extended to me and for making the library a welcoming place to do research. I also offer my gratitude to the staff of the Rare Books and Special Collections at McGill University for the help and support they offered me.

Among my friends, I must offer sincere gratitude to Heather Empey, who kindly assisted me with proofreading this book. I cherish her and I cherish our friendship. To Elizabeth Alexandrin, Abdul Muthalib, Domenico Aversano, Christopher Anzalone, Ayesha Irani, Barbara Empey, and Zozan Pahlivan, whose inspiring words, warm company and valuable friendship have been priceless, let me express here my deepest thanks. I have very much enjoyed participating in the weekly sessions of the *Mathnawī* circles in Montréal and being part of the

lively discussions among its participants; thanks to Nasser and Jila Ghalkhani for inviting me into their circle and making me feel at home.

Words fall short to describe the spiritual light that ‘Abdullāh Wā’iz brought to my life, and the warmth and heartfelt moral support offered to me by Karim Zayyani throughout his many visits to Montreal. Last but not the least, I would like to turn to my family who have been my support and encouragement and express my sincere indebtedness and gratitude. I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to my cousin Ms. Rafat Asadian, who assisted me with obtaining a manuscript from Mash’had’s Āstān-i Quds-i Raḡavī Library. I particularly wish to express my appreciation and love to my brother Fakhr al-Dīn Tasbihi, who has been of great moral support to me throughout my studies and offered his tireless assistance and constant support in obtaining any materials and documents I needed to complete my thesis. Finally, I wish to dedicate this work to the memory of my parents, as well as to the memory of a dear friend and colleague Stephen Mellier, who was of great help in preparing the initial draft of this work.