

Christian Lange\*

# Thinking Through Smell: Theories of Olfaction in Early Modern Ottoman and Islamic Culture

<https://doi.org/10.1515/islam-2025-0006>

**Abstract:** While the political, social, and material histories of smell and perfume in the Ottoman and other early modern Muslim societies have received some scholarly attention, the intellectual history of olfaction in the Islamic world remains largely unstudied. This is a significant shortcoming in so far as practices involving perfume and stink are always embedded in, and informed by, discursively constituted smellscape. This article studies some of the conceptual parameters – philosophical-epistemological, mystical, and ethico-legal – within which smells were perceived in the early modern Islamic world. As the article demonstrates, not only was olfaction credited, by some, with great epistemic and even salvific importance, the question of smell and of the perception of smell also informed debates about who, and on what basis, should be attributed authority in matters of science, religion, and the sociopolitical order.

**Keywords:** Islam, Ottoman, smell, senses, sensory history

Oh you who are forgetful, rise and love!  
This is Joseph's scent, so inhale!<sup>1</sup>

---

1 Rūmī, *Mathnavī* (1925–40), III, 329 (bk. 4, v. 850): *ayyuhā l-sāllūna, qūmū wa-shaqū / tilka rayyā Yūsufā, fa-stanshiqū*. A shorter version of this article was delivered on 7 October 2023 as the first Josef van Ess Memorial Lecture at the German Oriental Institute in Beirut. I would like to thank Jens Hanssen and Thomas Würtz for instituting the lecture series and inviting me to speak in it, as well as Maher Jarrar for providing a response and generously sharing his thoughts and notes on the topic. This article is dedicated to Josef van Ess (†2021).

---

**\*Corresponding author: Christian Lange**, Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands, C.R.Lange@uu.nl

## Ottoman and Islamic Olfactory History in the Early Modern Period

It does not take a sleuth's nose to detect the rich aromata of early modern Ottoman culture.<sup>2</sup> As Nina ERGIN has observed, in the Ottoman empire “perfume and fumigation were not merely a marginal diversion sustaining a few scattered craftsmen but a flourishing industry.”<sup>3</sup> People habitually scented their homes, bodies, clothes and accoutrements, their medicines, food, and drinks.<sup>4</sup> Perfumeries proliferated throughout the Ottoman domain, especially in the imperial capital, Istanbul. If we are to trust the witness of the 11th/17th-century traveler Evliyā Çelebî (d. ca. 1095/1685), there were hundreds of shops and merchants trading in aromatics all over the city, organized in guilds of musk, ambergris, and aloeswood sellers, druggists, dealers in incense, scented and unscented soaps, and, importantly, rosewater.<sup>5</sup>

---

2 On perfume and olfaction in the Ottoman empire, see YENTÜRK 2005; DIMMIG 2012; ERGIN 2014; UZUN 2015; DAVIS/THYS-ŞENOCAK 2017; UZUN/MACARAIG 2022; NOOR 2023. There is only one study, to my knowledge, that dwells on the issue of urban stench in the Ottoman period, namely FAHMY 2002, against which might be compared VARLIK 2015, 36, 44, 52, 154, 225, 227–228, 277, 279, 291 (stench and miasma theory) and the brief comments in GRATIEN 2022, 56–57 (rural stench and modernization). I owe the reference to GRATIEN's study to the anonymous reviewer. Compare this with the far more developed historiography of smells, including bad ones, in early modern Europe, starting with CORBIN 1982/1996. See, for example, COCKAYNE 2007; DUGAN 2011; EVANS 2019. On the history of perfume in the Islamic world beyond the Ottoman world, see GROOM 1981; GYSELEN (ed.) 1998; BONNÉRIC (ed.) 2015; BOUHDIBA 2017; KING 2017; BOGHANIM/CARAYON (eds.) 2023. For studies of the intellectual and sociopolitical history of smell in the early Islamic world, see JARRAR/JAAFAR 2009; THURKILL 2016; BURSI 2020; LANGE 2022; LANGE *fc*.

3 ERGIN 2014, 87. Kamāl al-Dīn, a 10th/16th-century weaver from Aleppo, refers to perfumes like musk, saffron, rosewater, and other aromata several times in his notebook. See Kamāl al-Dīn, *Ayyām* (1442/2021), 49, 64–66, 114.

4 See YENTÜRK 2005, 66 (incense water sold on Istanbul markets), 69 (rosewater in food and drink), 71 (*ghāliya* unguent on moustaches), 72 (coffee and other drinks perfumed with ambergris and orange flower water); UZUN 2015, 17 (rosewater sprinklers in private homes), 18 (aromatized coffee and coffee cups), 20 (rosewater and incense during meals); PHILLIPS 2016, 18 (scented wood of prayer beads), 43 (incense burners and rosewater sprinklers in private homes), 66 (perfumed rice), 76 (perfumed *şerbet*).

5 Çelebî, *Seyāhatnāmesi* (2006), 262, 299, 320. The members of the guild of rosewater merchants regarded a certain “İṭr al-Dīn from Rey in Hindustan” as their patron saint. See *ibid.*, 262. I have been unable to identify this “İṭr al-Dīn (‘Perfume of Faith’). ‘Rey in Hindustan’ might refer to Raebareli (Uttar Pradesh), a city not far from Kannawj, India's traditional perfume capital. I owe this suggestion to Gianni Sievers.

If, as has been claimed, “[t]he study of the cultural history of smell is, [...] in a very real sense, an investigation into the *essence* of human culture,”<sup>6</sup> research on the history of smell and olfaction in early modern Islam has much to recommend itself.<sup>7</sup> Given the salience of perfume and fumigation, the political, social, and material histories of smell in the Ottoman and other early modern Muslim societies have received a certain amount of scholarly attention.<sup>8</sup> However, the intellectual history of olfaction in the Islamic world remains largely unstudied. This is a significant shortcoming in so far as practices involving perfume and stink are always embedded in, and informed by, discursively constituted smellscape. As this article demonstrates, the conceptual parameters within which smells were perceived in the early modern Islamic world were richly varied and debated controversially. Not only was olfaction credited, by some, with great epistemic and even salvific importance, it also spoke (or rather, smelled) directly to the question of who, and on what basis, should be attributed authority in matters of science, religion, and the sociopolitical order.

It is, of course, impossible to prove that the conceptual parameters demarcating the discursive smellscape were at all times actively present to the consciousness of Ottoman or other early modern Muslim smellers. However, as is suggested here, they formed something like the bottom note of their olfactory experience. In the literary and intellectual circles in which olfaction was discussed and theorized, pleas-

---

6 CLASSEN/HOWES/SYNNOTT 1994, 2.

7 Olfactory history, and sensory history more generally speaking, as a “habit of historical inquiry” (SMITH 2021, 4), deserves to be anchored more firmly in the historiography of the Islamic world. As Mark SMITH, one of the leading sensory historians today, insists (*ibid.*, 4, 77), characterizations of sensory history of the Western hemisphere as “new,” “burgeoning,” or “emerging” are off the mark; sensory history is fully “emerged.” However, SMITH also notes (*ibid.*, 36) – and I agree – that “we are in dire need of much more work on the senses in Asian history.”

8 On smell in the context of empire and imperial religion in Ottoman times, see the literature mentioned above, at footnote 2. In addition, on smell and perfume in harems and bathhouses, see ANDREWS/KALPAKLI 2005, 33, 221, 296; TUFAN 2006, 61; MACARAIG 2019, 118, 123, 150, 200. An important, largely untapped source for Ottoman olfactory history are court records. For example, an Istanbul court in the early 12th/18th century prohibited Jewish and Armenian merchants from selling fake musk and musk-scented products in the streets and courtyards of mosques. See Coşkun 2010, XXI, 155 (*hüküm* 88). In another case, in the early years of the 13th/19th century, representatives of the guild of sausage makers lodged a complaint against an Armenian merchant for selling sausages “out of season” and thereby making the “poor people” suffer from its stench. See Coşkun 2019, LXXXV, 418 (*hüküm* 401). Other complaints concern the smell of wine wafting from taverns or from wine barrels on transport through the city; the stink of carrion left in the street or emanating slaughterhouses; and the stench of latrines, sewage canals, and public dumps. I owe all these references to Yusuf Ünal.

ant smells were avidly cultivated. In Ottoman society it was a custom, according to Beyza UZUN and Nina MACARAIG,

to perfume spaces where intellectual labor took place, maybe with the goal of enhancing mental acuity, a custom that continued into the nineteenth century, as dignitaries and ulema then were known to carry a small piece of amber[gris] called *şemname* to put on their writing desk for this very purpose.<sup>9</sup>

Next to their writing desks, a prime site for intellectual labor of early modern scholars of the Ottoman and Safavid realms were the salons, the learned gatherings of the social male elite, usually staged in the reception rooms of private houses and residences.<sup>10</sup> These salons were filled with pleasant scents, in the form of actual aromata but also as the subject of polite conversation. Early modern Arabic, Persian, and Turkish poetry is replete with allusions to smell and perfume, and with actual descriptions of sweet-smelling objects and persons.<sup>11</sup> For example, a Damascene poet of the 11th/17th century describes his beloved as “perfume-diffusing ambergris... fertilizing my poems,”<sup>12</sup> and he writes gushingly about the pleasant smell coming from his beloved’s mouth:

It is as if his breath were a sweet breeze  
and as if we, when he sings, were twigs shivering,  
and as if the drinking companions in the pleasure-dome  
were branches bearing fruits of silent longing.<sup>13</sup>

9 UZUN/MACARAIG 2022, 69. *Şemname* balls were also kept on the body to imbue garments with a lasting scent. See YENTÜRK 2005, 72; DIMMIG 2012, 110. In *Council to Sultans (Naşihatü ş-şelâṭin)*, completed in 989/1581, the Ottoman bureaucrat and intellectual Muṣṭafâ ‘Âlî (d. 1008/1600) recommends that those keeping the sultan company should wear perfumed garments. See Muṣṭafâ ‘Âlî, *Naşîha* (1979), II, 100. Frédéric HITZEL mentions that public libraries in 18th- and 19th-century Istanbul were scented with flowers, spices, and incense. See HITZEL 1999, 28–29. I owe the last reference to Suzanne Compagnon.

10 On the Ottoman salon, see PFEIFER 2022. On literary salons in Persia, see among others, BROOKSHAW 2010; SUBTELNY 1984.

11 See the poems collected in Shalag, *Shamm* (1414/1984). For examples in Ottoman literature, see ANDREWS/KALPAKLI 2005, 33, 221, 296.

12 Shalag, *Shamm* (1414/1984), 153: *Kunta ka-l-‘anbari -lladhî fâha ṭibā... fa-akḥṣabat ash‘ārî*. The poet Manjak al-Dimashqî (d. 1080/1669) was one of the last well-known scions of the powerful Damascene Manjak family. See VIGOUROUX 2013, 219.

13 Shalag, *Shamm* (1414/1984), 153: *Wa-ka’anna l-anfāsa minhu nasīm / wa-ka’annā idhā shadā aghṣān / wa-ka’anna l-nudmāna fī dawḥati l-lah- / -wi ghuṣūnun thimāruhā l-kitmān*. The sweet smell of the beloved’s breath is a trope in Arabic poetry from pre-Islamic times onward. See BAUER 1998, 326–328. In the story of Budūr and Qamar al-Zamān in the *Arabian Nights*, the hero Qamar al-Zamān is attributed “fragrant breath” (*ṭib al-nakha*), while the heroine Budūr’s breath is “purer

The titles of 11th/17th-century Arabic poetic anthologies, such as *The Fragrance of Sensible Minds* (*Rayḥānat al-alibbā*), or of its continuation, *The Scent of Fragrant Herbs* (*Nafḥat al-rayḥāna*), likewise testify to early modern poets' infatuation with perfume.<sup>14</sup> The practice of eloquent speech in itself was said to give rise to pleasant olfactory sensations. A 10th/16th-century littérateur, for example, praises the prose of a colleague for being "more fragrant than the moringa and the lotus, and more intense than the scent of the rose and the narcissus."<sup>15</sup> When engaging with poetry, another imagines that he smells, as if by magic (*siḥr*), "scents from al-Shiḥr" – al-Shiḥr being a coastal town in Yemen known for exporting ambergris and frankincense.<sup>16</sup> As a modern-day scholar has claimed, with a whiff of hyperbole, Arab culture is home to "the world's most perfumed literature."<sup>17</sup>

The early modern salon was a space whose aromata vitalized the intellect and stimulated the olfactory imagination, a space in which the very act of reciting, and listening to beautiful speech was celebrated as a wonderfully fragrant event. Given this prominence of pleasant smells in salon culture, it is not surprising that the literary-scientific anthologies of the period, which collate topics discussed in the salons, consider the sense of smell and the bodily act of smelling as an important object of intellectual inquiry. Three concerns about olfaction – and about the senses more broadly speaking – come to the fore in these anthologies.<sup>18</sup>

First of all, the anthologies show a concern for the question of the role of the senses in the process of knowledge acquisition, asking how reliable sense perception is and how sensibles are perceived by the human sensory apparatus in general

---

than musk" (*azkā min al-misk*). See *Alf layla wa-layla* (1434/2013), II, 389 (night 172), 397 (night 183). In his book of salon etiquette, the *Tables of Delicacies* (*Mevā'idü n-nefā'is*), composed around 1008/1600, Muṣṭafā 'Ālī praises the sweet musky breath and the musk-scented hair of youthful servants, and he cautions "scholars of spiritual studies" and all "men of good conduct" against eating onions and garlic. See Muṣṭafā 'Ālī, *Mevā'id* (1998), 61, 157.

14 Al-Khafājī (d. 1069/1659), *Rayḥāna* (1967); al-Muḥibbī (d. 1111/1699), *Nafḥa* (1967–1971). On Muḥammad Amin al-Muḥibbī's multisensory literary esthetics and the notion of "sensory connoisseurship" in the Ottoman salon, see LEESE 2022.

15 See the translation of Badr al-Dīn al-Ghazzī (d. 984/1577) in PFEIFER 2022, 138, where Pfeifer highlights the "sensual pleasure men derived from speech."

16 See al-Muḥibbī, *Nafḥa* (1967–71), I, 4. For a full translation of the verse, see LEESE 2022, 98.

17 BOUHDIBA 2023, 31: "La littérature... la plus parfumée du monde."

18 I base the following on Bahā' al-Dīn al-Āmilī's (d. 1030/1621) *Beggar's Bowl* (*al-Kashkūl*), Sayyid Ni'matullāh al-Jazā'irī's (d. 1112/1701) *Nu'māniyyan Lights* (*al-Anwār al-Nu'māniyya*) and Muḥammad Rāghib Paşa's (d. 1176/1763) *Ship of the Desirous* (*Safīnat al-Rāghib*). On *al-Kashkūl* of al-Āmilī, a scholar and poet active at the court of Shāh 'Abbās (r. 995–1038/1587–1629), see BOSWORTH 1989. On *al-Anwār al-Nu'māniyya* of al-Jazā'irī, a Shi'i polymath scholar from Iraq who studied with Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī at Isfahan and died at Tustar, see RIZVI 2010. On *Safīnat al-Rāghib* of Rāghib Paşa, a high-ranking Ottoman bureaucrat and polyglot man of letters, see SIEVERT 2013.

and the sense of smell in particular. Early philosophical and theological traditions of thought shaped these epistemological discussions, but also late-medieval Illuminationist (*ishrāqī*) doctrines left a mark on them.<sup>19</sup>

The anthologies are also, secondly, invested in discussing in what ways, if any, otherworldly phenomena can be sensed and by whom. This concerns not only the question of an embodied experience of fragrances and other sensory delights in the future paradise, but also the question of the extent to which a sensory experience of the metaphysical realm is possible already now, during one's life on earth.<sup>20</sup>

Thirdly and finally, the anthologies relate ascetic views that undermine, at times denigrate, the pleasure of the senses. In other words, they raise the question of the moral and legal status of sense perception in general and of olfaction in particular – a question that occupied Muslim normative thinking virtually since the beginning of Islamic history.<sup>21</sup>

In the following sections, each of these three olfactory themes will be studied in detail. For each theme, a text written around the turn of the century from the 11th/17th to the 12th/18th century, will serve as entry point. As for the epistemology of olfaction, I examine a passage in the massive Shi'i encyclopedia compiled by Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (Isfahan, d. 1110/1699), the *Oceans of Lights* (*Bihār al-anwār*), on the question of the transmission of smell. While al-Majlisī's work is a monument not of Ottoman but of Safavid culture, his thoughts on olfaction are so tightly knit into transregional traditions of learning that it can serve as a good starting point for reconstructing early modern Muslim philosophical epistemologies of smell at large, across Ottoman and Safavid domains. In the next section, as regards mystical olfaction, I analyze a passage in the trilingual esoteric Qur'an commentary of Ismā'il Ḥaqqī Bursavī (Bursa, d. 1137/1725), the *Spiritual Proof in Qur'anic Exegesis* (*Rūḥ al-bayān fī tafsīr al-Qur'ān*). Bursavī's work likewise partakes in a transregional tradition, as he includes mystical and occult ideas from various backgrounds, including alchemy as well as Arabic and Persian Sufi poetry and prose literature. In the final section, I discuss normative constructions of olfaction in Islamic jurisprudence and *ḥadīth* scholarship in al-Khazrajī's (Damascus,

19 See Rāghib Paşa, *Saḥīḥ* (2000), 670–671, 731–733 (inner and outer senses), 727 (God's wisdom in creating the senses); al-ʿĀmilī, *Kashkūl* (1434/2013), II, 154–155 (sensory theory of the School of Illumination); al-Jazā'irī, *Anwār* (1429/[2008]), III, 128 (fickleness and unreliability of the senses).

20 See Rāghib Paşa, *Saḥīḥ* (2000), 755–758 (sensory pleasures and fragrances in paradise), 780–781 (impossibility of hearing the heavenly spheres); al-ʿĀmilī, *Kashkūl* (1434/2013), II, 25–30 (sensory pleasures of the afterlife); al-Jazā'irī, *Anwār* (1429/[2008]), III, 78 (sensory pleasures of the afterlife).

21 See especially al-Jazā'irī, *Anwār* (1429/[2008]), III, 78 (hierarchy of pleasures: rational, imaginative, and sensory), 80 (eating and sex as revolting activities), 81 (base nature of sensibiles: musk, honey, and silk). On smell in the formative period of Islam, see BURSİ 2020; LANGE 2022.

d. 1094/1683) *Subtle Commentary* (*Ṭaʿlīq laṭīfa*). While little is known about al-Khazrajī, his work is a comprehensive ethico-legal exploration of the well-known *ḥadīth* according to which the Prophet was enamored with “three things in this world of yours”: prayer, women, and perfume.

## Philosophical Fragrances: Olfaction in al-Majlisī’s (d. 1100/1699) *Oceans of Lights*

### Three Theories of Olfaction

In volume 14 of the massive religious and philosophical encyclopedia *The Oceans of Lights*, compiled under the general editorship of Muḥammad Bāqir al-Majlisī (d. 1110/1699), there is a chapter on the “faculties and perceptive powers of the soul: the outers senses, the inner senses, and the rest of the physical faculties.”<sup>22</sup> The section dealing with the sense of smell opens with a number of physiological observations;<sup>23</sup> it then proceeds to provide a summary of three different theories of olfaction, all of which center on explaining how smell is transmitted from the smell-possessing body to the olfactory organ, that is, the nose.<sup>24</sup>

The first of these theories, here referred to as the “vapor theory” (Figure 1), claims that olfaction occurs “by the vaporization (*tabakhkhur*) of subtle particles of the smell-possessing thing, which then get mixed up with air and reach the nostrils together with it.”

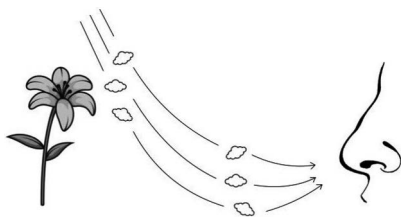


Fig. 1: Vapor theory of olfaction.

<sup>22</sup> Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār* (1429/2008), LVIII, 439–468. On this chapter of the *Biḥār al-anwār*, see NEWMAN 2012.

<sup>23</sup> Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār* (1429/2008), LVIII, 457 l. 21: Olfaction is a faculty that runs through “the two nipple-shaped appendices” of the front part of the brain. Thus already in Ibn Sīnā, *Qānūn* (1420/1999), II, 7.

<sup>24</sup> Al-Majlisī, *Biḥār* (1429/2008), LVIII, 457 ll. 21–30.

The second theory, here termed the “transformation theory” (Figure 2), holds that the olfactory organ does not perceive the smell itself, but rather the medium by which smell is conveyed to the nose, that is air in the case of human beings (water in the case of certain animals). This medium, the theory posits, undergoes transformation (*istiḥāl*) “by assuming the qualities of the smell-possessing thing.”

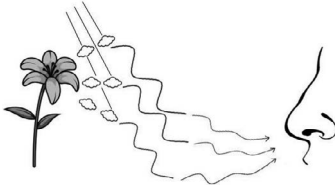


Fig. 2: Transformation theory of olfaction.

Finally, the third theory, dubbed here the “direct olfaction theory” (Figure 3), proposes that olfaction occurs “when the smell-possessing thing acts on the olfactory organ [directly], without transformation of the air and without vaporization and detachment of particles.”

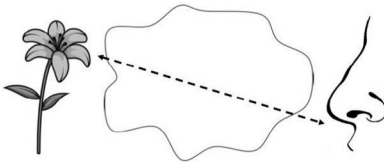


Fig. 3: Direct olfaction theory.

In medieval Islam, philosophical debates about how smells are transmitted from the smell-possessing thing to the organ of smell built on several precursors in Ancient and Late Antique philosophy.<sup>25</sup> What interests us in the present context is that the three theories summarized by al-Majlisī lay out a spectrum from material to immaterial explanations. The vapor theory considers smells to be bodies (usually referred to as “subtle particles,” *ajsām laṭīfa*) that detach themselves from the smell-possessing body (which shrinks in consequence) and subsequently enter into physical contact with the sensory organ in the nose. It is therefore the most tangibly materialist and naturalist explanation of olfaction. By contrast, the trans-

25 HARVEY 2006, 100–114; BALTHUSSEN 2015.

formation theory suggests that the medium of olfaction is affected by the smell-possessing body and thereby altered; the sensory organ does not come into direct contact with the smell of the smell-possessing body; it does so only indirectly, by way of the medium, which takes on odorific qualities (*kayfiyyāt*) by undergoing a mysterious process of transformation. Arguably, this makes the transformation theory less materialist and naturalist. Finally, the direct olfaction theory not only rejects the idea that smell is occasioned by smell particles floating into the sensory organ; it also disputes that what is smelled is the transformed medium of smell. Instead, the theory suggests, rather curiously, that olfaction of the smell-possessing body is a direct, immediate event. As will be argued below, by early modern times, this theory comes to underpin the notion that olfaction is immaterial, spiritual.

Disagreements in natural philosophy about how best to account for the transmission of smell are mentioned in several works of philosophy (*falsafa*) and dialectic theology (*kalām*) of the centuries before al-Majlisī.<sup>26</sup> It is worth noting that in addition to reflecting on the issue of odor transmission, philosophers and theologians considered other aspects as well. For example, they commented on the fact that human beings are rather skilled at parsing an object's odor and producing perfumes, but that their physiological powers of olfaction and cognitive ability to retain traces of smells in the soul are weak in comparison to other animals.<sup>27</sup> They reflected on the fact that smells are relative to the smeller's context and experience.<sup>28</sup> They also

26 The following discussion is based mostly on Ibn Sīnā, *Nafs* (1952–83), II, 65–69; al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1989), III, 274–276; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 167–168 (tr. 144–145). In addition, I draw on Ibn al-Jazzār, *Funūn* (2007), 35–37; Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira* (2009), II, 714–715; Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā'il* (1376/1957), II, 405–406; al-Baghdādī, *Mu'tabar* (1939), II, 339–340; Ibn Rushd, *Talkhīṣ* (1972), 17–18, 19–20, 23–24; al-Rāzī, *Muḥaṣṣal* (1411/[1990–1]), I, 262; al-Rāzī, *Mabāḥith* (1411/[1990–1]), II, 282–283; al-Āmidī, *Abkār* (1423/[2002–3]), I, 489; al-Bayḍāwī, *Ṭawālī'* (1411/1991), 121; al-Ījī, *Mawāqif* (1997), II, 561; al-Jurjānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1998), VII, 206; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Ta'liqāt* (1392sh/2000), 303–305. 27 For example, Ibn Rushd (d. 595/1198) notes the human skill in “close smelling,” in contrast to Aristotle (*De anima* [1907], 421a–421b), who considers human olfaction inferior to animal olfaction. See Ibn Rushd, *Talkhīṣ* (1972), 19–20. The human olfactory weakness explains the conceptual poverty of the human taxonomy of smell. As many Islamic philosophers, following Aristotle, state, human beings are generally content to distinguish between no more than two basic types of smell, “good” (*ṭayyib*) and “stinking” (*muntin*). See Ibn Sīnā, *Nafs* (1952–1983), II, 65–66; Ibn al-Jazzār, *Funūn* (2007), 35; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 168–169. This contrasts with the other senses, such as touch and taste. The Brethren of Purity, for example, count six basic types of the former and nine basic types of the latter. See Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā'il* (1376/1957), II, 404–405. On the Brethren of Purity's theory of the senses, see ISH2, ch. 18 (C. LANGE), 220–232.

28 See, for example, al-Balkhī, *Maṣāliḥ* (1426/2005), 435 (tanners not affected by bad smells); Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā'il* (1376/1957), II, 406 (dung beetles becoming lifeless when immersed in flowers); al-Jildakī, fol. 36b (perfumers losing their ability to smell pleasant fragrances). See also Ibn al-Jazzār, *Funūn* (2007), 35: “Perfume... is better and more pleasant in the lands of gentle air, or,

debated the place of smell in the hierarchy of the five senses, usually following Aristotle's model by assigning smell to the middle position.<sup>29</sup>

First and foremost, however, the discussion revolved around the question of how smells travel. The defenders of the vapor theory provided two main arguments. First of all, they noted that apples and other smell-emitting bodies shrink over time and when sniffed at vigorously; this proves that particles are detached from them. Secondly, they reasoned that smell comes about and is released when smell-possessing objects get hot (for example, by rubbing or kneading), while cold conditions generally impede the spread of smell. This proves that smells are warm vapors, just like the smokes released by fire.

The proponents of the transformation theory rejected these arguments on the following grounds. First of all, they pointed out that not all smell-possessing objects shrink; a piece of ambergris, for example, retains its size. The withering of certain aromatic objects, such as apples, is due to other natural factors, such as exposure to wind or touch. Secondly, they stressed that smells travel much farther than heat. This shows that olfaction does not depend on heat and is, in fact, unrelated to warm vapors. Invoking the authority of Aristotle, they related that the white vultures of Egypt fly to Greece or to certain parts of North Africa in the aftermath of battles, smelling the stench of cadavers on the battlefield.<sup>30</sup> It is inconceivable, they argued, that material particles travel over such enormous distances through the air. Therefore, it is the air itself, taking on certain characteristics of smell in a process of transformation, that is perceived by the smelling subject.

## From the Vapor Theory to the Transformation Theory

Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d. 428/1037) is our most important early witness of the debate. In his *Canon of Medicine (al-Qānūn fī l-ṭibb)*, he relates that the vapor theory is the “majority position” of the scholars of his time.<sup>31</sup> One such scholar was the 5th/11th-century Muʿtazilite theologian Ibn Mattawayh. In an influential work

---

rather, its pleasant scent exists because of the purity and gentleness of their air, and the goodness of its soil.” On Ibn al-Jazzār's (d. 369/979–80) theory of smell, see *ISH2*, ch. 20 (A. KING), 239–248.

<sup>29</sup> See Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā'il* (1376/1957), II, 403. See also al-Baghdādī, *Mu'tabar* (1939), II, 330, who states that smell is a type of touch and closely related to taste. According to Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 167, smell, taste, and touch are the three “coarse” senses, but smell is subtler than taste, and taste subtler than touch. Cf. below, footnotes 54 and 65. See further JARRAR/JAAFAR 2009, 270; PUERTA VÍLCHEZ 2017, 659 and passim.

<sup>30</sup> See Aristotle, *History of Animals* (1862), 145 (book 6, ch. 5), 243–244 (book 9, ch. 12).

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *Qānūn* (1420/1999), I, 302.

on natural philosophy, Ibn Mattawayh states that olfaction is the result of “particles of the smelled object” (*ajzā’ al-mashmūm*) being transported (*intiqāl*) in the air and moving into adjacency (*mujāwara*) to the nose buds.<sup>32</sup> Mu’tazilite theologians of earlier centuries likewise had maintained strongly corpuscular explanations of olfaction. Prominently, al-Nazzām of Baghdad (d. ca. 230/845) considered that smells are bodies; they are hidden (*kāmin*) in other bodies and released upon burning of these bodies, as in the case of wood or substances used for fumigation. Al-Nazzām defined smell as “a body that detaches itself from the body that is smelled and connects to the nostrils of those who smell, so that they become aware of it.”<sup>33</sup>

Ibn Sīnā pivots away from such accounts, as in general he moves away from the materialistic “sensualism”<sup>34</sup> of thinkers such as al-Nazzām, stressing the fundamental superiority of “the intellect’s apprehension of the intelligible [over] the senses’ apprehension of the sensible.”<sup>35</sup> He rejects the theory that smell particles are detached from the smell-possessing body and then intermix with air or water.<sup>36</sup> Instead, he embraces the transformation theory, arguing that the medium of olfaction, air or water, is transformed.<sup>37</sup> There occurs, he maintains, “another smell” (*rā’ihā ukhrā*) in the medium: a smell that is not identical with the smell of the smell-possessing body, but one that qualitatively resembles it.<sup>38</sup>

Some sought to combine and reconcile the vapor theory and the transformation theory of olfaction. Already the Brethren of Purity (4th/10th c.) point in this direction. As they explain, smell-possessing bodies release “subtle vapors that enter into an immaterial mixture (*mizāj rūḥānī*) with the air,” with the result that “the air becomes like them in quality.”<sup>39</sup> Ibn Rushd (Averroes, d. 595/1198) opines that odors

32 Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira* (2009), II, 714–715. See similarly, Ibn al-Jazzār, *Funūn* (2007), 37; *ISH2*, ch. 20 (A. KING), § 1.

33 Thus, in al-Nasafī (d. 508/1114), *Tabṣira* (1990–93), I, 389. On al-Nazzām’s theory of sensory perception, especially olfaction, see VAN ESS 1991–1997, III, 353–360, *passim*; *ISH2*, ch. 26 (J. WEAVER), 317–327.

34 VAN ESS 1991–97, III, 338.

35 See Ibn Sīnā, *Ilāhiyyāt* (2005), 298. For a succinct discussion of Ibn Sīnā’s view of the relationship between the senses and the soul, see GUTAS 2014, 373–379. On Ibn Sīnā’s “empiricism,” see GUTAS 2012; for different perspectives, Davidson 1992, 93; *ISH2*, ch. 29 (C. VAN LIT), 352–363.

36 Ibn Sīnā argues that interpenetration of bodies is impossible in several places in the *Physics* of *al-Shifā’*. See Ibn Sīnā, *Samma’*, (1952–83) 121 (tr. 174); Ibn Sīnā, *Kawn* (1952–83), 81.

37 Al-Nawbakhtī (d. between 300/912 and 310/922), in his commentary on Aristotle’s *De generatione et corruptione*, defines transformation (*istiḥāla*) as change in sensible qualities, which move from potentiality to actuality. See al-Nawbakhtī, *Talkhiṣ* (2015), 14 (§ 4.1), 18 (§ 5.1).

38 Ibn Sīnā, *Maqūlāt* (1952–83), 37. Cf. Aristotle, *De anima* (1907), 421b.

39 Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā’il* (1376/1957), II, 405–406.

inhere in the medium immaterially, while they exist materially in the smell-possessing body.<sup>40</sup> Al-Rāzī (d. 606/1209), Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1045/1635–6), and also al-Majlisī all entertain the idea that *both* theories are somehow correct and that, in fact, they can be combined.<sup>41</sup> Al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233) seeks to bypass the issue by emphasizing a different aspect: occasionalism. He states that, whether by a physical connection (*ittiṣāl*) between the smell and the organ of smell, or by a transformation of the medium, it is only by force of God and in accordance with His custom (*ʿāda*) that perception of odor actually occurs.<sup>42</sup>

Gradually, however, the transformation theory gained the upper hand. In the 6th/12th century, Abū al-Barakāt al-Baghdādī (d. 547/1165) articulates a cautious preference, finding it “not completely impossible” but “difficult to fathom” that smell particles can travel over long distances without losing their scent.<sup>43</sup> Also al-Bayḍāwī (d. ca. 685/1286 or 716/1312) leans toward the transformation theory.<sup>44</sup> Al-Ījī (d. 756/1355) flatly declares the transformation theory to be “the correct explanation (*al-ḥaqq*),”<sup>45</sup> and al-Taftazānī (d. 793/1390) states that it is the theory on which “the majority agrees.”<sup>46</sup>

## Direct Olfaction

What, however, about the direct olfaction theory? Ibn Sinā calls the defenders of this theory *aṣḥāb al-ta’dīya*, “proponents of [direct] transmission,” and he states that they claim “that the smell-possessing body affects the body that lacks smell, there being between them a body that has no smell, without affecting the inter-

<sup>40</sup> Ibn Rushd, *Talkhīṣ* (1972), 24 (tr. 16). Ibn Rushd also states (*ibid.*, 8) that smelling is connected to “the fiery and smoky element,” which directly enters the brain, curing it. See further HASSE 2014, 313. On Ibn Rushd’s theory of sensation, see *ISH2*, ch. 23 (R. HANSBERGER), 273–290.

<sup>41</sup> Al-Rāzī, *Muḥaṣṣal* (1411/[1990–1]), I, 262; al-Rāzī, *Mabāḥith* (1411/[1990–1]), II, 282–283; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 168; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Ta’līqāt* (1392/2000), 303–306; al-Majlisī, *Bihār* (1429/2008), LVIII, 457. Mullā Ṣadrā’s theory of perception arguably points beyond the three theories of olfaction presented here. For lack of space, his views cannot be discussed here in greater detail. See, for example, Mullā Ṣadrā, *Ta’līqāt* (1392/2000), 306: *kull iḥsās bi-inshā’ al-ṣuwar al-ḥisiyya fī ‘ālam al-malakūt al-naḥsānī mujarrada ‘an al-mādda, lā ‘an al-iḍāfa ilayhā, qā’ima bi l-naḥs qiyām wujūd al-shay’ bi-fā’ilihi lā bi-qābilihi*. See PARILDAR 2020, 107–165.

<sup>42</sup> Al-Āmidī, *Abkār* (1423/[2002–3]), I, 489. On occasionalist epistemology in the Ash’arī *kalām* tradition, see VAN ESS 1966, 168–169; in Ottoman times, see EL-ROUAYHEB 2015, 294–305.

<sup>43</sup> Al-Baghdādī, *Mu’tabar* (1939), II, 339–340.

<sup>44</sup> Al-Bayḍāwī, *Tawālī’* (1411/1991), 121.

<sup>45</sup> Al-Ījī, *Mawāqif* (1997), II, 561.

<sup>46</sup> Al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1998), III, 274.

mediary.”<sup>47</sup> According to the *aṣḥāb al-ta’diya*, olfaction is a process that goes right through, or skips over, the bodies of water and air that are situated between the olfactory organ and the smell-possessing object. We get a little closer to the identity of the *aṣḥāb al-ta’diya* with the help of Ibn Mattawayh, who briefly invokes the idea, entertained by an unidentified group of thinkers, that smells are perceived “where they are” (*bi-ḥaythu hiya*), that is, at the smell-possessing object. “This is incorrect,” Ibn Mattawayh notes, “for were it so, it would not be necessary for us [human beings] to inhale and draw in those particles in order to perceive.”<sup>48</sup>

The idea that perception does not occur in the sensory organ and the brain but at the sensed object seems decidedly odd. What Ibn Mattawayh is describing in this passage is the olfactory equivalent of an optical theory: extramissionism. Extramissionists, proponents of a dominant school of optical thinking from Greek antiquity to the medieval world, argued that the eye emits visual rays that touch the surface of seen objects, giving rise to visual perception at the seen object.<sup>49</sup> From Ibn Mattawayh and other authors invoking the theory that smells are smelled “where they are,” we gather that extramissionism was extrapolated, by some, from sight to olfaction. Some people, in al-Rāzī’s words, argued that the olfactory organ “latches onto smells while they [i.e., the smells] are over there.”<sup>50</sup>

In late-medieval and early modern *kalām* and *falsafa*, concomitantly with the gradual decline of the extramission theory in optics, olfactory extramissionism went out of fashion. Writing in the 7th/13th and 8th/14th centuries, al-Āmidī, al-Bayḍāwī, and al-Ījī, authors of influential *summae* of Sunni theology, do not refer to any third theory at all. They merely relate the vapor theory and the transformation theory. By contrast, toward the end of the 8th/14th century, al-Taftazānī *does* refer to a third theory. However, he does not cite the key phrase of extramissionism, that is, that sensibles are perceived in the place where they are, *ḥaythu hiya*. This

47 Ibn Sinā, *Nafs* (1952–83), 66. It seems unlikely, contrary to what has been proposed, that Ibn Sinā is taking aim here at the Nestorian Abū l-Faraj ‘Abd Allāh Ibn al-Ṭayyib (d. 435/1043), who favored an explanation of olfaction according to which smell imprints itself in the air in an immaterial way, not unlike the explanations provided by the Brethren of Purity and, later, Ibn Rushd. See Ibn al-Ṭayyib, *Tafsīr* (2006), 67: *lā yanbaghī an... yakūna ka-inṭibā’ šūra fī hayūlā, a’nī inṭibā’an jumāniyyan, lākin rūḥāniyyan*. On Ibn al-Ṭayyib’s theory of olfaction, see FERRARI 2004; FERRARI 2006, 67–74; HASSE 2014, 312–313.

48 Ibn Mattawayh, *Tadhkira* (2009), I, 157.

49 On extramissionism in the thought of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’, Ibn al-Haytham, al-Ghazālī, and al-Suhrawardī, see ISH2, ch. 18, § 6 (C. LANGE), ch. 21, §§ 1.1.1–1.1.5 (J. HOGENDIJK and A. SABRA), ch. 30, § 8 (D. INGENITO), ch. 22, § 101 (H. AMIN BEIDOKHTI).

50 Al-Rāzī, *Muḥaṣṣal* (1411/[1990–1]), I, 262; al-Rāzī, *Mabāḥith* (1411/[1990–1]), II, 283: *ḥaythu huwa*. See also Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 168: *ḥaythu huwa*.

raises an intriguing question: in talking about direct olfaction, does al-Taftazānī have olfactory emissionism in mind, or is he thinking of something else?

Al-Taftazānī, in fact, takes the discussion in a rather different direction. He is the first among the authors studied up to here who, having mentioned the third theory of olfaction, adds an excursus.<sup>51</sup> In this excursus, al-Taftazānī deals with a most peculiar phenomenon: the smell of stars. Already in his summary work of theology, *The Goals of Theological Seekers* (*Maqāṣid al-ṭālibīn fī uṣūl al-dīn*), al-Taftazānī relates that “some philosophers claim that the celestial spheres smell, and that the requirement that air reach the nostrils only exists in the world of elements.” In his own vast commentary on *The Goals of Theological Seekers*, he elaborates:

It is related from Plato, Pythagoras, Hermes [Trismegistus] and others that the celestial spheres and the stars have a sense of smell, and that they are fragrant. The Peripatetics rebutted them by saying that there is no air there [in the celestial spheres] to take on the quality [of smells], nor are there vapors that dissolve. It [smell] only exists in things composed of elements.<sup>52</sup>

The notion that the celestial spheres produce music was shared widely in Islamic philosophy,<sup>53</sup> less so the notion that they smell. As the Brethren of Purity asserted, “heavenly beings and denizens of the celestial spheres are above such things.”<sup>54</sup> However, al-Suhrawardī of Aleppo (d. 587/1191) embraced the idea.<sup>55</sup> The argument is that, in the same way that the music of the spheres is audible to certain human beings like Pythagoras, so the perfume of the stars can be smelled by a certain group of people. As al-Taftazānī relates,

some latter-day scholars say that when we enter into conjunction with the celestial spheres, in our sleep or in a waking state, we perceive them as releasing smells more pleasant than musk and ambergris [...] For this reason, the masters of the spiritual sciences (*arbāb al-ʿulūm*

<sup>51</sup> On the reception history of al-Taftazānī's works as well as other “books of the Persians” (including al-Suhrawardī's *Philosophy of Illumination*) in 11th/17th-century Ottoman scholarship, see EL-ROUAYHEB 2015, 29, 31, 51 and passim. On Persian influences on the Ottoman salon, see PFEIFER 2022, 46–51.

<sup>52</sup> Al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1989), III, 275.

<sup>53</sup> Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', *Rasā'il* (1376/1957), I, 208; al-Suhrawardī, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* (1999), 154 (§ 258); al-Shīrāzī, *Sharḥ* (1383sh/[2013–4]), 512 (see the translation in CORBIN 1989, 134); al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1989), III, 277; Rāghūb Paşa, *Saḥḥa* (2000), 780–781. Also, Ibn al-'Arabī speaks of the possibility of listening to the music of the spheres, see RAŠIĆ 2022.

<sup>54</sup> Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', *Rasā'il* (1376/1957), I, 207. According to the Brethren of Purity, the three proximate senses perceive in a corporeal way (*jusmāniyyan*), by way of touch (*mumāssa*), whereas the two distal senses perceive in a purely immaterial way (*rūḥāniyyan qat'an*). See *ibid.*, II, 406–407.

<sup>55</sup> Al-Suhrawardī, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* (1999), 154 (§ 258): *wa-li'l-aflāk sam' ghayr mashrūt bi-l-udhun... wa-shamm ghayr mashrūt bi-l-anf*. Cf. al-Shīrāzī, *Sharḥ* (1383sh/[2013–4]), 512. On al-Suhrawardī's theory of the senses, see ISH2, ch. 22 (H. AMIN BEIDOKHTI), 259–272.

*al-rūhāniyya*) agree that every star has its own special vapor. Every spiritual being has a known scent that they [the masters] sniff out. They experience pleasure on account of it [the scent], and on account of the scents of the foods that are prepared for them. They pass on to those who prepare this for them whatever accords with their status.<sup>56</sup>

The last lines in this quote suggest that certain “masters of the spiritual sciences” talked about smelling transcendent realities not just in terms of an otherworldly experience but also as something that occurs in the context of sacred meals, shared between a master and his disciples.<sup>57</sup> We will return to this motif of embodied mystical olfaction in the next section. What is of interest here is that by the time of al-Taftazānī a certain group of philosophers had come to defend the possibility of smelling the fragrance of transcendent, immaterial objects. This required them to have an immaterial explanation of the process of olfaction.

The bases for such a theory were provided by the aforementioned al-Suhrawardī, the founding figure of what, in later tradition, came to be known as the “School of Illumination” (*madhhab al-ishrāq*). Al-Suhrawardī, who developed a theory of knowledge that served as “a general alternative to Ibn Sīnā’s epistemology”<sup>58</sup> in the Islamic world, opposed the idea that air serves as the medium of sensation, whether in the case of hearing or of olfaction. “Air will not hold a shape, for it is quick to blend,” al-Suhrawardī argues, concluding that “sensibles are known innately and have no definitions.”<sup>59</sup> Sensation, according to al-Suhrawardī, is not, or only in a superficial way, a function of the sensory organs of the body. In fact, it is not even a function of the faculties of the human soul, as commonly defined: the *sensus communis*, the imagination, reason, and so on. Human souls, al-Suhrawardī says, perceive objects in an immaterial way, by means of the souls’ “luminous essence.” This luminous essence, al-Suhrawardī declares, is the “sense of all the senses.”<sup>60</sup> This disembodied, spiritual theory of perception is summarized in a passage in one of the literary-scientific anthologies referred to above, in the introduction to this article. Its author, Bahā’ al-Dīn al-Āmilī (d. 1030/1621), relates that Illuminationists define sensory perception as

56 Al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1989), III, 275–276; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 169.

57 On sacred meals in late-medieval Sufism, see BASHIR 2011, 166, 172; ABUALI 2022, 60–62.

58 KAUUKUA 2020. See further KAUUKUA 2022, 112–117.

59 Al-Suhrawardī, *Hikmat al-ishrāq* (1999), 73–74 (§ 105); al-Shahrazūrī, *Sharḥ* (1383sh/[2013–4]), 276.

60 Al-Suhrawardī, *Hikmat al-ishrāq*, 139 (§§ 226–227): *kamā al-ḥawāss kulluhā tarji’u ilā ḥassa wāḥida, wa-hiya al-ḥiss al-mushtarak, fa-jamī’u dhālika yarji’u fi l-nūr al-mudabbir ilā quwwa wāḥida hiya dhātuhu al-nūriyya al-fayyāda li-dhātiḥā*. Ibid., 139 (§ 227): *al-nūr al-isfahbadh muḥīt... wa-huwa ḥiss jamī’ l-ḥawāss*. Also, Ibn al-‘Arabī speaks of the senses, including olfaction, as lights, and of the sensibles as manifestations of light. Perception, he states, “latches onto them.” See Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Futūḥāt* (1431/2010), VIII, 524, and the translation of this passage in ISH2, ch. 36, (C. LANGE), § 5.

an illumined connection of the soul with what is perceived. This connection can be established by way of the [physical] senses, or it can be achieved without them. Souls separated from the body are capable of perceiving things – we can be certain that they [these things] are not engravings in any of the bodily faculties. Souls continue to be able to witness [objects of perception] for as long as they exist.<sup>61</sup>

According to this view, then, there is no physical connection, no particles, no transformation of the medium taking place in the space between the smell-possessing body and the smelling organ. Still, the former acts on the latter. It does so directly, immediately, as if the simultaneous presence of the smell-possessing body and the smell-perceiving subject is sufficient for olfaction to occur. “Knowledge-by-presence,” to invoke a well-known phrase of al-Suhrawardī, includes olfaction-by-presence.

It appears, then, that the direct olfaction theory, refuted by the likes of Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Mattawayh, and al-Rāzī, and the direct olfaction theory, criticized by al-Taftazānī and al-Majlisī, are not the same. While Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Mattawayh, and al-Rāzī aim their critique at olfactory emissionism, al-Taftazānī and al-Majlisī react against the theory of olfaction-by-presence. Both theories are debunked as “far-fetched,” “highly unlikely,” and “extremely implausible.”<sup>62</sup> The key argument used to rebut the two direct olfaction theories is the same: if a smell-possessing thing (say, a flower) is removed to a distance, or when it is destroyed, still its scent lingers in the room in which it was previously. This shows that olfaction does not occur at the smell-possessing object (*ḥaythu hiya*), as per olfactory emissionism, and also that it is not immediate, as claimed by the olfaction-by-presence theory, but rather, that it is mediated by air.<sup>63</sup>

## Sufi Scents: Olfaction in Bursavī’s (d. 1137/1725) *Spiritual Proof*

### Otherworldly Smells

The less naturalist, physicalist a theory of olfaction is, the more plausible it is to claim an olfactory experience of the divine. An immaterial theory of olfaction makes

<sup>61</sup> Al-ʿĀmilī, *Kashkūl* (1434/2013), II, 155.

<sup>62</sup> Ibn Sīnā, *Nafs* (1952–83), 68; al-Rāzī, *Muḥaṣṣal* (1411/[1990–1]), I, 262; al-Rāzī, *Mabāḥith* (1411/[1990–1]), I, 372; Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asfār* (1981), VIII, 168.

<sup>63</sup> In addition to the literature cited in the previous footnote, see al-Taftazānī, *Sharḥ* (1419/1989), III, 274; al-Majlisī, *Biḥār* (1429/2008), LVIII, 457.

room for the idea that fragrance is “indicative of divine presence, at once distinct from the mundane realm yet permeating and transforming it by infusing its sweet scent.”<sup>64</sup> In the epistemological traditions of the Islamic world, sight and hearing were usually regarded as the most spiritual of the five senses,<sup>65</sup> and hence as the senses by which one was most likely to witness transcendent realities. In certain areas of Islamic thought, however, sensing the beyond by no means remained limited to sight and hearing. People claimed other avenues for a sensory experience of the divine. After all, the Prophet was said to have declared in a *ḥadīth* that he had perceived “the breath of your Lord coming from the direction of Yemen”: an encounter with the divine that involved not the two senses of sight and hearing but of smell and touch.<sup>66</sup>

Not only the “breath of the Lord” was believed to waft into the world from the otherworld. Other fragrances were thought to be arriving on earth from the divine realm, too. Islam inherited from the Christian tradition the notion that martyrs and their bodily remains exude the “odor of sanctity,” directly transmitting the aromatic bliss of their heavenly afterlife.<sup>67</sup> In the Islamic world, as in medieval Christendom, the tombs of saints were said to smell of the life-giving fragrance of paradise.<sup>68</sup> Most famously, this phenomenon was said to be experienced at the grave of the prophet Muḥammad in Medina.<sup>69</sup> Muslim authors reminisced admiringly about the wonderful aroma of the Prophet, in both life and death. Reportedly, the Prophet’s natural fragrance elicited the admiration of his cousin and son-in-law ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib, as he washed his dead body. “How pleasant is your smell, alive and dead!” he is related to have exclaimed.<sup>70</sup> In Sufi literature, one encounters the story that during the *mi’rāj* some drops of the Prophet’s sweat fell to the ground, and that from the drops the first rose grew to unfold its bouquet,<sup>71</sup> such that roses, to this day, provide a whiff of the Prophet’s glorious, eschatological body.

<sup>64</sup> HARVEY 2006, 163.

<sup>65</sup> According to the Brethren of Purity, sight is the most “spiritual” or “immaterial” (*rūḥānī*) of the five senses, followed by hearing, smell occupying a middle position. See Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, *Rasā’il* (1376/1957), II, 403. See further JARRAR/JAAFAR 2009, 270; PUERTA VÍLCHEZ 2017, *passim*.

<sup>66</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (1421/2001), XVI, 576 (no. 10978).

<sup>67</sup> ALBERT 1990; HARVEY 2006, 90, 227–228; THURLKILL 2016, 71–72; BONNÉRIC 2019, 76.

<sup>68</sup> DIEM/SCHÖLLER 2004, II, 90–96.

<sup>69</sup> Al-Būṣṣirī, *Burda* (1434/2013), 164 (v. 58): *lā ṭiba ya’dilu turban ḍamma a’zumahu / ṭubā li-mun-tashiqim-minhu wa-multathimi*.

<sup>70</sup> Ibn Hishām, *K. Sīrat rasūl Allāh* (1858–59), 1019. See further BONNÉRIC 2019, 76; THURLKILL 2016, 116.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Aṭṭār, *Muṣibatnāma* (1338sh/1959), 28; Rūmī, *Divān* (1336sh/1957–), no. 1348. See SCHIMMEL 1985, 35. According to a tradition related by Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī and al-Majlisī (but judged to be inauthentic by al-Nawawī), the white rose was created from the Prophet’s sweat, while the red rose was

## Jacob's Sense of Smell

The early modern Islamic world witnessed a renewed interest in olfactory piety. In the 11th/17th century, the Ottoman olfactory century, representations of the Prophet as a rose became increasingly popular in the Islamic world, especially in Sufi visual culture.<sup>72</sup> Early modern Sufi discourses about olfaction are brought together in the trilingual Qur'an commentary of the Ottoman Sufi-scholar Ismā'il Haqqī Bursavī (d. 1137/1725), the sprawling *Spiritual Proof in Qur'anic Exegesis*. The Qur'an is a curiously odorless text,<sup>73</sup> but there is one passage in which olfaction plays a pivotal role. This passage revolves around the patriarch Jacob catching a whiff of the scent of the shirt of his son Joseph, after having believed for many years that Joseph has been killed by a wolf. The incident occurs toward the end of the Joseph story. Having escaped to Egypt and risen to wealth and fame there, Joseph instructs his visiting brothers to return to Canaan and drape his shirt over their blind father's face, in order to make him regain his sight. With the caravan still underway, Jacob suddenly smells the scent of the son he had thought lost, and when, after the caravan's arrival, the shirt is cast on his face, he sees again (Q 12:93–95):

“Go, take this shirt,” [Joseph said,] “and do you cast it on my father's face, and he shall recover his sight; then bring me your family all together.” So, when the caravan set forth, their father said, “Surely, I smell Joseph's scent, unless you think me demented.” They said: “By God, you are certainly in your ancient error.” But when the bearer of good tidings came to him, and laid it on his face, he saw once again.<sup>74</sup>

Muslim exegetes often stress the miraculous character of the story, explaining that the east wind asked God for permission to carry Joseph's scent to Jacob, that Joseph's shirt had been woven in paradise, and that Jacob's nose was supernaturally gifted, considering that Joseph's scent traveled over such a great distance.<sup>75</sup> Sufi commentators expand on the otherworldly connotations of Joseph's shirt and the miraculous nature of Jacob's olfaction. In one of the earliest preserved esoteric commentaries on the passage, Ja'far al-Šādiq (d. 148/765) equates Jacob with all

---

created from Gabriel and the yellow rose from Burāq. See Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, *Ashraf al-wasā'il* (1419/1998), 295; al-Majlisī, *Hilyat al-muttaqīn* (1994), 288.

72 GRUBER 2014; GRUBER 2018, 297–300.

73 See LANGE 2022.

74 The translation follows that of Arthur Arberry (1955), with minor changes.

75 Al-Ṭabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān* (2011), XIII, 72; al-Māturīdī, *Ta'wīlāt* (2005–11), VII, 358; al-Ṭūsī, *Tibyān* (1957–63), V, 192; al-Jalālayn, *Tafsīr* (1388/1968), I, 508.

believers who feel the “breeze of faith in their heart.”<sup>76</sup> Rashīd al-Dīn Maybudī (*fl.* first half 6th/12th c.) writes that when Jacob contemplated Joseph’s absence, he contemplated the Real (*ḥaqq*), “sniffing news from the winds, as lovers do,” searching for “the divine breeze that wanders furtively around the world to the doors of the breasts of the faithful.”<sup>77</sup> In every breath Jacob took, explains Rūzbihān al-Baqlī (d. 606/1209), Jacob nosed around for Joseph. “For this is what lovers do: they turn their attention to the gushes of the wind of eternal union and sniff out the breezes that announce the ever-lasting contemplation [of the beloved].”<sup>78</sup> Also, Farīd al-Dīn ‘Aṭṭār (d. 618/1221) makes much of the mystical perception of Joseph’s “odor of intimacy,” which wafts in “the Egypt of the soul.”<sup>79</sup>

## Mystical Olfaction

Bursavī, writing around the turn from the 11th/17th to the 12th/18th century, builds on these traditions but also adds important new elements. In this, he draws from the sensory thought of Rūmī (d. 627/1273) and Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 638/1240), next to a number of other authorities. He begins his commentary by citing an Arabic verse of Rūmī, in which Rūmī extrapolates Jacob’s ability to smell the scent of Joseph to all those who have become distracted from love:

Oh you who are forgetful, rise and love!  
This is Joseph’s scent, so inhale!<sup>80</sup>

But what is Joseph’s scent? Bursavī takes a deeply embodied approach. “Lovers,” he states,

sniff out the perfume of the [divine] secrets wherever it appears. Fragrances of the Breath of the All-Merciful enter their nostrils, the likes of which renunciants, even were they to continue in their way for a thousand years, would never catch a whiff of.<sup>81</sup>

76 Al-Sulamī, *Tafsīr* (1442/2021), 92–93. Al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111) praises the nose for enabling human beings to “inhale the scent of life, which serves as nourishment to the heart.” See al-Ghazzālī, *al-Ḥikma fī makhlūqāt Allāh* (1398/1978), 48: *li-yastanshiqa rūḥa l-ḥayāt ghadhā’an li-qalbihi*.

77 Maybudī, *Kashf al-asrār* (1331–39sh/1952–91), V, 139–142 (tr. 259–260).

78 Rūzbihān, *Tafsīr* (1442/2021), 193–196.

79 See RITTER 1955, 336; JARRAR/JAAFAR 2009, 277. On ‘Aṭṭār’s theory of the senses, see *ISH2*, ch. 35 (C. A. ZARGAR), 428–436.

80 Rūmī, *Mathnavī* (1925–40), III, 329 (bk. 4, v. 850). On mystical olfaction in Rūmī’s *Mathnavī*, see SCHIMMEL 1978, 44, 178, 190, 198; ‘Aṭṭār 1389sh/[2019]. On Rūmī’s theory of the senses, see *ISH2*, ch. 38 (A. SEYED-GOHRAB and A. WILLIAMS), 461–475.

81 Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), IV, 333.

Note, first of all, that Bursavī speaks of Joseph's scent as the "Breath of the All-Merciful" (*al-nafas al-Raḥmānī*). The "Breath of the All-Merciful" is a concept that derives from the Prophetic *ḥadīth* about the "breath of your Lord coming from the Yemen." In late-medieval and early modern Sufi thought, building on the cosmology of Ibn al-'Arabī, "the Breath of the All-Merciful" is used as a technical term that refers to the exhalation by which God brings the universe into being in a process of continuous creation.<sup>82</sup>

Secondly, Bursavī understands this breath not just as a metaphor and not just as a scentless exhalation, but as a fragrance, that is, an actual odor, rich in both psychological and somatic effects:

All those who are sad find solace in the east wind, and the downtrodden inhale it eagerly. They perceive a certain spirit in it, a gentle one, coming from the east. Then, its kindness and gentleness settles on people's bodies, and feelings of passionate yearning for the loved ones arise, and longing for the home-land.<sup>83</sup>

This embodied understanding of mystical olfaction chimes, thirdly, with Bursavī's disregard for renunciants, who denounce and renounce the body and the senses in their attempt to move closer to transcendent, eternal truth. By contrast, Bursavī advises his audience to keep their nostrils open, to sniff around for traces of other-worldly scents – an advice heeded by other writers of the Ottoman period. As a poet of the early 12th/18th century waxes in a mystical ode:

From the Pond of the Meeting, there wafts the scent of [divine] secrets.  
From that breeze, we have become intoxicated with an aromatic perfume.<sup>84</sup>

## Masters of Olfaction

However, Bursavī adds an important caveat. Not everybody is gifted with mystical olfaction. Bursavī again quotes Rūmī, who says in his *Spiritual Couplets* (*Mathnavī-yi ma'navī*):

<sup>82</sup> On *al-nafas al-Raḥmānī*, see CHITTICK 1989, 127–130; HIRTENSTEIN 2023, 62.

<sup>83</sup> Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), IV, 333.

<sup>84</sup> The verse, by 'Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulusī (d. 1143/1731), is found in the *qaṣīda* beginning with *ayyuhā al-ṭālī' min mashriq aflāk al-ghuyūb*. See al-Nābulusī, *Dīwān* (1270/[1853–4]), 47: *nafaḥat rayḥānat al-asrār min rawḍ al-liqā' / fa-sakarnā bi-shamīm al-ṭīb min dhāka l-hubūb*.

The scent of Joseph's shirt eluded  
its keeper; but Jacob inhaled it.<sup>85</sup>

The keeper of Joseph's shirt is not other than Joseph's brother, who carries the shirt in the caravan that travels from Egypt to Canaan. He, the brother, does not smell anything special. It is Jacob, even though he is far away in Canaan, who catches a whiff of the wonderful things that are coming his way.

At this point in his commentary, Bursavī introduces another authority, the 8th/14th-century Syrian occultist al-Jildakī.<sup>86</sup> Al-Jildakī's alchemical teachings found many followers in Ottoman times.<sup>87</sup> In his massive *Proof on the Secrets of the Science of Balances* (*K. al-Burhān fī asrār 'ilm al-mizān*), al-Jildakī devotes a long chapter to the human sensorium, and to the ability of certain refined human beings to sense a great deal more than the common people. As quoted by Bursavī, al-Jildakī states that

in as much as the stuff from which people are made becomes thicker, the ability of their senses to perceive sensibles decreases. This is because there are thin, opaque veils covering a person's essence from the moment they are created. However, if the core of the human essence is subtle, or when its subtlety increases, all the senses are invigorated and able to perceive more. Many individuals of the human race perceive perfumes over a distance of a mile or more. Perhaps someone with great subtlety smells [the scent of someone] who possesses none of the common smells, as God relates from Jacob, namely that he said: "Surely, I smell Joseph's scent, unless you think me demented" (Q 12:94). Such sensory abilities, however, are particular to the people of mystical disclosure, to the exclusion of other people.<sup>88</sup>

Al-Jildakī's idea here is that there exists a class of people with very special sensory abilities. This notion has a long history in Islamic esoteric thought. There is a continuous tradition of talking about the physiognomic vision of certain holy individuals, in virtually all periods of Islamic history.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> Rūmī, *Mathnavī* (1925–40), III, 260 (bk. 3, v. 4529): *bū-yi pīrāhān-i Yūsuf-rā na-dīd / ānkih hāfīz būd-u Ya'qūb-ash kashīd*.

<sup>86</sup> Despite his towering status in the history of Islamic science (see the comments by ULLMANN 1972, 237), al-Jildakī remains an understudied figure. See, however, HOLMYARD 1937; HARRIS 2017. On al-Jildakī's sensory theory, see *ISH2*, ch. 24 (C. LANGE), 291–303.

<sup>87</sup> Notably through the so-called 'Alī Çelebī corpus (second half 10th/16th c.). See ARTUN 2013, 29. It is perhaps by way of this corpus that Bursavī became familiar with al-Jildakī's thought.

<sup>88</sup> Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), IV, 334. The passage is lifted from al-Jildakī, "Burhān," MS Paris Arabe 1355, fols. 36r–36v.

<sup>89</sup> On Sufī *fīrāsa*, see the seminal chapter on *fīrāsa* in al-Qushayrī's *Risāla* and the commentary by al-'Arūsī, *Natā'ij al-afkār* (2007), III, 309–328. See further BASHIR 2011, 45–47 and *passim*. On the superhuman visual powers attributed to the Shi'ī Imams, see KOHLBERG 2020, 365–393.

However, it can be argued that the thought of Ibn al-ʿArabī, whose pivotal importance was already highlighted above, marks a crucial intervention and amplification of the theme.<sup>90</sup> For Ibn al-ʿArabī elaborates the physiognomic motif, applying it to all five senses, not just vision. In his *Meccan Openings (al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya)*, Ibn al-ʿArabī states:

[The saints] perceive things in ways that are out of the ordinary, and they are linked to the capacity by which they perceive them. Thus, people say that someone is a “master of vision,” that is, by force of vision, he perceives all the things that can be known... [Or they say that] someone is a “master of hearing,” a “master of taste,” a “master of breath and fragrances,” that is, of olfaction, or a “master of touch.”<sup>91</sup>

The “masters of olfaction,” Ibn al-ʿArabī further asserts, are known to embody one attribute, or “beautiful name,” of God in particular, namely “the All-Merciful” (*al-Raḥmān*).<sup>92</sup> Ibn al-ʿArabī thus links the masters of olfaction to the Prophet, who smelled “the Breath of the All-Merciful coming from Yemen.”<sup>93</sup>

Which historical figures, besides Jacob, the prophet-patriarch, and Muḥammad, the prophet of Islam, did Bursavī consider to be masters of olfaction? According to a story that Bursavī quotes from Rūmī’s *Spiritual Couplets*, the renowned ecstatic Bāyazīd Baṣṭāmī (d. 261/874–5 or 234/848–9), while traveling in the region of Rayy in northern Iran, suddenly perceived the scent of Abū al-Ḥasan al-Kharaqānī (d. 425/1033) wafting into his nostrils from the eastern province of Simnan, al-Kharaqānī’s homeland. “A marvelous scent has come to me,” an enraptured Baṣṭāmī supposedly exclaimed, “just like [a scent came] to the Prophet from Yemen.”<sup>94</sup>

Baṣṭāmī, however, is not the only non-prophetical master of olfaction Bursavī knew. In fact, he considered that his shaykh, a certain Osman Fazlī, was one such master. In the hagiographical history Bursavī wrote of his Sufi brotherhood, he describes a moment of initiation in which Fazlī breathed at him, in a microcosmic reenactment of God’s breathing His “Breath of the All-Merciful” into the cosmos. Bursavī relates that, having read some verses from the Joseph story in the Qurʾān

<sup>90</sup> Bursavī can be assumed to have been familiar with Ibn al-ʿArabī’s thought as he wrote a commentary on Ibn al-ʿArabī’s *Bezels of Wisdom (Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam)*. He also penned a commentary on the beginning of Rūmī’s *Mathnavī*. On Ibn al-ʿArabī’s theory of the senses, see *ISH2*, ch. 36 (C. LANGE), 437–447.

<sup>91</sup> Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Futūḥāt* (1431/2010), I, 639.

<sup>92</sup> Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Futūḥāt* (1431/2010), I, 640.

<sup>93</sup> Ibn al-ʿArabī quotes the *ḥadīth* multiple times in *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya*. See Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Futūḥāt* (1431/2010), II, 85 and *passim*.

<sup>94</sup> Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), IV, 334. Quoting from Rūmī’s *Mathnavī*, Bursavī compiles verses from Book 1 (vv. 1902, 1903, 1900, in this order) and Book 4 (vv. 1802–1805, 1810–1813, 1826–1827, 1829, 1834–1839). See Rūmī, *Mathnavī* (1925–40), I, 115–116, III, 384–387.

together, he and Fazlī entered into a state of trance, and Fazlī told him that he wanted to appoint him, Bursavī, as his successor at the head of their Sufi brotherhood:

Having said that, he put a mahogany bead from his rosary in my mouth and said, “This breath, after me, is coming to you.” As I kissed his feet, I experienced boundless delight and unlimited happiness.<sup>95</sup>

In fact, in this passage, Bursavī depicts himself as a master of olfaction, having inherited the ability to perceive the “Breath of the All-Merciful” from Fazlī in a moment of investiture, by symbolically putting the latter’s breath into his own mouth. Bursavī describes a fully embodied olfactory (as well as gustatory) experience of higher realities: not only of God’s breath, but within it and through it, of the breath of his beloved Sufi master. Just like poets of the period praised the sweet smell coming to them from the mouth of a beautiful young boy or woman, so Bursavī extols the breath of the beloved – and within it, that of the Beloved.<sup>96</sup>

## Prophetic Perfumes: Olfaction in al-Khazrajī’s (d. 1094/1683) *Subtle Commentary*

### Olfactory Asceticism and Normative Traditions of Perfume Appreciation

Turning to smell in Islamic law and ethics, let us begin by noting that it was not uncommon for pious individuals of the early centuries of Islam, following in the footsteps of Christian ascetics, to issue warnings against pleasant fragrances and to agitate against the use of perfume.<sup>97</sup> Authors who cultivated an interest in renunciatory piety, such as the well-known Baghdad-based traditionist and moralist Ibn Abī l-Dunyā (d. 281/894), related that the prophet Jesus had deliberately shunned fragrance and sought out bad odors instead: “A foul smell is a trial, and I love to

<sup>95</sup> Bursavī, “Silsilanāma”, MS Princeton Islamic Manuscripts, New Series No. 1144, fol. 83b. The translation follows ATANASOVA 2016, 128.

<sup>96</sup> In Jāmī’s (d. 898/1492) mystical romance *Joseph and Zuleikha* (*Yūsuf-u Zulaykhā*), Zuleikha, representing the Sufi seeker, “draws the breath” from the mouth of her lover Joseph, representing God, while he sleeps. See Jāmī, *Yūsuf-u Zulaykhā* (1910), 108.

<sup>97</sup> See GOLDZIEHER 1910. Early *zuhd* continued the old Christian prejudice against perfume. See CLASSEN/HOWES/SYNNOTT 1994, 51 (Clement of Alexandria, c. 150–215 CE); HARVEY 2006, 206 (John Chrysostom, d. 407 CE).

endure a trial.”<sup>98</sup> The Prophet’s Companions, as one of them was said to have remembered, smelled like sheep, because they were dressed in simple garments of wool.<sup>99</sup> Eking out an often precarious existence on the fringes of Muslim society, renunciant individuals continued in this vein, disparaging expensive perfumes and refusing to worry about their body odor, instead opting for an altogether unaromatic appearance.<sup>100</sup>

However, in Islamic jurisprudence and ethics, such ascetic motives enjoyed little success. There are only faint traces of them in the works produced by Muslim jurists and ethicists of the medieval and early modern periods. These traces can be perceived in restrictions imposed on the use of perfume in certain areas of Muslim social and religious etiquette, mainly the following:<sup>101</sup> perfumes with a strong, conspicuous smell, such as musk and ambergris, are recommended only for men, to the exclusion of women;<sup>102</sup> women are discouraged from wearing perfume during Friday prayer;<sup>103</sup> and for both women and men, the use of perfume while in the state of *iḥrām* during the pilgrimage is forbidden.<sup>104</sup> Writing in the second half of

<sup>98</sup> Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, *Kitāb al-Waraʿ* (2002), 105. On Ibn Abī l-Dunyā’s sensory style, see BURSI 2024 (from whom the translation is taken).

<sup>99</sup> Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan* (n.d.), IV, 44.

<sup>100</sup> The renunciant orders’ olfactory etiquette (or rather, their lack thereof) deserves separate study. See the comments in KARAMUSTAFA 1994, 40–41; SHAFT’I-KADKANĪ 1386/[2007], 234–235; RIDGEON 2010, 11.

<sup>101</sup> For rules relating to perfume and fumigation in Sunni law, see al-Jazīrī, *K. al-Fiqh* (1422/2002), I, 431–432 (perfuming and fumigating the dead), 544–548 (perfume during *iḥrām*). For the *ḥadīth*, see Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl* (1389–62/1969–72), III, 31–40 (perfume during *iḥrām*), IV, 766–773 (perfume in general), and the translation of these passages in *ISH2*, ch. 6 (C. LANGE), 79–89. See also the influential collection of (mostly legal) *ḥadīth* by Majd al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Salām Ibn Taymiyya (d. 652/1255), the grandfather of the celebrated Taqī l-Dīn Aḥmad Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), with six core traditions, as well the commentary on this work by al-Shawkānī (d. 1255/1839): Ibn Taymiyya, *Muntaqā* (1429/[2008]), 66–67 (*b. al-ikṭihān wa-l-iddihān wa-l-taṭayyub*); al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 94a–96a. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) condemned fumigation (other than for personal, hygienic purposes) as a magical practice of the Christians and Sabeans. See DUCÈNE 2016, 173; BONNÉRIC 2023, 176.

<sup>102</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl* (1389–1392/1969–1972), IV, 768, 770; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 95b. “Female” perfumes include saffron and the unguent known as *khalīq*. As for “male” perfumes, al-Khazrajī lists rose, musk, ambergris, and camphor. Henna, according to the Shāfiʿīs is not a perfume; but the Ḥanafīs claim it is. See al-Khazrajī, “Taʿlīq”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 34v.

<sup>103</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl* (1389–92/1969–72), IV, 768, 771–773; al-Khazrajī, “Taʿlīq”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 39r.

<sup>104</sup> See Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmiʿ al-uṣūl* (1389–92/1969–72), III, 31–40; al-Jazīrī, *K. al-Fiqh* (1422/2002), I, 544–548. For a detailed legal discussion of the *ḥadīths* and rules pertaining to the use of perfume and perfumed substances during the pilgrimage, see Ibn Abi Zayd al-Qayrawānī, *Nawādir* (1999), II, 327, 341–353, and the study of this text in *ISH2*, ch. 40 (A. BURSI), 501–512.

the 11th/17th century, the Damascene scholar Abū l-Su‘ūd al-Khazrajī (d. 1094/1683), summarizes the legal-ethical rules concerning perfume as follows:

The use of perfume is something that is encouraged by divine revelation, except for people in the state of *iḥrām* and for the fasting person – in their case it is disliked. For men, it is an established practice [to don perfume] for the Friday prayer, during the Feast of Sacrifice, when doing the preparations for *iḥrām*, when attending public processions, when reading the Qur‘ān and [works of] religious knowledge, and in spiritual séances. It is disliked that women [put on perfume] when going to the mosque and other [places], including during the preparations for attending the Friday prayer. It is recommended that they eliminate the foul odors that come from them. It is an established practice for them [to use perfume] when meeting their intimate friends. They are forbidden from using it when going out if it incites *fitna*.<sup>105</sup>

Overwhelmingly, the chapters in jurisprudential works and *ḥadīth* compilations dealing with perfume praise it and recommend its use. The Prophet, as many *ḥadīths* attest, appreciated pleasant fragrances.<sup>106</sup> Conversely, he disliked foul smells, such as halitosis. One of the Prophet’s wives, ‘Ā’isha Ḥaḥṣa bt. ‘Umar, once conspired to draw the Prophet away from Zaynab bt. Jaḥsh (or, according to a different version of the story, from another of his wives, Umm Salama) by suggesting he had acquired halitosis from drinking one of her honeydrinks – which greatly alarmed him.<sup>107</sup> “It concerned him gravely that a foul odor should come from him.”<sup>108</sup> The Prophet is also said to have stressed the obligation to accept perfume offered as gift.<sup>109</sup>

Perfume was declared to derive directly from paradise: Adam had brought it with him after his expulsion from the Garden, when settling on earth.<sup>110</sup> As an early pious exemplar was said to have stated (in a pun on the Arabic root *ṭ-y-b*): “God is good (*ṭayyib*) and He loves perfume (*ṭīb*).”<sup>111</sup> “Perfume is nourishment for the soul,” wrote the Syrian theologian and jurist Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751/1350), “it

<sup>105</sup> Al-Khazrajī, “Ta’līqā”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fols. 39r–39v.

<sup>106</sup> On the Prophet’s love of musk and ambergris, see Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-uṣūl* (1389–92/1969–72), IV, 768–769; al-Majlisī, *Ḥilyat al-muttaqīn* (1994), 273–274; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 95a–95b.

<sup>107</sup> See Ibn Sa’d, *Ṭabaqāt* (1968), VIII, 170. For this story, see also al-Ṭabarānī, *Mu’jam* (1415/[1994–5]), VIII, 323; al-Ṣāliḥī, *Subul al-hudā* (1993), IX, 407.

<sup>108</sup> Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (1421/2001), XLIII, 221 (no. 26119); Ibn Ḥajar al-‘Asqalānī, *Fath al-bārī* (n.d.), XXVI, 208.

<sup>109</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-uṣūl* (1389–92/1969–72), IV, 767–768; al-Majlisī, *Ḥilyat al-muttaqīn* (1994), 271–272; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 95a.

<sup>110</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-uṣūl* (1389–92/1969–72), IV, 768; al-Majlisī, *Ḥilyat al-muttaqīn* (1994), 265. According to a tradition related by al-Suyūṭī and other writers, the earth of paradise is made of ambergris. See al-Suyūṭī, “al-Maqāma al-miskiyya” (1989), 1100.

<sup>111</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-uṣūl* (1389–92/1969–72), IV, 766 (from Sa’īd b. al-Musayyab, d. 94/715).

amplifies and strengthens its faculties.”<sup>112</sup> Examples of similar statements of praise for perfume could be multiplied easily.<sup>113</sup>

Accordingly, the nose escapes censure in works of jurisprudence and *ḥadīth*, as well as in the parenetic and ethical literature. Even a puritanical work of practical ethics like *The Muḥammadan Way* (*al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*) of the influential Ottoman moralist Meḥmed Birgivi (d. 981/1573) refrains from linking smell to sin. In his work, Birgivi lists the evils (*āfāt*) of various body parts and sensory organs: tongue, ear, eye, hands, belly, genitals, and feet. The senses of sight, hearing, touch, and taste are thoroughly criticized. Olfaction, however, is absent from Birgivi’s scrutiny.<sup>114</sup> It is as if Birgivi leaves the door ajar for Ottoman-era writers and scholars to make the most of the boundary-crossing, transcendental potential of olfaction, in both thought and practice.

### “I was made to love three things”

One smell-related *ḥadīth*, however, sparked controversy. In what is likely to be his most famous utterance on smell, the Prophet was reported to have stated: “I was made to love three things in this world of yours: perfume and women, and my delight is in prayer.”<sup>115</sup> People worried that the *ḥadīth* could be misunderstood: that misguided individuals would use it as a pretext for a life of unfettered sensualism. Stories circulated that were designed to remind believers of the need for restraint in interpreting the *ḥadīth*. In one such story, a pious man gets into a fight with a popular preacher because the preacher has proclaimed in public that Muslims are encouraged to have many women, citing the *ḥadīth* about the Prophet’s love for women and perfume and claiming that “nobody is free from desire,” not even the Prophet. Having reprimanded the preacher, the pious man sees the Prophet in a dream, who promptly announces that he has cut off the preacher’s head. And

112 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Ṭibb* (n.d.), 260. See, however, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya’s description of the forbidden (*ḥarām*) aspects of smell in *Stages of the Wayfarers* (*Madārij al-sālikin*). See ISH2, ch. 45, (C. LANGE), § 4.

113 See, for example, the long chapter al-Majlisī devotes to aromata in his *Adornment of the Pious* (*Ḥilyat al-Muttaqin*). See al-Majlisī, *Ḥilyat al-muttaqin* (1994), 265–289.

114 Birgivi, *Ṭarīqa* (1432/2011), 438–485. On Birgivi’s *al-Ṭarīqa al-Muḥammadiyya*, see IVANYI 2020.

115 See al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā’* (n.d.), II, 48: *ḥubbiba ilayya min dunyākum thalāth: al-ṭib wa-l-nisā’ wa-qur-rat ‘ayni fi l-ṣalāt*. On al-Ghazālī’s theory of the senses, see ISH2, ch. 30 (D. INGENITO), 364–381, ch. 33 (I. WEINRICH), 403–415. The fame of the tradition owes much to the fact that the final chapter of Ibn al-‘Arabī’s *Bezels of Wisdom* (*Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*) is a meditation on the *ḥadīth*. See Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Fuṣūṣ* (1365/1946), I, 214–26 (tr. 172–182).

indeed, as the pious man later learns, after leaving the city the preacher has been waylaid and killed by brigands.<sup>116</sup>

Such cautionary tales, however, were not enough to appease those who worried about the *ḥadīth*'s potential to encourage sensory excess. Scholars developed a whole arsenal of arguments to neutralize the dangers they saw lurking in the *ḥadīth*. To this end, a number of luminaries, such as al-Sakhāwī (d. 902/1497) and Ibn Ḥajar al-Ḥaythamī (d. 974/1567), but also less well-known figures, such as al-Khazrajī, wrote learned *fatwās* and treatises on the *ḥadīth*.<sup>117</sup> Al-Khazrajī, a scholar-littérateur from Damascus who studied in Syria and Egypt and taught for a while in Anatolia,<sup>118</sup> penned one of the longest early modern commentaries on the *ḥadīth*, in which he studied, in six chapters, the lines of transmission of the *ḥadīth* as well as a host of ethico-legal interpretive issues.

There was one thing al-Khazrajī and other commentators could not do: it was impossible for them to suggest that the *ḥadīth* should be cast aside and ignored. The *ḥadīth*, after all, appears in canonical collections that were widely read and appreciated in the Ottoman empire and beyond. Other ways to deal with the *ḥadīth* had to be devised. There were, in the main, three angles from which scholars tackled the issue. First of all, they criticized the *ḥadīth*'s transmission history. Secondly, they pointed out certain grammatical and stylistic peculiarities of the *ḥadīth*. Thirdly, they critiqued the analogy between sex, perfume, and prayer that the *ḥadīth* can be read to imply.

Regarding, first, the transmission history of the *ḥadīth*, scholars distinguished between two different versions. The widely circulating version, quoted above,

116 The story appears in al-Ṣafadī, *Wāfi* (1420/2000), V, 138, where the Sufi is identified as Abū 'Abdallāh al-Aswānī (d. 686/1287–8), a scholar hailing from Egypt, who confronts the preacher during a visit to Damascus. An anonymized version is transmitted by al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 9v; Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), II, 188.

117 An early example of a work devoted to the tradition is Ibn Sīnā's short *Epistle on Perfume* (*R. fī l-Ṭīb*), in which Ibn Sīnā argues that the Prophet loved perfume on medical grounds. On this epistle, see MICHOT 1978. On the medical properties of perfume according to Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (d. 322/934) and Ibn al-Jazzār (d. 369/979–80), see *ISH2*, ch. 19 (H. BIESTERFELDT and E. ROWSON), 233–238, ch. 20 (A. KING), 239–248. Postclassical works on the *ḥadīth* include al-Sakhāwī, *Idāḥ al-rushd min al-ghayy fī l-kalām 'alā ḥadīth ḥubbiba ilayyā min dunyākum* (see al-Baghdādī, *Idāḥ al-maknūn* [n.d.], I, 155); Ibn Ḥajar al-Ḥaythamī, *Fatāwā* (n.d.), 497–498; al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385. In addition, see al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505), *Ḥawī* (1424/2004), II, 324–325; al-Ḥamawī (d. 1016/1607), *Taḥrīr al-abḥāth fī kalām 'alā ḥadīth ḥubbiba ilayyā min dunyākum thalāth* (see al-Baghdādī, *Idāḥ al-maknūn*, I, 231); al-Khālidi (d. after 1250/1834), *Mu'taṣam* (1329/[1911]), 2–4. The many commentaries on Ibn al-'Arabī's mystical interpretation of the *ḥadīth* in his *Bezels of Wisdom* (*Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*) form a separate tradition, deserving separate study.

118 Al-Muḥibbi, *Khulāṣat al-athar* (1966), I, 119–120.

read: “I was made to love three things in this world of yours: perfume and women, and my delight is in prayer.” Scholars recognized that this was the version “that people most commonly recite.”<sup>119</sup> There was also, however, a shorter version, one that, crucially, lacked the expression “three things”: “I was made to love in this world of yours women and perfume; and my delight is in prayer.” The omission of “three things” in the short version makes only women and prayer the object of the Prophet’s love “in this world”; prayer, by contrast, is moved to a different realm. On the basis of the short version, it was impossible to argue that the Prophet loved perfume, women, and prayer in the same way. In sum, the short version chips away at the importance of eros and perfume; it desacralizes them.

The short version, as *ḥadīth* scholars did not fail to point out, can claim to be the older and hence the more authoritative version, as it appears in two highly-regarded early collections, the *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855) and the *Sunan* of al-Nasā’ī (d. 303/915).<sup>120</sup> The version including the word “three” (*thalāth*), by contrast, emerges at a later moment in the development of *ḥadīth* literature. The Ash’arite theologian Ibn Fūrak (d. 406/1015) is identified by al-Khazrajī and others as the first scholar to have discussed and defended the *thalāth* version.<sup>121</sup> Regarding the question as to how the *thalāth* version acquired its dominant status, fingers were usually pointed at al-Ghazālī (d. 505/1111), who quotes it in his *Revivification of the Religious Sciences* (*Iḥyā’ ‘ulūm al-dīn*).<sup>122</sup> After al-Ghazālī, the *thalāth*

119 See Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, *Ashraf al-wasā’il* (1419/1998), 539; al-Khazrajī, “Ta’līqā”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 3v; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 94b.

120 See Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad* (1421/2001), XIX, 307 (no. 12294), XX, 351 (no. 13757), XXI, 433 (no. 14037), and passim; al-Nasā’ī, *Sunan* (n.d.), V, 280. See also Ibn Abī ‘Āṣim (d. 287/900), *Zuhd* (1408/1987–8), 119, with truncated versions that omit any mention of prayer. JUYNBOLL (2007, 75b) states that the *ḥadīth* is “a relatively late tradition.” After the 4th/10th century, the short version appears, among other works, in al-Bayhaqī, *Sunan* (1414/1994), VII, 78; Ibn al-Athīr, *Jāmi’ al-uṣūl* (1389–1362/1969–1972), IV, 766; Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmū’ al-fatāwā* (1425/2004), XXVIII, 31 and passim; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Zād al-ma’ād* (1405/1986), IV, 308 and passim; al-Suyūṭī, *al-Jāmi’ al-ṣaḡhīr* (n.d.), II, 68; al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ummāl* (1413/[1993]), VII, 450 (no. 18913).

121 Al-Khazrajī, “Ta’līqā”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 3v. Ibn Fūrak is said to have done so in a separate epistle (*juz’ mufrad*). The published edition of Ibn Fūrak’s *Problematic Ḥadīths* (*Mushkil al-ḥadīth*) does not include a discussion of the *ḥadīth*, and I have been unable to trace Ibn Fūrak’s treatment of the *ḥadīth* elsewhere. To the best of my knowledge, the first attestation of the *thalāth* version occurs in Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī’s (d. 386/998) *Nourishment of hearts* (*Qūt al-qulūb*). See al-Makkī, *Qūt al-qulūb* (1426/2005), II, 413. A generation later, the *thalāth* version also appears in Ibn Sīnā, *R. fi l-ṭib* (1978), 54.

122 Al-Ghazālī does indeed quote the *thalāth* version (three times), probably from al-Makkī, but it should be noted that he also cites the short version (five times). His discussion is nuanced. Perfume and women, he explains, epitomize the full range of the pleasures experienced through the five senses. Prayer, by contrast, is not experienced by the five senses but by a “sixth sense,” located in

version appears in Qur'ānic exegesis (*tafsīr*), in Sufi literature, and in biographical and hagiographical works on the Prophet,<sup>123</sup> as well as in “many works of jurisprudence.”<sup>124</sup> However, starting with the Egyptian ‘Abdallāh al-Zayla’ī (d. 762/1361), the *thalāth* version comes under heavy criticism from *ḥadīth* scholars. “In none of the [sound] lines of transmission, the word ‘three’ is found,” al-Zayla’ī notes.<sup>125</sup> Later *ḥadīth* scholars, including al-Khazrajī, follow suit.<sup>126</sup>

Arguing, secondly, about the grammar of the *ḥadīth*, al-Khazrajī and other scholars drew particular attention to the passive voice at the beginning of the *ḥadīth*: “I was made to love.” There is a reason, they said, why the Prophet used the passive and not the active form, “I love”: he did not love women and perfume on his own account but rather he was “compelled”<sup>127</sup> to love them, “made to love” by God, for the sake of others and “as a mercy to the believers.”<sup>128</sup> By his own nature, he had no predilection for either of them. He was made to love women merely so that they would be able to be close to him, to learn from him and relate what they had learned from him to others, as well as to bear him children, who would grow up to defend the cause of Islam.<sup>129</sup> A similar principle applies to the Prophet’s attitude toward perfume. As al-Suyūṭī (d. 911/1505) explains,

He [the Prophet] was made to love perfume so as not to offend the angels when meeting them, for the angels do not like foul smells. Therefore, he was also forbidden from eating garlic and the like, so that Gabriel would visit him.<sup>130</sup>

---

the heart (*qalb*). See al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā’* (n.d.), IV, 429. See also *ibid.*, III, 319: Prayer is “one of the pleasures on earth” (*min jumlat malādhah al-dunyā*).

**123** In *tafsīr* literature, see, for example, al-Zamakhsharī, *Kashshāf* (1407/1987), I, 388 (*ad Q* 3:96); al-Rāzī, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (1420/[1999–2000]), XXIII, 370 (*ad Q* 24:32). In Sufi literature, see Ibn al-‘Arabī, *Futūḥat* (1431/2010), V, 599; Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), II, 188 and *passim*; Ibn ‘Ajība, *Baḥr* (1423/2002), I, 388, II, 35, V, 511; al-Khālidi, *Mu’taṣam* (1329/[1911]), 1. For *sīra* and *shamā’il* works, see al-Qaṣṭallānī (d. 923/1517), *Mawāhib* (n.d.), II, 221; al-Ṣāliḥī (d. 942/1535–6), *Subul al-hudā* (1993), VII, 338, who falsely attributes the *thalāth* version to al-Nasā’ī.

**124** Thus according to al-Qaṣṭallānī (d. 923/[1517–8]), *Mawāhib* (n.d.), II, 221.

**125** See al-Zayla’ī, *Takhrij* (1414/[1993–4]), I, 195–197.

**126** See, for example, al-Zarkashī, *La’ālī* (n.d.), 181. Al-Khazrajī and other authors draw attention to the *Amālī* of Zayn al-Dīn al-‘Irāqī (d. 806/1403) as an important witness of this criticism. See al-Khazrajī, “Ta’līq,” Houghton MS Arab. 385, fols. 2v–3r; al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr* (1415/1994), XII, 421; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 94b.

**127** Al-Khazrajī, “Ta’līq,” Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 8r: *majbūr*.

**128** Al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr* (1415/1994), XII, 422.

**129** Al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥāwī* (1424/2004), II, 425; al-Munāwī, *Fayḍ al-qadīr* (1415/1994), XII, 422.

**130** See al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥāwī* (1424/2004), II, 425.

The Prophet's use of perfume also helped to attract women, perfume being "one of the things that call to sexual union," a desirable quality because it could result in offspring.<sup>131</sup>

Regarding his own persona, the Prophet "was not in need of perfume,"<sup>132</sup> as he was by nature extremely sweet-smelling, "even without perfume."<sup>133</sup> Al-Khazrajī, Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, and other scholars relate a plethora of *ḥadīths* that describe the pleasant aroma of the Prophet's saliva and sweat, or note the absence of bad odors following his visits to the lavatory.<sup>134</sup> Given his naturally aromatic body, the Prophet "did not waste time thinking about it [i.e., perfume]."<sup>135</sup> This is why the Prophet stressed in the *ḥadīth* that women and perfume were "from this world of yours," that is, from the world that ordinary people inhabit – not from his own world, the world of revelation and transcendent truth.<sup>136</sup>

The statement that women and perfume are "from the world" had another important corollary, relating to the definition of prayer. This was the third and the most fundamental angle from which scholars interrogated the *ḥadīth*. As Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya categorically stated, prayer "is not from among the things of this world, it cannot be added to them [women and perfume]."<sup>137</sup> Scholars following this view in the centuries after Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya judged that to insist on the *thalāth* version was to "corrupt" or "upset" the meaning of the *ḥadīth*.<sup>138</sup> Yes, sex and olfaction provide certain pleasures, but prayer stands apart, because it, and it alone, enables an "intimate colloquy with God." It is for this reason that the Prophet refers to it not as "pleasure" but as "delight" (*qurrat al-ʿayn*, lit. "coldness of the eye"). "The tears of joy," as al-Khazrajī puts it, "are cold."<sup>139</sup>

131 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 37r.

132 Al-Ṣaffūrī, *Nuzhat al-majālis* (1281/[1864–5]), 137.

133 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 35v.

134 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fols. 35v–39r; Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, *Ashraf al-wasā'il* (1419/1998), 295–296.

135 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 12r.

136 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 10r–12r. The argument is old. Already Abū Bakr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/988) presents it in his *K. al-Luma'*. See al-Sarraj, *Luma'* (1960), 138. See on this point LORV 2022, 240–241.

137 Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, *Zād al-ma'ād* (1407/1986), I, 145; al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 3v. On Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's view of prayer, see KATZ 2013, 66–67. On Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya's theory of the senses, see ISH2, ch. 32 (C. LANGE), 389–400, ch. 45 (idem), 553–561.

138 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 3v; al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al-awṭār* (2004), 94b. See al-Zayla'ī, *Takhrīj* (1414/[1993–4]), I, 195–197, whom al-Shawkānī follows closely. See further al-Zarkashī, *La'ālī* (n.d.), 181: *ziyādat al-"thalāth" mukhilla li-l-ma'nā fa-inna l-ṣalāt laysat min al-dunyā*.

139 Al-Khazrajī, "Ta'liqa", Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 40v.

Al-Khazrajī himself leans toward a compromise. There is no contradiction, he states, between the position that prayer is “not from this world,” as claimed by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, and the view that perfume, sex, and prayer have things in common. Prayer, he suggests, should be considered under two aspects: the first is the fulfilment of a legal command on earth, the other is striving for reward in the afterlife.<sup>140</sup> Al-Khazrajī approvingly quotes a widely popular work on the Prophet, to the effect that prayer can be considered “from this world” in the sense that it is an event in whose context sex and the use of perfume often occurs.<sup>141</sup>

Such statements make it possible to think that prayer and perfume serve the same goal, namely, to connect the mundane and the transcendent realms. In fact, already Ibn Fūrak, one of the earliest defenders of the *thalāth* version of the *ḥadīth*, is said to have described prayer as “a connection to the otherworld.”<sup>142</sup> The thought paved a path for Sufi authors. “One half of prayer belongs to God and one half to His servant,” states Ibn al-ʿArabī.<sup>143</sup> Sufis such as Najm al-Dīn Rāzī Dāya (d. 654/1256) considered prayer to enable a transition from this world to the transcendent otherworld. For Dāya, prayer is a “journey away from the self,” until one reaches the “original presence with God Almighty and contemplation of Him [...] Prayer is the believer’s ascension (*miʾrāj*).”<sup>144</sup> In the early modern period, such ideas continued to reverberate in the Islamic world. “There is a mysterious connection,” writes Bursavī,

between the world of the here-and-now and the otherworld. The physical body belongs to the world of the here-and-now, the heart to the otherworld. [...] The effect of the actions of the body’s limbs – which belong to the world of the here-and-now – rise up to the heart. [...] Therefore, the Prophet commanded [us] to pray, despite the fact that prayer consists of movements of the physical body, which belongs to the world of the here-and-now, declaring it [prayer] to be both *in* the world and *of* the world, saying: “I was made to love three things: perfume, women, and my delight is in prayer.”<sup>145</sup>

140 Al-Khazrajī, “Taʿlīqā”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fol. 6r.

141 Al-Qaṣṭallānī, *Mawāhib* (n.d.), II, 222: *ẓarf li-wuqūʾihā*. On *ḥubbiba ilayyā*, see *ibid.*, II, 202 ff. See also al-Khazrajī, “Taʿlīqā”, Houghton MS Arab. 385, fols. 3v–4r.

142 Ibn Ḥajar al-Haythamī, *Fatāwā* (n.d.), 498: *waṣla ilā l-ākhirā*.

143 Ibn al-ʿArabī, *Fuṣūṣ* (1365/1946), I, 222 (tr. 179).

144 Dāya, *Mirṣād al-ʾibād* (1982), 184. On Dāya’s theory of the senses, see *ISH2*, ch. 37 (A. O’MALLEY), 448–460. See also Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), II, 360: *al-ṣalāt hiya miʾrājukum li-l-rujūʾ ilā maqām qurbikum*.

145 Bursavī, *Rūḥ al-bayān* (1430/2009), II, 363 (*ad* Qurʾān 5:6).

## Conclusion

Thinking through smell in the context of early modern Near and Middle Eastern culture, what we perceive is, first of all, that writers of the period, across the discursive traditions examined in this article, nurtured a generally positive attitude toward olfaction and pleasant fragrances. Categorical dismissals of the human propensity to enjoy good smells are rare. The stories about the Prophet's love for perfume, it seems, were too well-established, the olfactory culture of the period too rich, and olfactory practices too ingrained, to allow for roundabout condemnations of perfume and perfuming practices.

That being said, Muslim writers of the early modern period were attuned to the seductive, transgressive danger inherent in olfaction.<sup>146</sup> As we saw, their discussions of the phenomenon of smell were not free from controversy, demonstrating a fascinating variety of attitudes toward olfaction.<sup>147</sup> Philosophical discussions about olfaction among early modern Muslim intellectuals revolved around the question of how smell travels from the smell-possessing body to the organ of smell. Broadly speaking, three theories circulated: the vapor theory, which explained olfaction by the vaporization of smell particles issuing from the smell-possessing body; the transformation theory, which declared the perception of smell to depend on a transformation of the medium of smell; and the theory of direct olfaction. As this article has argued, the transformation theory gradually superseded the vapor theory in the centuries roughly up to the time of al-Taftazānī in the 8th/14th century, but came itself under pressure as the result of al-Suhrawardī's intervention in philosophical epistemology, that is, his notion of knowledge-by-presence. Naturalizing theories gave way to tendencies to mystify the process of olfaction, resulting in claims that human beings can smell beyond the confines of matter in a miraculous, intuitive act of olfaction-by-presence.

---

**146** Occasionally, perfumes were thought to be extremely dangerous, producing uncontrollable sexual desire, especially in women. See, for example, a story told by Muṣṭafā 'Alī in his *Tables of Delicacies*, cited in ANDREWS/KALPAKLI 2005, 167. On polemics against the use of perfume in medieval Islam, see LANGE *fc*.

**147** This richness of olfactory thought in the early modern Islamic world stands in sharp contrast to the conceptual poverty of the European anti-Islamic polemical tradition, which took aim at the alleged sensualism of Oriental despotism and the supposed sensual excesses of the Prophet, highlighting his love of women and perfume in particular. See GROSCHARD 1998, 100–102. On European polemics about “Oriental perfume” in the context of emergent anti-Catholic Puritanism, see the comments by DUGAN 2011, 29, 40. On the danger of perpetuating “sensory colonialism” in the study of Asian smellscape, see MCCLELLAND/GOULD 2023, 6–7. On olfactory Orientalism in the Mediterranean, see DELMAS 1998.

Sufi scholars like Ḥaqqī Bursavī took such ideas a step farther, by positing the human ability to sniff divine scents in the actual odorific, embodied sense. Sufi theorists of olfaction fully exploited the transgressive potential of smell: its characteristic mode of crossing from the outside of the body into the inside of the body when inhaled, and from earth to heaven when rising up as smoke. Olfaction, as David HOWES has remarked, is “the liminal sense *par excellence*.”<sup>148</sup> As such, it is not surprising that Sufis, keen as they were to move into liminal proximity to God, nurtured a deep interest in the nose. However, Bursavī and other Sufi authors were careful as to whom they attributed the ability to perceive otherworldly smells. In general, for them it was important for mystical olfaction to remain embedded in the institutional context of Sufism, requiring a master-disciple relationship, a familiarity with Sufi textual traditions, and so on. Only a chosen few were credited with the power and the right to perceive divine fragrances.

Scholars invested in representing and protecting the Islamic normative system derived from the Qurʾān and the Sunna of the Prophet sought to make sure that smell did not penetrate too deeply into the realm of religion, a realm they claimed to control. In addition to insisting on the odorlessness of key rituals, such as the pilgrimage, they worked to establish discursive control over the use of perfume, thereby countering Sufi-philosophical notions of miraculous, revelatory olfaction, as well as refuting the claims to spiritual authority that came with them. In particular, they explained that the Prophet’s love of perfume, as attested in the *ḥadīth*, was in reality entirely contingent upon, and subordinate to, his Prophetic mission, and thus, ultimately, of little significance for human beings living in the post-Prophetic period. The same scholars also criticized the analogy between perfume and prayer that Bursavī and other Sufis championed. Perfume, these scholars argued, is “from this world,” while prayer takes places in another realm: the eternal, transcendent realm of religion. Therefore, for them, the use of perfume, or claims to special powers of olfaction, implied no religious prestige whatsoever.

It is worth recalling at this point that modern, empirical science has popularized a reductionist understanding of olfaction as a mechanical, biochemical process involving aerosolized odorous substances. However, the sensorium remains “an ever-shifting social and historical construct.”<sup>149</sup> Olfaction is a “not only [a] means of apprehending physical phenomena, but also [an] avenue for the transmission of cultural values.”<sup>150</sup> The present investigation contributes to this “cultural” understanding of olfaction. For the inhabitants of the early modern Near and Middle East,

---

148 HOWES 1987, 411.

149 See BULL/GILROY/HOWES/KAHN 2006, 5.

150 CLASSEN 1997, 401.

the question whether smell is a material or an immaterial event was a matter of great ambiguity as well as of existential importance. In a sense, all three groups under study here – philosophers, Sufis, and scholars of Islamic law and ethics – thought (and worried) about the same issue: the sacralization of smell, that is, interpretations of smell that associated aromatic substances, places, objects, or indeed persons with the metaphysical realm. *A fortiori*, they also thought (and worried) about the sacralization of the smelling person, the idea that smellers can be transformed by their olfactory experience and lifted to a position of privileged access to truth in the absolute sense.<sup>151</sup>

Is smell a go-between this world and the transcendent otherworld? Had the answer been clear-cut, there would have been no need to debate the question. The generalizing statement that in Islam “God leaves perfumes entirely to humankind” or that in Islam perfume is “a strictly human affair”<sup>152</sup> risks reproducing one rather specific kind of orthodoxy. In its own way, such a statement is just as misguided as the assumption that olfaction is a purely biological event,<sup>153</sup> rather than being culturally and socially constructed, as is maintained here. In reality, the situation is more complex. Muslim thinkers of the early modern period were intrigued, like scholars of the senses are to this day, by the association of smell with transcendence, category-change, and transition, and they pondered, in their own, nuanced, and imaginative ways, the great promise of olfaction: the promise of enabling smellers to transgress, in their minds and in their bodies, the boundaries of time and space, to rise and to love, like Jacob did, and to remember Joseph.

## Bibliography

### Sources

Abū Dāwūd al-Sijistānī (n.d.), *Sunan*, ed. by Muḥammad Muḥy al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Ḥamīd, 4 vols., Beirut: al-Maktaba al-‘Aṣriyya.

*Alf layla wa-layla* (1434/2013), 6 vols., 2nd ed., Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.

al-Āmidī (1423/[2002–3]), *Abkār al-afkār*, ed. by Aḥmad Muḥammad Maḥdī, 5 vols., Cairo: Dār al-Kutub.

al-‘Āmilī, Bahā’ al-Dīn (1434/2013), *Al-Kashkūl*, ed. by Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Nimrī, 2 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.

---

<sup>151</sup> See HOWES 1987, 399.

<sup>152</sup> BOUHDIBA 2023, 27: “Dieu... leur abandonne les parfums... Le parfum est un tout-pour-l’homme.”

<sup>153</sup> On this and other “conceptual impediments” in the study of the senses, see already CLASSEN 1997, 402.

- Aristotle (1862), *History of Animals*, trans. by Richard Cresswell, London: Henry G. Bohn.
- (1907), *De anima*, trans. by R. D. Hicks, Cambridge: University Press.
- al-ʿArūsī, Muṣṭafā (2007), *Hāshiyat al-ʿallāma Muṣṭafā al-ʿArūsī al-musammā Natāʾij al-afkār al-qudsiyya fī bayān maʾānī Sharh al-Risālā al-Qushayriyya li-shaykh al-Islām Zakariyyā b. Muḥammad al-Anṣārī*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Wārith Muḥammad ʿAlī, 2nd ed., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya.
- ʿAṭṭār, Farīd al-Dīn (1338sh/1959), *Muṣibatnāma*, ed. by Nūrānī Wiṣāl, Tehran: Zawwār.
- al-Baghdādī, Abū l-Barakāt (1939), *K. al-Muʿtabar fī l-ḥikma*, ed. by S. Yalṭkaya, 3 vols., Hyderabad: Dāʾirat al-Maʾārif al-ʿUthmāniyya.
- al-Baghdādī, Ismāʾīl Pāshā (n.d.), *Īdāh al-maknūn fī dhayl ʿalā Kashf al-ḡunūn*, 2 vols., Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.
- al-Balkhī, Aḥmad b. Sahl (1426/2005), *Maṣāliḥ al-abdān wa-l-anfus*, ed. by Maḥmūd Miṣrī, Cairo: Maʾhad al-Makhtūṭāt al-ʿArabiyya.
- al-Bayḍāwī, ʿAbdallāh (1411/1991), *Ṭawālīʾ al-anwār min maṭālīʾ al-anzār*, ed. by ʿAbbās Sulaymān, Beirut: Dār al-Jilʾal-Maktaba al-Azhariyya li-l-Turāth.
- al-Bayhaqī, Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn (1414/1994), *Al-Sunan al-kubrā*, ed. by Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā, 10 vols., Mecca: Maktabat Dār al-Bāz.
- Birgivi (1432/2011), *Al-Ṭariqa al-Muḥammadiyya wa-l-sira al-Aḥmadiyya*, ed. by Muḥammad Raḥmat Allāh Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Nāzim al-Nadwī, Damascus: Dār al-Qalam.
- Bursavī, Ismāʾīl Ḥaqqī (1430/2009), *Rūḥ al-bayān*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Laṭīf Ḥasan ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, 10 vols, 2nd edition, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya.
- “Kitāb Silsilanāma-yi Jalvatiyya”, MS Princeton University Rare Book Collection, Islamic Manuscripts, New Series No. 1144.
- al-Būṣīrī, Aḥmad (1434/2013), *Qaṣīdat al-burda maʾa sharḥihā ʿAṣīdat al-shuhda*, Karachi: Maktabat al-Madīna.
- Çelebī, Evliyā (1996), *Evliyā Çelebī Seyāhatnāmesi*, vol. 1, *Kitap: Istanbul*, ed. by Orhan Şaik Gökyay, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları.
- Coşkun, Yılmaz, ed. (2010), *İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri: İstanbul Mahkemesi 24 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1138–1151/M. 1726–1738)*, Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Araştırmaları Merkezi (İSAM).
- ed. (2019), *İstanbul Kadı Sicilleri 85: İstanbul Mahkemesi 94 Numaralı Sicil (H. 1222–1223/M. 1807–1809)*, Istanbul: İBB Kültür A.Ş. and Medipol Üniversitesi Hukuk Fakültesi, 2019.
- Dāya, Najm al-Dīn Rāzī (1982), *Mirṣād al-ibād*, trans. by Hamid Algar, *The Path of God’s Bondsmen from Origin to Return*, New York: Caravan Books.
- al-Ghazzālī, Abū Ḥamid (1398/1978), *Al-Ḥikma fī makhlūqāt Allāh*, ed. by Muḥammad Rashīd al-Qabbānī, Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-ʿUlūm.
- (n.d.), *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, ed. by Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Malik al-Zughbī, 5 vols., [Cairo:] Dār al-Manār.
- Ibn Abī ʿĀṣim, Aḥmad b. ʿAmr (1408/1987–8), *K. al-Zuhd*, ed. by ʿAbd al-ʿAlī ʿAbd al-Hamid Ḥāmid, Cairo: Dār al-Rayyān.
- Ibn Abī l-Dunyā, ʿAbdallāh (2002), *Kitāb al-Warāʾ*, ed. by Bassām ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al-Jābī, Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm.
- Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (1999), *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt ʿalā mā fī l-Mudawwana min ghayrihā min al-ummahāt*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Muḥammad al-Ḥulw et al., 15 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī.
- Ibn ʿAjība (1423/2002), *al-Baḥr al-madīd*, 8 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya.
- Ibn al-ʿArabī, Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad (1365/1946), *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. by Abū l-ʿAlā ʿAffī, 2 vols. Cairo: ʿĪsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī, trans. by Binyamin Abrahamov (2015), *Ibn al-ʿArabī’s Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam: An Annotated Translation of “The Bezels of Wisdom”*, London: Routledge.

- (1431/2010), *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkīyah*, ed. by ‘Abd al-‘Azīz Sulṭān al-Manṣūb, 12 vols., Cairo: Al-Majlis al-‘Alī li-l-Thaqāfah.
- Ibn al-Athīr, Majd al-Dīn (1389–92/1969–72), *Jāmi‘ al-uṣūl fī aḥādīth al-rasūl*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Arna‘ūt, 11 vols., Damascus: Maktabat al-Ḥilwānī.
- Ibn Fūrak (1985), *Mushkil al-ḥadīth wa-bayānuhu*, ed. by Mūsā Muḥammad ‘Alī, 2nd ed., Beirut: ‘Ālam al-Kutub.
- Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalānī (n.d.), *Fatḥ al-bārī fī sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, Beirut: Dār al-Ma‘rifa.
- Ibn Hajar al-Haythamī (1419/1998), *Ashraf al-wasā’il ilā fahm al-shamā’il*, ed. by Aḥmad b. Mazīd al-Mazīdī, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.
- (n.d.), *Al-Fatāwā al-ḥadīthiyya*, [Beirut:] Dār al-Fikr.
- Ibn Ḥanbal, Aḥmad (1421/2001), *Musnad*, ed. by Shu‘ayb al-Arna‘ūt et al., 50 vols., Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risāla.
- Ibn Hishām (1858–59), *K. Sīrat rasūl Allāh*, ed. by Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, 2 vols., Göttingen: Dieterichsche Universitäts-Buchhandlung.
- Ibn al-Jazzār, Aḥmad b. Ibrāhīm (2007), *Kitāb fī funūn al-ṭib wa-l-‘itr*, ed. by al-Rādī al-Jāzī and Fārūq al-‘Asalī, Tunis: Bayt al-Ḥikma.
- Ibn Mattawayh (2009), *Al-Tadhkira fī aḥkām al-jawāhir wa-l-a‘rād*, ed. by Daniel Gimaret, 2 vols., Cairo: IFAO.
- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (n.d.), *Al-Ṭibb al-nabawī*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Ghanī ‘Abd al-Khālīq, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
- Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1405/1986), *Zād al-ma‘ād fī hudā khayr al-‘ibād*, ed. by Shu‘ayb Arna‘ūt and ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Arna‘ūt, 5 vols., Beirut: Mu‘assasat al-Risāla.
- Ibn Rushd, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad (1972), *Talkhiṣ Kitāb al-Ḥiss wa-l-maḥsūs*, ed. and trans. by H. Blumberg, Cambridge, MA.: The Mediaeval Academy of America.
- Ibn Sa’d (1968), *Al-Ṭabaqāt al-kubrā*, ed. by Iḥsān ‘Abbās, 8 vols., Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.
- Ibn Sinā (1952–83), *Kawn = al-Shifā’, al-Ṭabī‘īyyāt, al-Kawn wa-l-fasād*, ed. by Maḥmūd Qāsim, in *al-Shifā’*, gen. ed. Ibrāhīm Madkūr, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Amīriyya.
- (1952–83), *Maqūlāt = al-Shifā’, al-Manṭiq, al-Maqūlāt*, ed. by Madkūr/El-Khodeiri/El-Ehwani/Anawati/Zayid, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Amīriyya.
- (1952–83), *Nafs = K. al-Shifā’, al-Ṭabī‘īyyāt, al-Nafs*, ed. by Jūrj Qanawātī [Georges Anawati] and Sa‘īd Zāyid, in *al-Shifā’*, gen. ed. Ibrāhīm Madkūr, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Amīriyya.
- (1952–83), *Sammā’ = K. al-Shifā’, al-Ṭabī‘īyyāt, al-Sammā’ al-ṭabī‘ī*, ed. by Sa‘īd Zāyid, in *al-Shifā’*, gen. ed. Ibrāhīm Madkūr, Cairo: al-Maṭba‘a al-Amīriyya, also ed. and trans. by Jon McGinnis (2009), *The Physics of The Healing: Books 1 and 2*, Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press.
- (1978), *Risāla fī l-ṭib*, ed. by Jean Michot, “L’Épître d’Avicenne sur le parfum”, *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 20 (1978): 54–55.
- (1420/1999), *al-Qānūn fī l-ṭibb*, ed. by Muḥammad Ayman al-Ḍanāwī, 3 vols, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya.
- (2005), *Ilāhiyyāt = K. al-Shifā’, al-Ilāhiyyāt*, ed. and trans. by M. E. Marmura, *The Metaphysics of The Healing*, Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press.
- Ibn al-Ṭayyib (2006), *Tafsīr K. al-Maqūlāt*, ed. and trans. by Cleophea Ferrari, *Der Kategorienkommentar von Abū l-Farağ ‘Abdallāh Ibn al-Ṭayyib: Text und Untersuchungen*, Leiden: Brill.
- Ibn Taymiyya, Aḥmad (1425/2004), *Majmū‘ al-fatāwā*, Medina: Majma‘ al-Malik Fahd.
- Ibn Taymiyya, Majd al-Dīn ‘Abd al-Salām (1429/[2008]), *Al-Muntaqā min akhbār al-Muṣṭafā*, ed. by Ṭariq b. ‘Awd Allāh Muḥammad, Dammām: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī.
- al-Ṭijī (1997), *Al-Mawāqif fī ‘ilm al-kalām*, ed. by ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ‘Umayra, 3 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Jil.
- Ikhwān al-Ṣafā’ (1376/1957), *Rasā’il*, 4 vols., Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.

- al-Jalālayn [= Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī and Jalāl al-Dīn al-Maḥallī] (1388/1968), *Tafsīr*, apud al-Bayḍawī, *Anwār al-tanzīl*, 2 vols, 2nd edition, Cairo: Muḥammad Maḥmūd al-Ḥalabī.
- Jāmī (1910), *Yūsuf-u Zulaykhā*, trans. by Alexander Rogers, *The Book of Yusuf and Zuleikha*, London: Cooper.
- al-Jazā'irī, Sayyid Ni'matullāh (1429/[2008]), *Al-Anwār al-Nu'māniyya*, 4 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Qārī.
- al-Jazīrī, 'Abd al-Raḥmān (1422/2002), *K. al-Fiqh 'alā l-madhāhib al-arba'a*, 5 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
- al-Jurjānī, 'Alī b. Muḥammad (1419/1998), *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, ed. by Muḥammad 'Umar al-Dimyāṭī, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- al-Jildakī, 'Izz al-Dīn Aydamir b. 'Alī, "Al-Burhān fī asrār 'ilm al-mizān", MS Paris BNF, Arabe 1355.
- Kamāl al-Dīn (1442/2021), *Ayyām Kamāl al-Dīn al-Ḥā'ik*, ed. by Boris Liebrecht and Kristina Richardson, *The Notebook of Kamāl al-Dīn the Weaver: Allepine Notes from the End of the 16th Century*, Beirut: De Gruyter.
- al-Khafājī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (1967), *Rayḥanat al-alibbā wa-zahrāt al-ḥayāh al-dunyā*, Cairo: 'Īsā al-Bābī al-Ḥalabī.
- al-Khālīdī, Ismā'īl (1329/[1911]), *Mu'taṣam makārim akhlāq al-sayyid al-mustaghāth 'alā ḥadīth ḥubbiba ilayyā min dunyākum thalāth*, Damascus: Maṭba'at Badā'ī al-Funūn.
- al-Khazrajī, Abū Su'ūd b. Taj al-Dīn, "Ta'līqā laṭīfa fī-mā yata'allaqu bi-qawl al-nabī... ḥubbiba ilayyā min dunyākum", Houghton MS Arab. 385.
- al-Majlisī, Muḥammad Bāqir (1429/2008), *Biḥār al-anwār*, 110 vols., Beirut: Mu'assasat al-A'lamī li-l-Maṭbū'āt.
- (1994), *Ḥilyat al-muttaqīn fī l-ādāb wa-l-sunan wa-l-akhlāq*, trans. by Khalīl Rizq al-Āmilī, Beirut: Dār al-Amīr li-l-Thaqāfa wa-l-'Ulūm.
- al-Makkī, Abū Ṭālib (1426/2005), *Qūt al-qulūb*, ed. by 'Āsim b. Ibrāhīm al-Kayyālī, 2 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- al-Māturīdī, Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad (2005–2011), *Ta'wīlāt al-Qur'ān*, ed. by Ahmet Vanlioğlu et al., Istanbul: Mizan Yayınevi.
- Maybudī, Rashīd al-Dīn (1331–39sh/1952–91), *Kashf al-asrār wa-'uddat al-abrār*, 10 vols., Tehran: Intishārāt-i Dānishgāh-i Tīhrān, partial trans. by William C. Chittick (2015), *The Unveiling of the Mysteries and the Provision of the Pious*, Louisville, KY: Fons Vitae.
- al-Muḥibbī, Muḥammad Amīn (1966), *Khulāṣat al-athar fī a'yān al-qarn al-ḥādī 'ashar*, 4 vols., Beirut: Dār Ṣādir.
- (1967–71), *Nafḥat al-rayḥāna wa-rashḥat ṭīlā' al-ḥāna*, ed. by 'Abd al-Fattāh al-Hūlw, 6 vols., Cairo: Dār Iḥyā' al-Kutub al-'Arabiyya.
- Mullā Ṣadrā (1981), *Al-Ḥikma al-muta'āliya fī l-asfār al-'aqliyya l-arba'a* (= *Al-asfār*), 9 vols., 3rd edition, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī, 1981, partial trans. by Latimah-Parvin Peerwani (2008), *Spiritual Psychology*, London: ICAS Press.
- (1392sh/2000), *Ta'līqāt*, apud Suhrawardī, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq, bā sharḥ-i Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī wa-Ta'līqāt-i Ṣadr al-Dīn Muḥammad Shīrāzī* (Mullā Ṣadrā), *jild-i chahārum*, ed. by Najafqulī Ḥabībī, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Bunyād-i Ḥikmat-i Islāmī-yi Ṣadrā.
- al-Munāwī, 'Abd al-Ra'ūf (1415/1994), *Fayḍ al-qadīr sharḥ al-Jāmī' al-saghīr*, ed. by Aḥmad 'Abd al-Salām, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya.
- Muṣṭafā 'Ālī (1979), *Naṣīḥatū s-selāṭīn*, trans. by Andreas Tietze, *Muṣṭafā 'Ālī's Counsel for Sultans of 1581*, 2 vols., Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- (1998), *Mevā'idü' n-nefā fī kavā'idü' l-mecālīs*, trans. by Douglas Scott Brookes, *Tables of Delicacies Concerning the Rules of Social Gatherings*, PhD thesis, University of California, Berkeley.
- al-Muttaqī al-Hindī (1413/[1993]), *Kanz al-'ummāl fī sunan al-aqwāl wa-l-aqāl*, ed. by Ṣafwat al-Saqqā, 18 vols., Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla.

- al-Nābulusī (1270/[1853–4]), *Dīwān al-ḥaqāʾiq wa-majmūʿ al-raqāʾiq*, Būlāq: Dār al-Ṭibāʾa al-Bāhira.
- al-Nasafī, Abū l-Muʿīn (1990–93), *Tabṣirat al-adilla*, ed. by Claude Salamé, Damascus: Institut Français de Damas.
- al-Nasāʾī (n.d.), *Al-Sunan al-kubrā*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Ghaffār al-Bundārī and Sayyid Kisrawī Ḥasan, 6 vols, Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya.
- al-Nawbakhtī (2015), *Talkhiṣ kitāb al-kawn wa-l-fasād*, ed. and trans. by Marwan Rashed, *Al-Ḥasan ibn Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī: Commentary on Aristotle De generatione et corruptione; Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, Berlin: De Gruyter.
- al-Qaṣṭallānī, Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (n.d.), *Al-Mawāhib al-laduniyya bi-l-minaḥ al-Muḥammadiyya*, 3 vols., Cairo: al-Maktaba al-Tawfiqiyya.
- Rāghib Paṣa, Muḥammad (2000), *Safīnat al-Rāghib wa-dafīnat al-maṭālib*, ed. by Rafīq al-ʿAjam and ʿAlī Dahrūj, Beirut: Librarie due Liban.
- al-Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn (1411/[1990–1]), *Al-Mabāḥith al-mashriqiyya fī ʿilm al-ilāhiyyāt wa-l-ṭabʾiyyāt*, 2 vols., 2nd ed., Qumm: Instishārāt-i Bīdār.
- (1411/[1990–1]), *Al-Muḥaṣṣal fī uṣūl al-dīn*, Cairo: Maktabat al-Turāth.
- (1420/[1999–2000]), *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb*, 32 vols., 3rd ed., Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.
- Rūmī (1925–40), *Mathnavī-yi maʿnavī*, ed. and trans. by Richard A. Nicholson, 8 vols, London: Luzac and Co.
- (1336sh/1957–8), *Dīwān-i kabir yā kulliyāt-i Shams*, ed. by Badīʾ al-Zamān Furūzānfar, 10 vols., Tehran: Tehran University.
- Rūzbihān al-Baqlī (1442/2021), *Tafsīr sūrat Yūsuf*, in: ʿAbduh, Khālīd Muḥammad, ed., *Al-Tafsīr al-ṣūfi li-sūrat Yūsuf, li-Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī wa-Ruzbihān al-Baqlī wa Shams al-Dīn al-Daylamī*, Algiers: Al-Maktaba al-Falsafiyya al-Ṣūfiyya.
- al-Ṣafadī (1420/2000), *Al-Wāfi bi-l-wafayāt*, ed. by Aḥmad al-Arnaʿūt and Turkī Muṣṭafā, 29 vols, Beirut: Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth.
- al-Ṣaffūrī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (1281/[1864–5]), *Nuzhat al-majālis wa-muntakhab al-nafāʾis* Cairo: al-Maṭbaʾa al-Kastaliyya.
- al-Ṣāliḥī, Muḥammad (1993), *Subul al-hudā wa-l-rashād fī sirat khayr al-ʾibād*, ed. by ʿĀdil Aḥmad ʿAbd al-Mawjūd and ʿAlī Muḥammad Muʿawwaḍ, 12 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya.
- al-Sarrāj, Abū Naṣr (1960), *K. al-Lumaʾ*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd and Ṭāḥā ʿAbd al-Bāqī Surūr, Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadītha.
- Shalaq, ʿAlī Aḥmad, ed. (1414/1984), *Al-Shamm fī l-shiʿr al-ʿarabī*, Beirut: Dār al-Andalus.
- al-Shawkānī (2004), *Nayl al-awṭār*, ed. by Wāʾid b. Ṣabrī b. Abī ʿAlfa, Amman: Bunyat al-Afkār al-Dawliyya.
- al-Shīrāzī (1383sh/[2013–4]), *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ihsrāq*, ed. by ʿAbdallāh Nūrānī and Maḥdī Muḥaqqiq, Tehran: Anjuman-i Athār-u Mafākhir-i Farhangī.
- al-Suhrawardī (1999), *Ḥikmat al-isḥrāq*, ed. and trans. by John Walbridge and Hossein Ziai, *The Philosophy of Illumination*, Provo, UT: Brigham Young University.
- al-Sulamī (1442/2021), *Tafsīr sūrat Yūsuf*, in: ʿAbduh, Khālīd Muḥammad, ed., *Al-Tafsīr al-ṣūfi li-sūrat Yūsuf, li-Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī wa-Ruzbihān al-Baqlī wa Shams al-Dīn al-Daylamī*, Algiers: Al-Maktaba al-Falsafiyya al-Ṣūfiyya.
- al-Suyūṭī, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (n.d.), *Al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr*, Beirut: Dār al-Fikr li-l-Ṭibāʾa wa-l-Nashr wa-l-Tawzīʿ.
- (1989), “Al-Maqāma al-miskiyya”, in Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī, ed., *Sharḥ maqāmāt Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī*, Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risāla.
- (1424/2004), *Al-Ḥawī fī l-fatāwā*, 2 vols., Beirut: Dār al-Fikr li-l-Ṭibāʾa wa-l-Nashr.
- al-Ṭabarānī (1415/[1994–5]), *Al-Muʿjam al-awsaṭ*, ed. by Ṭāriq b. Muḥammad and ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Ḥusaynī, 10 vols., Cairo: Dār al-Ḥaramayn.

- al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad b. Jarīr (2011), *Jāmi' al-bayān 'an ta'wīl āy al-Qur'an*, ed. by Muḥammad Shākir Ḥaristānī and 'Alī 'Ashūr, Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī.
- al-Taftazānī, Mas'ūd b. 'Umar (1419/1989), *Sharḥ al-Maqāṣid*, ed. by 'Abd al-Raḥmān 'Umayra, 5 vols., Beirut: 'Ālam al-Kutub.
- al-Ṭūsī, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan (1957–63), *Al-Tibyān fī tafsīr al-Qur'an*, ed. by Aḥmad Shawqī al-Amin and Aḥmad Ḥabīb Quṣayr al-'Āmilī, 10 vols., Najaf: al-Maṭba'a al-'Ilmiyya.
- al-Zamakhsharī (1407/1987), *Al-Kashshāf 'an ḥaqā'iq ghawāmiḍ al-tanzīl*, ed. by Muṣṭafā Ḥusayn Aḥmad, 4 vols., 3rd ed., Cairo: Dār al-Rayyān.
- al-Zarkashī (n.d.), *al-La'ālī l-manthūra fī l-aḥādīth al-manthūra*, ed. by Muḥammad b. Luṭfī al-Ṣabbāgh, [Beirut]: al-Maktab al-Islāmī.
- al-Zayla'ī (1414/[1993–4]), *Takhrīj ḥādīth... al-Kashshāf*, ed. by 'Abdallāh b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sa'd, 4 vols., Riyadh: Dār Ibn Khazīma.

## Studies

- ABUALI, Eyad (2022), “I Tasted Sweetness, and I Tasted Affliction”: Pleasure, Pain, and Body in Medieval Sufi Food Practices,” *The Senses and Society* 17.1: 52–67.
- ALBERT, Jean-Pierre (1990), *Odeurs de sainteté. La mythologie chrétienne des aromates*, Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales.
- ANDREWS, Walter G. and Mehmet KALPAKLI (2005), *The Age of Beloveds: Love and the Beloved in Early-Modern Ottoman and European Culture and Society*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- ARTUN, Tuna (2013), “Hearts of Gold and Silver: The Production of Alchemical Knowledge in the Early Ottoman World,” PhD dissertation, Princeton University.
- ATANASOVA, Kameliya N. (2016), “The Sufi as the Axis of the World: Representations of Religious Authority in the Works of Ismail Hakki Bursevi (1653–1725),” PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- 'AṬĀYĪ, Jamāl (1389sh/[2019]), “Kalima-yi 'bū' dar *Mathnavi*,” *Māhnāma-yi Ḥāfiẓ* 69: 41–44.
- BALTUSSEN, Han (2015), “Ancient Philosophers on the Sense of Smell,” in: Mark Bradley, ed., *Smell and the Ancient Senses*, Milton Park, UK: Routledge, 30–45.
- BASHIR, Shahzad (2011), *Sufi Bodies: Religion and Society in Medieval Islam*, New York: Columbia University Press.
- BAUER, Thomas (1998), *Liebe und Liebesdichtung in der arabischen Welt des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts. Eine literatur- und mentalitätsgeschichtliche Studie des arabischen Ġazal*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag.
- BOGHANIM, Hanna/CARAYON, Agnès, eds. (2023), *Parfums d'Orient*, Paris: Institut du Monde Arabe.
- BONNÉRIC, Julie, ed. (2015), *Histoire et anthropologie des odeurs en terre d'Islam à l'époque médiévale* (*Bulletin d'Études Orientales* 64), Beirut: Presses de l'Institut français du Proche-Orient.
- (2019), “L'odeur du guerrier: un parfum d'immortalité sur le champ de bataille. À propos de trois mentions du *Tārīḥ al-rusul wa-l-mulūk* d'al-Ṭabarī,” in: Mathieu Eychenne/Stéphane Pradines/Abbès Zouache, eds., *Guerre et paix dans le Proche-Orient médiéval. Histoire, archéologie, anthropologie*, Cairo: IFAI/IFPO, 71–85.
- (2023), “Les parfums on islam,” in: Boghanim/Carayon, eds., *Parfums d'Orient*, 171–177.
- BOSWORTH, C. Edmund (1989), *Bahā' al-Dīn al-'Āmilī and His Literary Anthologies*, Manchester, UK: University of Manchester Press.
- BOUHDIBA, Abdelwahab (2017), *La culture du parfum en Islam*, Tunis: Sud Éditions.
- (2023), “Le monde des parfums,” in: Boghanim/Carayon, eds., *Parfums d'Orient*, 23–31.

- BROOKSHAW, Dominic Parviz (2010), "Palaces, Pavilions, and Pleasure-Gardens: The Context and Setting of the Medieval *Majlis*," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 6.2: 199–223.
- BULL, Michael/GILROY, Paul/HOWES, David/KAHN, Douglas (2006), "Introducing Sensory Studies," *The Senses and Society* 1.1: 5–7.
- BURSI, Adam (2020), "Scents of Space: Early Islamic Pilgrimage, Perfume, and Paradise," *Arabica* 67: 1–34.
- CHITTICK, William C. (1989), *Ibn al-'Arabi's Metaphysics of Imagination: The Sufi Path of Knowledge*, Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- CLASSEN, Constance (1997), "Foundations for an Anthropology of the Senses," *International Social Science Journal* 49.3: 401–412.
- CLASSEN, Constance/HOWES, David/SYNNOTT, Anthony (1994), *Aroma: A Cultural History of Smell*, London: Routledge.
- COCKAYNE, Emily (2007), *Hubbub: Filth, Noise, and Stench in England 1600–1770*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- CORBIN, Alain (1982), *Le miasme et la jonquille*, Paris: Aubier Montaigne, trans. by Miriam L. Kochan (1996), *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odour and the Social Imagination*, London: Papermac.
- (2000), *Historien du sensible. Entretiens avec Gilles Heuré*, Paris: Éditions La Découverte.
- CORBIN, Henri (1989), *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth: From Mazdean Iran to Shi'ite Iran*, trans. by Nancy Pearson, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- DAVIDSON, Herbert A. (1992), *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- DAVIS, Lauren/THYS-ŞENOCAK, Lucienne (2017), "Heritage and Scent: Research and Exhibition of Istanbul's Changing Smellscapes," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 23.8: 723–741.
- DELMAS, Catherine (1998), "Saveurs et senteurs de l'Orient dans *Le Quatuor d'Alexandrie* de Lawrence Durrell," in: Paul Carmignani/Jean-Yves Laurichesse/Joël Thomas, eds., *Saveurs, senteurs: Le goût de la Méditerranée*, [Perpignan:] Presses universitaires de Perpignan, 425–435.
- DIEM, Werner/SCHÖLLER, Marco (2004), *The Living and the Dead: Studies in Arabic Epitaphs*, 3 vols., Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- DIMMIG, Ashley (2012), "Synaesthetic Silks: The Multi-Sensory Experientiality of Ottoman Imperial Textiles," Master thesis, Koç University, Istanbul.
- DUCÈNE, Jean-Charles (2015), "Des parfums et des fumées: les parfums à brûler en Islam médiéval," in: Bonnéric, ed., *Histoire et anthropologie des odeurs*, 159–178.
- DUGAN, Holly (2011), *The Ephemeral History of Perfume: Scent and Sense in Early Modern England*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- EL-ROUAYHEB, Khaled (2015), *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ERGIN, Nina (2014), "The Fragrance of the Divine: Ottoman Incense Burners and Their Context," *The Art Bulletin* 96.1: 70–97.
- EVANS, Jennifer (2019), "Gender, Medicine, and Smell in Seventeenth-Century England," in: Mark M. Smith, ed., *Smell and History: A Reader*, Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 115–151.
- FAHMY, Khaled (2002), "An Olfactory Tale of Two Cities: Cairo in the Nineteenth Century," in: Jill Edwards, ed., *Historians in Cairo: Essays in Honor of George Scanlon*, Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 155–187.
- FERRARI, Cleophea (2004), "Der Duft des Apfels. Abū l-Farağ 'Abdallāh Ibn at-Ṭayyib und sein Kommentar zu den *Kategorien* des Aristoteles," in: Vincenza Celluprica/Cristina D'Ancona, eds., *Aristotele e i suoi esegeti Neoplatonici*, [Naples]: Bibliopolis, 97–106.

- (2006), *Der Kategorienkommentar von Abū l-Farağ ‘Abdallāh Ibn at-Ṭayyib: Text und Untersuchungen*, Leiden: Brill.
- GOLDZIER, Ignaz (1910), “Asketismus und Sūfismus,” in: *Vorlesungen über den Islam*, Heidelberg: Carl Winter’s Universitätsbuchhandlung, 139–200.
- GRATIEN, Chris (2022), *The Unsettled Plain: An Environmental History of the Late Ottoman Frontier*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- GROSCHARD, Alain (1998), *Structure du sérail. La fiction du despotisme Asiatique dans l’Occident classique*, first publ. 1979, trans. by Liz Heron, *The Sultan’s Court: European Fantasies of the East*, London: Verso.
- GROOM, Nigel (1981), *Frankincense and Myrrh: A Study of the Arabian Incense Trade*, London: Longman
- GRUBER, Christiane (2014), “The Rose of the Prophet: Floral Metaphors in Late Ottoman Devotional Art,” in: David Roxburgh, ed., *Envisioning Islamic Art and Architecture: Essays in Honor of Renata Holod*, Leiden: Brill, 227–254.
- (2018), *The Praiseworthy One: The Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Texts and Images*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- GUTAS, Dimitri (2012), “The Empiricism of Avicenna,” *Oriens* 40.2: 391–436.
- (2014), *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition: Introduction to Reading Avicenna’s Philosophical Works*, 2nd ed., Leiden: Brill.
- Gyselen, Rika, ed. (1998), *Parfums d’Orient (Res Orientales 11)*, Bures-sur-Yvette: Groupe pour l’étude de la civilisation du moyen-orient.
- HARRIS, Nicholas G. (2017), “In Search of ‘Izz al-Dīn Aydamir al-Ġildakī, Mamlūk Alchemist,” *Arabica* 64: 531–56.
- HARVEY, Susan Ashbrook (2006), *Scenting Salvation: Ancient Christianity and the Olfactory Imagination*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- HASSE, Dag Nikolaus (2014), “The Soul’s Faculties,” in: Robert Pasnau/Christina van Dyke, eds., *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, I, 305–319.
- HIRTENSTEIN, Stephen (2023), “Cosmogonic Myths in Sufism,” in: Christian Lange/Alexander Knysch, eds., *Sufi Cosmology*, Leiden: Brill, 47–67.
- HITZEL, Frédéric (1999), “Manuscrits, livres et culture livresque à Istanbul,” *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée* 87: 19–38.
- HOLMYARD, Eric John (1937), “Aidamir al-jildakī,” *Iraq* 4: 47–53.
- HOWES, David (1987), “Olfaction and Transition: An Essay on the Ritual Uses of Smell,” *Canadian Review of Sociology* 24.3: 398–416.
- ISH2 = Lange, Christian/Bursi, Adam, eds. (2024), *Islamic Sensory History*, Vol. 2: 600–1500, Leiden: Brill.
- IVANYI, Katharina (2020), “*Adab, akhlāq* and Early Modern Ottoman Paraenesis: Birgivi Meḥmed Efendi’s (d. 981/1573) *al-Ṭarīqa al-muḥāmmadiyya*,” in: C. Mayeur-Jaouen, ed., *Adab and Modernity*, Leiden: Brill, 49–62.
- JARRAR, Maher/JAAFAR, Nesrine (2009), “‘It Stinks in Basra!’: Al-Jāḥiẓ on Odours,” in: Arnim Heineman/John L. Meloy/Tarif Khalidi/Manfred Kropp, eds., *Al-Jāḥiẓ: A Muslim Humanist for Our Time*, Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg (in Kommission), 269–279.
- JUYNBOLL, G. H. A. (2007), *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*, Leiden: Brill.
- KARAMUSTAFA, Ahmet (1994), *God’s Unruly Friends: Dervish Groups in the Later Middle Period, 1200–1550*, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press.
- KATZ, Marion Holmes (2013), *Prayer in Islamic Thought and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- KAUKUA, Jari (2020), “Illumination,” *EP*, online publication (accessed February 5, 2023).
- (2022), *Suhrawardī’s Illuminationism: A Philosophical Study*, Leiden: Brill.

- KING, Anya (2017), *Scent from the Garden of Paradise*, Leiden: Brill.
- KOHLBERG, Ethan (2020), "Vision and the Imams," in: *In Praise of the Few: Studies in Shi'i Thought and History*, ed. Amin Ehteshami, Leiden: Brill, 365–393.
- LANGE, Christian (2022), "Qur'ānic Anosmia," in: Bruce Fudge/Kambiz GhaneaBassiri/Christian Lange/Sarah Savant, eds., *Non Sola Scriptura: Essays in Honour of William Graham*, London: Routledge, 23–43.
- (fc.), "The Smell of Heresy," in: Blain Auer/Wissam Halawi, eds., *Orthodoxy and Heresy*, Berlin: De Gruyter.
- LEESE, Simon (2022), "Connoisseurs of the Senses: Tobacco Smoking, Poetic Pleasures, and Homoerotic Masculinities in Ottoman Damascus," *The Senses and Society* 17.1: 90–108.
- LORY, Pierre (2022), "Modèle prophétique et modèle de sainteté dans le soufisme ancien: quelques exemples", in: Denis Gril/Stefan Reichmuth/Dilek Sarmis, eds., *The Presence of the Prophet in Early Modern and Contemporary Islam*, Vol. 1: *The Prophet Between Doctrine, Literature and Arts: Historical Legacies and Their Unfolding*, Leiden: Brill, 229–243.
- MACARAIG, Nina (2019), *Çemberlitaş Hamamı in Istanbul: The Biographical Memoir of a Turkish Bath*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- MCCLELLAND, Gwyn, and Hannah GOULD (2023), "Introduction: Scents, Sensory Colonialism, and Social Worlds in Asia," in: Gwyn McClelland/Hannah Gould, eds., *Aromas of Asia: Exchanges, Histories, Threats*, University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 1–11.
- MICHOT, Jean (1978), "L'épître d'Avicenne sur le parfum," *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale* 20: 53–57.
- NEWID, Mehr Ali (2010), *Aromata in der iranischen Kultur unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der persischen Dichtung*, Wiesbaden: Reichert.
- NEWMAN, Andrew (2012), "Recovery of the Past: Ibn Bābawayh, Bāqir al-Majlisī, and Safawid Medical Discourse," *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies* 50.1: 109–127.
- NOOR, Rao Mohsin Ali (2023), "Aromas of Knowledge, Networks of Scent: Tracing the Olfactory Imagination of a 17th-century Ottoman Traveler," *The Senses & Society* 18.1: 52–65.
- PARILDAR, Sümeyye (2020), *Intentionality in Mulla Sadra*, Cham: Springer.
- PFEIFER, Helen (2022), *Empire of Salons: Conquest and Community in Early Modern Ottoman Lands*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 195–205.
- PHILLIPS, Amanda (2016), *Everyday Luxuries: Art and Objects in Ottoman Constantinople, 1600–1800*, Dortmund: Verlag Kettler.
- PUERTA VÍLCHEZ, José Miguel (2017), *Aesthetics in Arabic Thought: From Pre-Islamic Arabia Through al-Andalus*, Leiden: Brill.
- RAŠIĆ, Dunja (2022), "Music of the Spheres in Akbarian Sufism," *Religions* 13.10: 928, online publication (accessed February 5, 2023).
- RIDGEON, Lloyd (2010), "Shaggy or Shaved? The Symbolism of Hair Among Persian Qalandar Sufis," *Iran and the Caucasus* 14: 1–18.
- RITTER, Hellmut (1955), *Das Meer der Seele. Mensch, Welt und Gott in den Geschichten des Farīduddīn ʿAṭṭār*, Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- RIZVI, Sajjad H. (2010), "Sayyid Nī'mat Allāh al-Jazā'irī and His Anthologies: Anti-Sufism, Shi'ism and Jokes in the Safavid World," *Die Welt des Islams* 50: 224–242.
- SHAFĪ'Ī-KADKANĪ, Muḥammad Riḍā (1386/[2007]), *Qalandariyya dar tārikh*, Tehran: Intishārāt-i Sukhan.
- SIEVERT, Henning (2013), "Eavesdropping on the Pasha's Salon: Usual and Unusual Readings of an Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Bureaucrat," *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 41: 159–195.
- SCHIMMEL, Annemarie (1978), *The Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Works of Jalāloddin Rumi*, Albany, NY: SUNY Press

- (1985), *And Muhammad Is His Messenger: The Veneration of the Prophet in Islamic Piety*, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- SMITH, Mark M. (2021), *A Sensory History Manifesto*, University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania University Press.
- SUBTELNY, Maria (1984), “Scenes from the Literary Life of Tīmūrīd Herāt,” in: Roger Savory/Dionisius Agius, eds., *Logos Islamikos: Studia Islamica in Honorem Georgii Michaelis Wickens*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 137–155.
- THURLKILL, Mary (2016), *Sacred Scents in Early Christianity and Islam*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books.
- TUFAN, Ömür (2006), “Hamam Malzemeleri,” in: Emine Bilirgen et al., eds., *Hamam: Osmanlı’da Yıkınma Geleneği ve Berberlik Zanaatı*, İstanbul: Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, 52–62.
- ULLMANN, Manfred (1972), *Natur- und Geheimmwissenschaften im Islam*, Leiden, E. J. Brill.
- UZUN, Beyza (2015), “Ottoman Olfactory Traditions in a Palatial Space: Incense Burners in the Topkapı Palace,” Master thesis, Koç University, İstanbul.
- /MACARAIG, Nina (2022), “Scenting the Imperial Residence: Objects from the Topkapı Palace Museum Collections,” *The Senses and Society* 17.1: 68–89.
- VAN ESS, Josef (1966), *Die Erkenntnislehre des ‘Aḍudaddīn al-Īcī*, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- (1991–97), *Theologie und Gesellschaft im 2. und 3. Jahrhundert Hidschra: Eine Geschichte des religiösen Denkens im frühen Islam*, 6 vols., Berlin: de Gruyter.
- VAN GELDER, Geert J. H. (1998), “Four Perfumes of Arabia: A Translation of al-Suyūṭī’s *Al-Maqāma al-Miskiyya*,” in Gyselen, ed., *Parfums d’Orient*, 203–212.
- VARLIK, Nühket (2015), *Plague and Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean World: The Ottoman Experience, 1347–1600*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- VIGOUROUX, Élodie (2013), “Les Banū Manğak à Damas: Capital social, enracinement, et gestion patrimoniale d’une famille d’awlād al-nās à l’époque mamlouke,” *Annales islamologiques* 47: 197–233.
- YENTÜRK, Nejat (2005), “Ottoman Perfumes,” in: Şentürk, Şennu/Ezilmez, Hakan/Yentürk, Nejat/Başer, K. Hüsnü Can (2005), *Kutsal Dumandan Sihirli Damlaya: Parfüm*, transl. Mary Işın, *Sacred Incense to Fragrant Elixir: Perfume*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 65–88.