MEDICINE AND THE SAINTS
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Science, Islam, and the Colonial Encounter in Morocco, 1877–1956

ELLEN J. AMSTER
FOREWORD BY RAJAE EL AOUED

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Chapter 1

Healing the Body, Healing the Umma:
Sufi Saints and God’s Law in
A Corporeal City of Virtue

Ya Mawlay Ya‘qub
Da‘wini min al-habub
F‘ana gharib wa barrani.
(O Lord [Saint] Jacob
Cure me from the sore
For I am a stranger and an outsider.)

Popular Fez Song, Referring to the Shrine of Mawlay Ya‘qub
Near Fez, Where the Hot Springs Provide Relief from a
Variety of Skin Ailments

After a failed revolt against the Sa’diyyan sultan ‘Abdallah II (ruled 1613–1623), the city of Fez feared his vengeance and sent two mad saints (majdhbin) to intercede on its behalf with the enraged ruler. When the sultan received the two emissaries, Sidi Jallul bin al-Haj and Sidi Masa‘ud al-Sharrat, he scoffed, “The people of Fez couldn’t find any to mediate for them but these two shitters in their rags” (literally, “he who evacuates his bowels”).1 Angered, Sidi Jallul replied, “By God, you will not have a free hand [in Fez] for forty-one years,” and the saints departed. Suddenly, the sultan’s stomach reversed and he vomited feces from his mouth for several days, until he sent for the saints and begged their pardon. No sultan ruled in Fez for the period Sidi Jallul had predicted “until God brought” the ‘Alawi sultan Rashid. “And this story is true,” concludes the court historian al-Ifrani, “for I heard it from many people, and I summarize what was told to us.”2

The vomiting sultan suggests a precolonial political imaginary in which Sufi saints were “public healers,” restoring bodies and the community to wholeness.3 As al-Ifrani’s chronicle suggests, this political vision relied upon a way of knowing in which miracles, body experiences, and the lives of the saints were history—not legends or symbols, but history,
accepted and integrated into the official text of a court scholar. Modern historians of Africa have illuminated alternate epistemologies to positivism and multiple ways of knowing the past; they ask us to “experience all these representations of reality as realities.” Sainthood was the essence of premodern Moroccan social reality, yet contemporary historians seldom include Islamic saints in the narrative of Moroccan history. As Steven Feierman observes, historians tend to privilege the diachronic, stable, and linear—dynasties and colonial rule—the miraculous becomes unintelligible and therefore invisible to history. What narrative might emerge, he wonders, were we to construct African history from purely African ways of knowing?

For the Moroccan historian al-Ifrani and his readers, the sultan’s body obeyed a political authority derived from Sufi Islamic epistemology. In Islamic thought, the legitimate Muslim leader must be a reflection of the Prophet Muhammad and emulate his spiritual guardianship (walaya) and political power (wilaya) in the Muslim community (umma). The Muhammadan Reality is knowledge of God, wrote the Sufi ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani; leadership is an “intellect [aql] because it comprehends universal truths [kulliyat], and a pen [qalam] because it is an instrument for the transmission of knowledge.” But because knowing could not be monopolized in an office, a kingdom, or even a sultan’s body, the leader in Morocco was often not the sultan, nor indeed a single person.

As the Moroccan jurist ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Fasi (1598–1680) observed, leadership in Morocco was of two separable elements: a limited, temporal sultanate and a continuous, spiritual imamate. The cities and tribes of Morocco invested the sultan with temporal authority through a legal contract of rule, a bay’a, defining him as the servant of God’s umma who must respect the people’s rights. Spiritual leadership, the imamate, flowed from direct knowledge (maʿrifa) of God’s reality (haqqa), a diffuse, mobile, invisible, esoteric, Gnostic knowing superior to and outside the mechanisms of state control. The awliya’, (singular, wali), translated variably as “Friends of God,” “People of [His] Right Hand,” or “Islamic saints,” were knowers (ʿarifun) among the people—jurists, tribemen, Sufis, merchants, physicians, beggars, craftsmen, sultans, women, and others—who achieved intimacy with God. The public validated saints by recognizing their miracles, visiting them in life and death, and narrating their lives in healing. Miracle-working saints sometimes contended with the sultans for political power, directed military action and war, created states or quasi states, governed territory, collected taxes, and negotiated trade agreements.
The vomiting sultan reveals this political vision as reliant upon a human body obedient to God and active in worldly politics. The Sufi Muhya ad-Din ibn ‘Arabi described its cosmological system; the human body is a microcosm of the human city and a parallel realm for God’s “divine system for the reform (islah) of the human kingdoms.” As God appointed the human soul to be His Vice-Regent on Earth, so He created the human body as a citadel for its residence. As a just ruler produces a harmonious city, so a just soul produces a harmonious body; an unjust soul will provoke the body’s members to revolt. So it was that the stomach of Sultan ‘Abdallah II rose against tyranny in the two citadels—Fez and his own person—to uphold God’s law in the two realms. The Qur’an warns man that his body will testify to God on the Day of Judgment: “That day shall We set a seal on their mouths, but their hands will speak to Us and their feet bear witness to all that they did” (36:65). In Fez in 1623, we find Qur’anic promise fulfilled: a body testified to God in order to restore God’s law to man and society. Michel Chodkiewicz has argued that Moroccan saints concretized Sufism’s abstractions through their human personalities, but it was the body that grounded Sufi knowing in social reality. It was the body-as-space that allowed saints to act in the world and heal the umma as a geopolitical entity.

Fez illustrates an elusive concept: the Sufi polity. The ideal Islamic polity, the City of Virtue, al-madina al-fadila, was first articulated by the Islamic philosopher al-Farabi. But al-Farabi envisioned a city of reason, not a Sufi city of saintly miracles. Contemporary scholars of Islamic political theory also give little thought to Sufism, which they consider an individual and contemplative path to God. Yet the Fez of al-Ifrani’s text exemplified al-Farabi’s virtuous city: a man could realize his full perfection only in society, the law was God’s law, and a knower of God (‘arif) guaranteed the application of His laws. Indeed, the knower (‘arif) could be at once political and “beyond this earthly world.” As Sufi knowing was shared among many awliya’, authority was decentralized, rendering the sultan the people’s executor. The human body was thus the means by which God’s law entered into human life, not the source of “evil inclinations” or “enslavement” for the soul.

But this Sufi polity was challenged in the early twentieth century, when the threat of foreign invasion led a Moroccan sultan, his court officials, and some legal scholars to consider a different idea of truth. To defend Morocco against European colonialism, the sultan’s court adopted European scientific and military reforms and Islamic modernist salafiyya philosophy from the Orient (Mashriq). Predicated upon a positive theory of
knowledge, *salafiyya* proved useful to Sultan ʿAbd al-Hafiz (ruled 1908–1912) for the consolidation of his central state power. With its war on saintly intermediaries (*wasāʾīt*) and invisible knowledge, *salafiyya* empowered the sultan to discredit saintly critics and rivals. In 1909, Sultan ʿAbd al-Hafiz executed a Sufi saint, marking the definitive triumph of sultans over saints, of positivism over *batinī* knowing, and a new imagining of social corporeality in Morocco.

UNITING TWO MODELS OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY: THE SHARIF AND THE SUFI QUTB

_We raise to degrees those whom We will, and above every possessor of knowledge is One more knowing._

_qur’ān 12:76_

What was the role of saints in Moroccan politics on the eve of the French protectorate? Ernest Gellner has argued that tribal society produces saints functionally to mediate disputes in the absence of a central state authority, whereas Clifford Geertz sees saintly *baraka* (blessing) as a Weberian charisma possessed by saints and sultans to varying degrees.16 Vincent Cornell offers an alternative: the Jazuliyya Sufi order synthesized a uniquely Moroccan and Islamic conception of political sovereignty in the sixteenth century, a precolonial Moroccan political identity fundamentally unlike nationalism or *salafiyya* Islamic reform.17 This chapter considers the social, geographic, spatial, and temporal aspects of Jazulite sovereignty, an Islamic *umma* imagined in and through the human body.

The philosophical basis of Moroccan political sovereignty developed as a blend of *sharifian* Hasanid Shi’ism and Jazulite Sufism. In other words, Moroccans had two ways of envisioning political leadership, both of which emulate the Prophet Muhammad. After the Prophet died in 632, the Islamic world battled over how to replace him. A refugee from the conflict fled to Morocco in 789, Idris ibn ʿAbd Allah, a blood descendant of the Prophet Muhammad through his grandson al-Hasan (d. 669).

The oldest model of political authority in Morocco is thus “sharifism,” a notion that blood descent from the Prophet imparts both a privileged knowledge of God’s realities and the legitimacy to rule. Although the Umayyads invaded Morocco, Idris I created a unified Islamic state under his rule in 789 and Moroccans credit his lineage, the Idrisids (789–921), with the introduction of the Arabic language and Islam to Morocco.18 After being overthrown by the Zanata Berbers in 921, the Idrisids continued
to claim the throne by promoting a sharifian model of leadership and celebrations for the Prophet’s birthday (mawlid).\(^{19}\)

A newer model of leadership came from Sufism and the Moroccan Sufi Muhammad ibn Sulayman al-Jazuli (d. 1465). Sufi thinkers prior to al-Jazuli conceived the Friend of God, the wali, as a person who reflected the “Muhammadan way” through his direct knowledge (ma’rifa) of God. Muhya ad-Din ibn al-’Arabi (d. 1240) believed that the wali could come to mirror the divine archetype of the Perfect Man and be a human expression of the divine Word in the universe.\(^{19}\) ‘Abd al-Karim al-Jili (d. 1402–3) argued that the Prophet Muhammad never died, but is an eternal living reality who returns in each generation to guide the people in the guise of an “axial saint” (qutb).\(^{20}\) Muhammad al-Jazuli argued that because the Sufi qutb mastered both exoteric and esoteric spheres of knowledge, he was the ideal political leader: “By virtue of the Truth (haqiqa), he becomes a leader of men, who assent [to his guidance] by carrying out what he asks them to do.”\(^{22}\)

Al-Jazuli thus fused sultanic and saintly authority, temporal and spiritual leadership, with a theory of knowledge. The Jazuliyya argued that the axial saint, like Muhammad, reached the “point of complete knowledge” at which all truth and guidance converged. According to a Jazulite shaykh:

The Terrain of Safety is the “point of complete knowledge” (nuqtat al-’ilm al-kamali) that legitimizes the sainthood of authority, wilaya. The “city” (madina) of this dominion is Muhammad, the “gate” (bab) of the city is the Prophet’s cousin and son-in-law ‘Ali, the founder of the Sufi Way, and the “key” (miftah) to the gate is the Generative Saint (al-ghawth) or Axis of the Age (qutb az-zaman). This person stands alone as the successor to the Prophet.\(^{23}\)

Al-Jazuli reconciled the sharif and the qutb socially by uniting the fragmented Moroccan Sufi brotherhoods into a single network and a universal spiritual path. Idrisids entered or founded Sufi orders with Jazulite doctrine, like the ‘Isawa of Meknes, and al-Jazuli praised the Prophet’s lineage with his book of prayer, Dala‘il al-khayrat wa shawariq al-anwar fi dhikr as-salat ‘ala an-nabi al-mukhtar (Tokens of blessings and advents of illumination in the invocation of prayers on behalf of the chosen Prophet). Finally, al-Jazuli encouraged his followers to visit Moroccan saints when the hajj pilgrimage to Mecca was impossible.\(^{24}\) This Jazulite notion, that a visit to the saints of Morocco could replace a visit to the Ka‘ba, helped
to create a local Moroccan spiritual authority generated by the *baraka* (blessing) of local saints.

The Sa’adiyyan sultans appropriated Jazuli ideas in the sixteenth century, when Sultan Muhammad al-Qa’im (1509–1517) led Moroccan armies to victory over Portuguese invaders. His son Muhammad ash-Shaykh “al-Mahdi” (1548–1557) united Morocco under Sa’adiyyan leadership in 1549 and portrayed himself as a saintly renewer of religion (*mahdi*). Quite rightly, al-Mahdi saw the Jazuliyya as potential political rivals, but the Jazuli sheikh al-Wazzani explicitly renounced political ambition: “Rather than fearing the *qutb*, the just Islamic ruler should welcome this saint and cleave to him. Comparing the state to a tree . . . the *qutb* is the water that brings the state to life.” For most of Moroccan history, the saints left political rule to the sultans, but in moments of dynastic conflict, foreign invasion, and social crisis, *mahdis* and Sufi saints rose to lead the people in jihad and a renewal of religion.

The Jazuliyya thus provided the root metaphor of the Moroccan leader as Knower, but the human body provided the space for his knowing to enter the world. Consider the words of al-Jazuli: “The fully actualized Jazuli sheikh (*ash-shaykh al-wasil*) has arrived at the station of direct perception (*maqam al-mushahada*). . . . When he returns to humankind he has illumination (*anwar*), sciences (*’ulum*) and laws (*ahkam*).” Knowing is spatial, for the wali is in the place of prophethood, an axis around whom reality revolves (*qutb*), a sanctuary for the believer (*maqam*), and a doorway to the divine: “The saint is a door and visiting them is a key and loving them is entry, for if you loved them, they love you, and if they love you they choose you, they help you arrive at the goal, and they raise you to your Lord.” It is the saint’s location in space as a body that allows him to mediate between divine and material worlds, to bind men to God (*murabit*, he who binds/connects). It is for this reason that pilgrims touched saints’ bodies for cure, swallowed their saliva, ate earth from their graves, and slept in their tombs, for the wali’s body was an opening to God in the world.

**TELLING HISTORY ON THE GRAVES:**
**SAINT SHRINES AS A TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP OF THE PAST**

The saints were thus literal tent stakes, anchoring a floating map of miraculous events on the Moroccan landscape with their bodies. Mircea Eliade has argued that the hierophanic miracle is a breaking-through from divine
to terrestrial reality, rendering historical time legible as sacred space.\textsuperscript{30} As Christian pilgrims read the Bible in the stained-glass pictograms of medieval cathedrals, so Moroccans read a history of God’s presence on a landscape defined by the graves of His saints. The \textit{awliya’} were people of different times and places whose knowing opened the world to God’s miraculous grace (\textit{baraka}). By visiting their graves, pilgrims connected discrete moments in time to form a topographical map of the past, a geographic Moroccan \textit{umma}. As the Moroccan public remembered the past in pilgrimage, so the sultans tried to manipulate public memory by both building and destroying buildings on \textit{wali} graves. To illustrate such politics, we consider a short history of the graves of Idris I and Idris II.

The grave of Idris I on Zarhun mountain became a rallying point for the political ambitions of his descendants, the Idrisids. As blood descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, the Idrisids used their ancestor Idris I to claim the throne lost in 921, a challenge to which the Berber dynasties were especially vulnerable. The Berber Marinids (1256–1465), for example, had no blood tie to the Prophet and thus only an insecure claim to power.\textsuperscript{31} Trying to force the people to forget Idris I and the Idrisids, the Marinid sultan ‘Uthman II (1310–1331) used his armies to chase pilgrims from Idris’s grave, as the chronicler Abu Hasan ‘Ali al-Jazna\textsuperscript{3} recounted:

\begin{quote}
Idris—may God be pleased with him—was buried outside the gate of Walili. And the people have been determined to visit his tomb. There they cry out their needs to God and are heard (by Him). His body appeared in its shroud in the year 718H/A.D. 1318. So people streamed to it from every part of the Maghrib, causing fears of a riot. Our lord, Abu Sa‘id ‘Uthman b. Ya’qub b. ‘Abd al-Haqq—may God accept his deeds—sent an army to drive them away from that place, and to put an end to the disturbances.\textsuperscript{32}
\end{quote}

To build their own legitimacy, the Marinids used the body of Idris II to reinvent themselves as his political heirs. In 1437, the Marinids “discovered” the unblemished corpse of Idris II perfumed with amber and untouched by decay, which they reburied in a magnificent shrine in the city of Fez.\textsuperscript{33} The “Mawlay Idris” shrine-mosque thus became a center of visitation, and Idris II the patron \textit{wali} of Fez after five hundred years of obscurity. The Marinids also promoted a written history of Morocco and commissioned scholarly histories of Fez, \textit{Rawd al-Qirtas} (Garden of Papers; 1326) and \textit{Zahrat al-As} (The Myrtle Flower; 1360), chronicles which
highlight Idris II as the builder of Fez. The Marinids presented themselves as his heirs by constructing magnificent Fez mosques, fountains, and madrasat.34

Two hundred years later, when the sharifian ‘Alawiyyin (1661–present) came to power, Sultan Isma’il (1672–1727) found the city of Fez fiercely resistant to his policies. To replace Fez as a sacred site and to supplant the Marinids with his own dynasty, Isma’il built a mosque and madrasa complex at the tomb of Idris I on Zarhun mountain and prayed there himself.35 Isma’il hoped that the new shrine would remind the people of his place in the Prophet’s lineage and draw pilgrims’ devotion away from Idris II in favor of Idris I, thus shifting the sacred center of Morocco from Fez to Zarhun mountain.

Despite the sultans’ efforts, Moroccans interpreted the shrines, saints, and Idrisids for themselves. Oral traditions across Morocco recount that as the Idrisids fell from power, an Idrisid child fled to their region and found refuge with a local family, who hid him from enemy soldiers. Over
time the sharifian child became so mixed with the family’s own sons that the whole family was known as *shurafa*. A French sociologist recorded one such narrative in the Habt region near Marrakesh in 1911:

At the moment of the persecution of the Idrisids by Musa ibn Abi-l'-Afiya, in 317 A.H. (929 A.D.) . . . a *sharif* Idrisi who was still a child, pursued by enemy soldiers who wanted to kill him, took refuge in the house of a *baqqal* (oil and soap merchant) of the Ghezaoua. Summoned by the pursuers to hand over the young *sharif*, the *baqqal*, to save a descendant of the Prophet, gave one of his own sons to the soldiers. Later, after the persecution of the Idrisids ended, the *baqqal* revealed to the *sharif*, whom he raised with his own sons, his real origin . . . The *Awlad al-Baqqal* [Children of the *baqqal*] quickly became the object of veneration of all the people of the country.36

This oral tradition reveals a merging of the Moroccan body politic with the human body, a human tree branching from Fez to other cities and tribes, transmitting the Prophet’s *baraka* from the Idrisids to local lineages across Morocco. The tree is an image of the Sufi chain of spiritual learning (*silsila*), but the people used the generative human body of

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**Figure 1.2.** City-shrine-tomb of Idris I, Mawlay Idris az-Zarhun.
Idris II to join the Sufi tree with the Prophet’s family tree, a popular synthesis of sharifian and Sufi authority. An actual tree grows from the grave of the Idrisid and axial saint ‘Abd as-Salam ibn Mashish (d. 1228), a literal and metaphorical expression of his corporeal and spiritual power (see Fig. 1.3). As saints’ bodies were vehicles for articulating Moroccan history, so suffering bodies were places for God’s spiritual guidance (walaya) to renew itself in individual human life.

**THE BODY AS ARCHIVE: IDRIS II AND THE ‘AZAMI CURE FOR BU ZELLUM**

In 1999, I sat behind a desk in a state medical clinic in the Lamtiyyin neighborhood of Fez and interviewed four elderly local residents. After a rousing critique of today’s health service, one man volunteered that his family cures “Bu Zellum,” a shooting pain from the base of the spine down the leg caused by “a blocked artery in the leg” or “a constriction of the intestines”:

We have an illness, because we are *shurafa*’ and our ancestor is Sidi Yahya, the son of this Mawlay Idris, he is our ancestor. And we have a
wahmy [spiritual, psychological] illness, they call it Bu Zellum. We cure it. It strikes here (showing base of the spine), in this joint here.

To treat Bu Zellum, the patient must visit the tomb of Sidi Yahya in the Sanhaja region and consult one of his descendants from the ‘Azami tribe. Each patient has “his plant” in the open countryside (khalaa’, empty place, undomesticated land), which “lights up the night like burning embers” to the ‘Azami, who mark it with ashes or wheat chaff. The next day, the ‘Azami return to the plant and cut its stem, thus “cutting the vein” for the patient:

At dawn, we get up and go out to that plant, we spend the night with it, we say we are going to cut [Bu Zellum] by means of it (ghadi naqtao biha) to so-and-so, for example. We put that plant in front of us, and we read al-Fatiha over it [the opening verse of the Qur’an] . . . They say, “In the name of God the Beneficent, the Merciful, praises to God the Lord of Worlds,” to the end of the verse. Then we say, “I cut it for so-and-so, son of [his mother’s name].” And they cut that stem with a knife, and he is cured, by the permission of God.

When I inquired why the ‘Azami are able to cure this pain, the answer was a history of the early Islamic state in Morocco:

E: Why does that thing work?
M: What do you mean?
E: What is the means [of operation]? How does it work?
M: That baraka . . . Our grandfather, he is Sidi Yahya, the son of Mawlay Idris. Because Mawlay Idris the second left twelve sons . . . It is a historical question. When the rule of the Idrisids disappeared, the Idrisids began to escape. Our ancestor came, escaped to this area, here to the region of Taounat. To one mountain. There he lived, there he had children. There now there is still a tribe, how big! Big! It is called the shurafa’ ‘Azamiyyin.

I began to regard the Moroccan body as an archive, a repository of a lost form of political authority. Saintly healing has often been marginalized by Peter Brown’s “two-tiered model of religious piety,” which posits that a supreme being is grasped only by an orthodox elite, whereas the masses need an anthropolatrous cult of the saints in order to understand and approach divinity. But as scholars of Sufism argue, theoretical Is-
lamic concepts become “activated” when experienced, built, and enacted in the sensory world. Reciting the Qur’an releases God’s word to energize the phenomenal world. The pilgrim realizes the full reality of the Ka’ba as the axis of the universe when he circumambulates it physically on his own two feet.40

In the ‘Azami cure, we see the patient live God’s mercy in his own body and connect his personal life to a larger history of the Moroccan umma. The ‘Azami link the sufferer to the Prophet Muhammad through healing; as Idris II reflected the Prophet, so Sidi Yahya reflects Idris II. The cure connects layers of reality otherwise fragmented in temporal life—politics, geography, history, the soul, and God—restoring the individual’s integration to a divine cosmological and moral order. Hasan al-Yusi (d. 1691) called the saints “a medicine and a cure,”41 for as the scholars write, the saint “connects the various layers of reality to each other,”42 he is the “object of [God’s] self-awareness,”43 and His means in the world.44

The cure also locates Moroccan identity in geographic space, for the patient must access baraka through the wali’s body or its topographical projection—a tomb, a tree, a spring. Sidi Yahya’s buried body transforms Taounat mountain into a living extension of his soul, a wellspring of ‘Azami identity. Saints’ bodies also planted and thus legitimized other collective identities. Each guild in Fez had its patron wali; for example, weavers visited the grave of Sidi ‘Ali al-M’salih, a weaver who miraculously produced great volumes of cloth in a single day.45 The jaysh military tribes that the sultans brought to Fez explained their presence in the city as a miracle of their tribal wali, Sidi Qasim. The Shararda jaysh troops discovered a miraculous “second tomb” for Sidi Qasim on the grounds of their Fez fort (qasba al-shararda), thereby planting their identity in Fez.46 A saint’s shrine was thus simultaneously an environment for tribes, guilds, and villages to collect memory (a milieu de mémoire),47 an opening to divine grace in the world, and a chronological point on the geographic Moroccan map of history.

Saints heal by actualizing the human body as the meeting place of divinity and materiality. In Sufi thought, the body is both a clay vessel for divine spirit (ruh) and an isthmus (barzakh) between the “oceans of God and the cosmos.”48 The Qur’an alludes to human bodies as sites of God’s revelation (ayat), “We will show them Our Signs in the horizons, and within themselves” (41:53) and of His reflection (tashbih); God has a “face” (2:115) and “two hands,” and created Adam in His own image.49 The human body is fragile yet contains the Omnipotent, according to the
Hadith qudsi: “My earth and My heaven do not encompass Me, but the heart of My servant does encompass Me.” Unlike the Christian rejection of the flesh, the Muslim body can hold God, according to the Hadith qudsi:

Nothing draws My servant near to Me like the performance of what I prescribe for him as religious duty . . . So that, when I love him, I become the ear by which he hears, his eye by which he sees, his hand by which he grasps, and the foot by which he walks. Thus, by Me he hears; by Me he sees; by Me he grasps and by Me he walks.

A human body existing simultaneously in several planes of reality is suggested by emanationist Islamic cosmology and colonial ethnography collected in 1926 in Marrakesh:

Stars are the celestial doubles of human beings, jinn familiars are their underground doubles, and the leaves of the Trees of Paradise are their doubles in Paradise. When human beings are sick, the genie double is sick with the same sickness, his star pales and the leaf of the Tree of Paradise yellows and curls. At the hour of death, the genie dies first, the star falls from the sky as a shooting star and the leaf detaches from the Tree of Paradise.

Extending the tree metaphor, we find a human body bridging the boundaries of multiple worlds, with roots in the earth, a trunk in human society, and leaves in paradise. The body itself thus links the operation of God’s law in individual life to His law in society, a relationship we examine in a social history of the city of Fez. Our source is the three-volume hagiographical compendium of the Moroccan scholar Muhammad ibn Ja’far al-Kattani, Kitab salwat al-anfas wa mubahathat al-akyas bi man uqbiara min al-‘ulama’ wa al-sulaha’ bi Fas (Entertainment of the souls and discourse of the sagacious concerning the scholars and righteous persons buried in Fez), a late nineteenth-century aggregate of written and oral memory about the Fez saints (awliya’). Read in light of contemporary healing narratives, colonial ethnography, and the Fez urban landscape, the Salwa blurs the human city and the human body. The Knowers animate and illuminate the city’s soil, model social virtue for the city’s residents, and open a channel between spirit and matter with the key of Sufi knowing.
THE BEATING HEART OF MAWLAY IDRIS:  
THE CITY OF FEZ AS A BODY OF KNOWLEDGE

Orientalists describe the Islamic city as a social reflection of Islamic law, but al-Kattani describes Fez as a living being brought into existence by prayer, the collective wish of the Muslims to be the city described in the Qur'an: “God will bring forth a community whom God loves and who love God, humble toward those who believe and powerful against those who reject, who struggle in the path of God and fear nobody’s reproach” (5:54). In al-Kattani’s Salwa, Fez is a zawiya (Sufi lodge) often visited by the Prophet Muhammad, a city His saints protect from tyranny: “[In Fez] the arrogant one will find people who break his force, and his power will vanish because of their power.” The saints mediate the city’s ecosystem, causing rain to fall and plants to spring from the earth. Without their knowledge, “afflictions would flow forth onto the people of the earth like an inundation” and the people would be “blind like beasts.” Science (‘ilm) flows from the city and its inhabitants; it “wells from the chests of its people” and “gushes forth from the city walls,” a flood opened by the builder of Fez, Idris II.

In al-Kattani’s text, Idris II is a Muhammadan figure who called upon God to make Fez “a house of knowledge (‘ilm) and law, the recitation of Your Book and may she uphold Your limits, and may her people be faithful adherents of the Sunna.” “Mawlay” (Lord) Idris brought Islam to the people as sciences (‘ulum), law (shari’a) and truth (haqiqa): “The root of the tree of religion was confirmed, and her branches stretched to the sky. Through his baraka, the people of Morocco knew that of which they had been ignorant . . . and God set things to rights through him.” Idris II’s buried body infuses the earth with his knowing. Healing narratives depict Idris II as a beating heart and the city waters as his circulatory system, carrying God’s blessing (baraka) to the city’s mosques on the waters of the River Fez. A Fez resident told me this baraka cured him of typhus: “And I put my legs into that pool of water [at the Bou Inania madrasa] and it works very quickly, like magic, and my Lord gives me life, and here I am standing up, my daughter.” A French physician recorded a cure at Bab Lufa, the tiny waterspout projecting from the wall of Mawlay Idris’s shrine (see Fig. 1.4):

An inscription in kufic characters engraved on the cup indicates that the fountain is a habous property [waqf, inalienable religious property] of Moulay Idriss. The patient takes the cup with the right hand, says “In the
name of God," (Bismillah), drinks three swallows of water and thanks God (Alhamdulilla). Then he recites: “May the baraka of this water of venerated Moulay Idriss expand in me, may God accord it to me, cure me and give me good health. May the will of God be done, of God the Healer” . . . The patient lights an olive oil lamp next to the fountain called “menara.” . . . If the patient can’t be transported, his family takes a bottle of water from Bab Loufa, which he drinks, then rubs the area of his body where the problem is.59

Fez topography recapitulates the history of the Moroccan Islamic state in microcosm, a history grounded by bodies. The construction of Fez fell to Idris II after his father’s death in 793. Idris II invited Muslims from Cordova in Andalusian Spain and refugees from Qarawan in Tunisia; thus, Fez is divided between the Qarawiyyin and the Andalusiyyin districts. According to the Maliki school of Islamic law, the dead should be buried in cemeteries outside the city walls, and most Fassis were buried at the Bab Ftuh and Bab Guisa portals. Exceptional people were buried in-

FIGURE 1.4. The fountain of Bab Lufa at Mawlay Idris mosque, today covered with a metal door. The tilework reads: “Drink here and wrath disappears / Become skilled by the name of God in visitation and prayer.” (Author photograph.)
side the city walls in the floors of homes or in the private sepulchral gardens (rawdat) created for shurafa’ and Sufi brotherhoods (Fig. 1.5). The streets of Fez thus literally contain its history.

The urban space resembles an organic being, growing and changing with the souls buried in its streets. A buried wali body could grow into a shrine, a mosque, a Sufi lodge (zawiya), or an entire city quarter. The body of Sidi Ahmad al-Shawi (Fig. 1.6) has become a city quarter, that of Sidi al-Khayyat (Fig. 1.7) a community mosque, and that of Sidi Qasim ibn Rahmun (d. 1733) a Sufi lodge. The street layout of Fez reflects an organic progress of urban expansion rather than an intentional state design (Fig. 1.8), because the people created the city with their prayers. Prayer creates physical reality, as 'Abd al-'Aziz ad-Dabbagh wrote in “Al-Ibriz”: “The hearts of the people of our lord Muhammad have a great importance with God, and even if they gathered together in a place where no one was buried and they thought a wali was there and asked God for something in that place, indeed God would hurry to respond to them.”

For example, through faith (niya), the people brought a man to Fez
Figure 1.6. The grave of Sidi Ahmad al-Shawi has become a neighborhood, here announced by a plaque over the archway. (Author photograph.)

Figure 1.7. Sidi al-Khayyat has become a mosque. His grave is fenced here. (Author photograph.)
**Figure 1.8.** The street layout of Fez does not reflect a state-directed design, as can be seen in this map from 1960. (Archives of the Fez Municipality.)

**Figure 1.9.** The khulwa (prayer place) of ‘Abd al Qadir al-Jilani in Fez. The actual al-Jilani is buried in Baghdad, but by constructing this grave, the people have grounded al-Jilani’s spiritual presence in Fez. Many Fez residents are now buried here beside “al-Jilani,” thus validating his constructed body with actual physical bodies. (Author photograph.)
who never set foot in Morocco, the Baghdad Sufi ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani, founder of the Qadiriyya Sufi order. The people repeatedly clashed with the Fez qadi (judge) Muhammad al-ʿArabi Burdala over “visiting” al-Jilani. Pilgrims attributed a pillar of the Qarawiyyin mosque to al-Jilani and left him offerings there, until the qadi had the pillar destroyed in order to prevent “heresy.” Al-Kattani also protested, “Shaykh Mawlana ʿAbd al-Qadir . . . never entered Morocco . . . So how is it possible that it is said he reached the city of Fez and worshipped God in some of its places? This is clearly lies, but the Fassis claim that some of them saw the Shaykh in this place, and some of them believe that . . . he came to it after his death supernaturally.”62 But the people’s prayers ultimately triumphed over scholars and judges in the urban space. The people washed themselves at a collecting drain in Tiyaliyyin street asking al-Jilani for cure, and today there is a grave and shrine for al-Jilani in this spot. With prayer, the people created an embodiment for al-Jilani in Fez; there is now a grave and prayer-place (khulwa) for his soul to inhabit (see fig. 1.9).

The people of Fez imagined the city space as a meeting-place of spirit and matter, a mirror of the human body. The Salwa describes Fez as a revolving spiral, spinning out from the grave of Idris II to the neighborhoods and peripheral gardens; he is the spiritual, geographic, and cosmological axis (qutb) around whom the city and its inhabitants revolve.63 The Salwa thus articulates a cartographic imaginary entirely different from the spatial map drawn by the French in 1913, for it is a world organized and animated by the spiritual energy of saints (see Fig. 1.10). Al-Kattani writes of the saints as “caliphs” of the Prophet, “swimmers in his light, which spreads out from his ocean,” “a refuge for those who fear, a place for sinners to find peace . . . doors to God on earth.”64 Their bodies provide openings in the skin of reality, making mundane city spaces into points of God’s grace.65 Burial reunites the saint’s flesh with its primordial origin, the clay into which God breathed of His spirit. Al-Kattani writes, “Permission is given to take earth from saints’ graves to ask for cure . . . because it is musk and under it is musk.”66 The city space of Fez joins the individual to the social, its perfumed earth is a thin membrane between the souls of the people and the collective Muslim umma.

Knowing illuminates Fez; her axial saints draw knowing from the founding Jazulite shaykhs of Morocco and her scholars master all domains of knowledge, acquiring learning even from the jinn.67 The Fez scholars are Sufi-jurists who reconcile the “visible sciences” (the “sciences of evidence”: fiqh, hadith, tafsir, grammar) with the intuitive (Sufi) knowing of God (maʿrifat). In the story of his own great-grandfather, al-Kattani illustrates the natural compatibility of esoteric and rational knowledge:
Once [The wali Sidi al-Walid ibn Hashim al-Kattani] came to our ancestor [Sidi al-Ta’ a ibn Idris al-Kattani (d. 1848)] and said, “Give me a piece of bread and two pieces of khali’ a [dried meat].” He refused, for he understood this request as a sign that two of his children would die: “By God and the shari’a, I won’t give you anything.” And he said to him, “You must! And I won’t go until I have taken them.” He gave the [khali’a], and his tears fell onto his beard, and [the wali] took them and gave him two hats. He said, “Take these two in place of what you took from me; they are for the wali and the scholar which will be in each generation of your descendants until the day of judgment . . .” A few days later, his son Isma’il died of the plague, his most beloved son, and one of his daughters died . . . what the wali spoke of came to pass.68

The scholar (‘alim) and Sufi saint (‘arif) are the two faces of a Knower who upholds God’s law in all dimensions of reality. This duality is illustrated by the career of the Qarawiyyin scholar Hasan al-Yusi (d. 1691). The jurist al-Yusi wrote two formal epistles chiding the ‘Alawi sultan

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**Figure 1.10.** French spatial mapping of the city of Fez in 1913. (American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee Libraries.)
Isma’il for his despotic policies, which he claimed violated the sultan’s contract of rule (bay’a): “[Your laws] eat the flesh of the subjects, drink their blood, suck their bones and brains, leaving them neither religion nor the world.” In an oral tradition collected by Clifford Geertz in the 1970s near Sefrou, al-Yusi is remembered as a saint who visits the sultan’s palace. In that narrative, when a worker falls ill while building for Sultan Isma’il, the sultan orders the man to be sealed alive inside the unfinished wall. The man’s fellows come in secret to complain to al-Yusi, who calmly breaks every dish in the palace. When the sultan arrives to demand an explanation, al-Yusi asks, “Well, which is better—the pottery of Allah or the pottery of clay?” Furious, the sultan commands al-Yusi to leave his city, and the saint exits the city gates to pitch his tent in the graveyard beside the city walls. Al-Yusi says, “Tell [the sultan] that I have left your city and I have entered God’s.” When the enraged sultan arrives on horseback to force his departure, al-Yusi responds, “I went out of your city and am in the City of God, the Great and Holy.” When the mounted Isma’il charges al-Yusi, the royal steed’s legs sink into the earth. Isma’il cries, “God has reformed me! God has reformed me! I am sorry! Give me pardon!”

This oral narrative of al-Yusi as a miracle-working saint is not mythology but an alternate expression of the Knower as the guardian of God’s law. In both narratives, al-Yusi uses his knowledge to correct the sultan, protect the community of Muslims, and restore the true balance of spiritual and temporal power. He reprimands Sultan Isma’il for elevating his own political law (wilaya) above God’s guidance (walaya), and al-Yusi insists that the Muslims are sovereign over themselves. In the formal epistle, al-Yusi warns Isma’il that he has broken his legal contract and so the Muslims now have the right to revolt against him. In the wali story, al-Yusi breaks the sultan’s law literally by smashing his plates, contrasting God’s eternal kingdom with fragile kingly power. He leaves “your city” of man-made walls for the graveyard, the city of the souls, the eternal “City of God.” The dead act as a jury, judging Isma’il guilty and dragging him down for God’s punishment. As both jurist and saint, al-Yusi defends a sovereign Muslim umma and confirms the right of the Muslims to revolt against unjust rule.

In al-Kattani’s Salwa, the awliya’ also show the people how to relate to one another in society, inhabit God’s City, and live the Prophet’s hadith, “God the Highest said, loving Me requires love of each other, loving Me requires cooperation, loving Me requires advising one other.” The awliya’ invite the people to righteousness and punish evildoers, even within their own bodies. If a criminal approached the wali Abu Ya’za,
he would find the body part used to perform evil acts streaked with black lines. Blindness, vomiting, and pain would strike the villain who came to harm the innocent: “Indeed, a group of assassins wanted to extract some of the people from the shrine of [Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Lamti (d. 1572)], who sought refuge with him. When the killer approached the shrine, a sickness seized him in his belly. His intestines felt as though they had been cut, and he gave up his plan, and this terrible pain remained until he died.” It is God who punishes, but the wali acts as a voice for His will. Such was the encounter between the treasonous son of Sultan Isma’il, Hafid, and the wali Masa’ al-Khayr al-Masmudi (d. 1705) in the streets of Fez Jadid:

[Hafid] ordered that [the wali] be seized and brought to him . . . He asked, “Are you really a murabit?” And al-Masmudi said, “If God has said so!” And the son of the sultan said, “And do you know God?” He said, “Yes.” He said, “By what do you know Him?” And he said, “I know that He is the one who ordered you to be killed, and He offers no blood money [dia] for you!” And after that day Mawlay Hafid was assassinated in Fez Jadid, because he wanted to revolt against his father and [the sultan] knew this.

In al-Kattani’s text, the awliya’ bring the Qur’an to life and fulfill the Qur’anic promise of God’s immanence: “Indeed We have created man, and We know whatever thoughts his inner self develops, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein” (50:16). The wali tells men news of the unseen; al-Masmudi shouted “Good afternoon” to passersby: “The people understood this as a sign that the people of goodness were going and goodness went with them, because in the afternoon the light is fading, and nothing remains after it but darkness.” If Ahmad ibn ‘Umar al-Sharif al-Bahlul (d. 1655) gave a man a straw bag, the recipient knew that he would soon die. Many of these awliya’ were majdhub (majnun, bahlul), the “unruly Friends of God” whose nakedness, bizarre speech, and antinomian behavior defy religious law and social convention. Sidi Ahasayn al-Aqra’ al-Fallusi (d. 1845) called the people to blindness and hunger and hit them in the eye or mouth with spittle. Sidi al-Waryaghli (d. 1748) “could not differentiate between heat and cold, giving and withholding, and let fall all obligation.” Scholars have attempted to explain the majnun as a madman suffering from organic illness, as one possessed, or as a radical ascetic, but the solution lies in a Sufi understanding of the human body.

Because the human being is a meeting-point of the divine and mate-
rial worlds, as the soul merges with God, the body becomes an open channel for His will. In a 1998 interview, a ninety-five-year-old Fez resident named My Khaddouj explained that her father (d. 1920s) was majnun, possessed by believing (Muslim) jinn:

For seven years he ate bread, and he ate jawi [an herb used as incense], and he drank tea with saffron . . . The people who are in him (an-nas li fihī), those things, that is what they wanted. The believers that were in him, that’s what they ate . . . From God. Those [jinn] that are from God. [He was one of] the people of rotation (an-nuba). And whoever the turn comes to, and he who has the key, he opens the door.79

Her family were blood descendants of the Prophet, but the “key” unlocking between the divine and the physical world was her father’s direct knowing (ma’rifa) of God. Her son remarked:

That is just like some part of the newspaper from God . . . And when he finds a woman, he says, Hey man! Man! Show your face, he says this to the woman. And when he finds a man, he tells him, hide your face . . . He had baraka in him . . . For example, you came, and he knew you. What was in your mind, he will tell you.80

He prayed in the mosques, and the people came with illness, sterility, and other wishes, “When they opened the door of Mawlay Idris [mosque], you find the slaves of God . . . so the people followed him, and they grabbed at him”:

A lot of sick people came to him. See, you came with your dress on like that, wearing clothes, and you come, you tell him, pray with me. She takes off her clothes, and she wraps herself in her haik [bijab, cloak], and she goes naked. They acquire houses, they acquire clothes, they acquire things . . . He even spit money out of his mouth.

One night he invited the neighbors to his home for his own funeral, did his ablutions, prepared his shroud, and sent for his daughter and her baby son:

At ten o’clock at night, he invited them, and the Lord of Faith took his faith [he died]. They let the word be spread . . . That night they [washed his body] in rosewater and orange flower water, they made a new gha-
sil [platform for washing the dead] for him . . . And the guardians and the 
police, they told people, not like that, you all want to tear him apart. And 
when they covered him again with a qiswa, and they were pushing with 
their shoulders, and then they pulled off his clothes until he was left with 
only the shroud. And the slaves of God were out of their minds. Just the 
youths were holding him up, from hand to hand.81

Death of either the ego or the biological body does not interrupt the wali’s 
guidance, as al-Jazuli wrote: “The knowers of God (al-‘arifun) are a folk 
who work righteousness . . . [thus] they are freed [from material con-
straints] . . . they die; when they die they come back [to God] and live [again]; when they live, they speak with the Living who never dies.”82

The saint is a healer because he can see the junction of body and soul, 
what Toshihiko Izutsu calls qadar, “an extremely delicate state in which 
an archetype is about to actualize itself in the form of a concretely existent 
thing. To know qadar, therefore, is to peep into the ineffable mystery of 
Being.”83 “Shaykh of the age” al-‘Arabi ibn Ahmad al-Darqawi (d. 1823) 
reached “a position of breaking and healing.” His son ‘Ali (d. 1857) cured 
a man by reading the Qur’an over water and having him drink it, “By God, 
the moment I drank that water the illness left me like a hair pulled gently 
from dough.”84 The awliya’ visit the sick in their sleep as the soul wanders 
from its bodily container. The companion of a wali wrote, “I was sick in 
my eyes until I could hardly see; then I saw Sidi Muhammad [ibn ‘Abd al-
Wahid al-Kattani (d. 1872)] in my dreams and he wiped my eyes; I awoke 
cured.”85 Only through bodily experience can the human soul realize its 
full potential in the world,86 thus the people experienced Berber saint Abu 
Ya’za by “tasting” his knowing (ma’rifat) with their senses: “Anyone who 
saw [Abu Ya’za] became blind from the light of his face, and among those 
who became blind through the sight of him are the shaykh Abu Madiyan. 
No one was able to see until he wiped his face with the cloth of Abu Ya’za, 
then he would return to sight. Then he would become blind, and the people 
of Morocco asked for rain by means of him, and they would draw wa-
ter.”87 Vision expresses the soul’s journey; the raw walaya of Abu Ya’za 
obliterates the adept’s sight until he reconciles inner (batini) and manifest 
(zahiri) reality in the Sufi way (tariqa), becoming a person of insight (ba-
sir). Blindness also expresses the soul’s arrival to God, for the Sufi master 
Abu Madiyan “would become blind, and the people of Morocco asked for 
rain by means of him, and they would draw water.”

Because pilgrims associated healing with saints, saintly persons were 
invented at the sites of purely medical cures. Patients with oto-rhino-
laryngological problems, gynecological disorders, muscular pain, and skin lesions immersed themselves in the hot, sulfated waters of a mineral spring near Fez, which the people named Mawlay Ya’qub ("Saint Jacob"). This "saint" never existed, but has a shrine, as does his "daughter," the eponymous Lalla Shafiyya, or "Lady Cure." In a similar process of invention, the maristan (hospital) for the mentally ill built by the Marinids, Bab al-Faraj, or "Door of Relief," was corrupted in the popular vernacular to "Sidi Frej," or "Saint Frej." Al-Kattani objects:

Near Suq al-‘Attarin and Suq al-Henna is the place where the people sick in spirit are—the insane. This place is designated by the name Sidi Frej although there is no person with that name buried there, nor any tomb. This house was built by a Sultan to bring together the sick Muslims who had no protection, and it was given the name “Bab al-Faraj” because the sick found relief for their ills.

Invented saints suggest a larger view of healing as the social, spiritual, and worldly restoration of God’s law, rather than the mechanical repair of a purely material human body.

**Dissection and the Divine: Autopsy as a Path to Sufi Illumination**

Yet how can spiritual healing can be reconciled with "Greco-Islamic medicine," the rationalist medicine inherited by the Islamic world from Hellenic Greece? Many famous Galenic physicians of the Islamic medieval period served the Moroccan court, among them Ibn Bajja (Avempace), who was vizier to Sultan Yahya ibn Tashfin and became governor of Fez (d. 1138); Abu Bakr Ibn Tufayl, personal physician and minister to Sultan Abu Ya’qub Yusuf in 1182; and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who succeeded his friend Ibn Tufayl at court. Abu Marwan ibn Zohr (Avenzoar) dedicated his *Al-Iqtisad* to his Almohad patron, Sultan Ibrahim ibn Yusuf. Even Abu 'Imran Musa ibn Maymun al-Qurtubi (Maimonides) lived briefly in Fez. Morocco produced its own impressive physicians, including ‘Afd al-Qasim ibn Muhammad al-Ghassani, the pharmacologist ‘Abd al-Qadir ibn Shaqrun al-Maknassi, ‘Abd as-Salam al-‘Alami, and the medical dynasties of the al-Fasi and the Adarraq. In this section, we will see that the larger cosmological vision developed in Islamic medicine greatly surpassed that of its Greek intellectual ancestors.

The physician and minister Abu Bakr Ibn Tufayl describes his own
journey to God through medicine with a philosophical novel, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*. The title character, Hayy, is born alone on a desert island and easily gains mastery over the animals with superior human reason. But Hayy is helpless to prevent the death of his beloved, a doe that suckled him as an infant. In an attempt to save her, Hayy quickly performs a dissection of her lifeless corpse. Lifting the pericardium from the heart, Hayy suddenly realizes the existence of the soul: “He soon dropped the body and thought no more of it, knowing that the mother who had nursed him . . . could only be that being which had departed.”93 From pathological anatomy, Hayy quickly deduces the emanationist structure of the universe, the existence of God, and a Sufi discipline through which he arrives at direct communion with the divine.94 Ibn Tufayl thus presents the human condition as a cycle of reason and *haqiqa*; the God-given qualities of reason and love drive man to scientific inquiry, and science leads man to God through His creation. Rational medicine was Ibn Tufayl’s own path to God, as he tells his Almohad patron, “I want only to bring you along the paths in which I have preceded you and let you swim in the sea I have just crossed.”95

But contemporary scholars have been unable to reconcile Islam and Galenic medicine, practically speaking. Michael Dols and Lawrence Conrad dismiss saintly healing as an import from foreign sciences or an artifact of pre-Islamic paganism.96 Anthropologists explain away saintly healing as social ritual rather than “real” medicine for “real” disease; blood is a means to separate social groups, cautery is a rite, pharmacology is a symbol.97 Or a medical pluralism model is used; vertical spiritual healing addresses “godly” diseases, while horizontal medicine addresses “worldly” ones.98 But Moroccan saintly healing was science, if by science we understand an organized intervention based on a paradigmatic understanding of the universe. Moroccans deployed an Islamic cosmological model that accommodated both Sufi and Galenic ways of knowing. Although these were distinct styles of knowledge, Sufism and Galenism intersected in the human body and its therapeutic cure.

The physician and philosopher Ibn Sina used Greek science to give the Qur’an a physics and a geography.99 He thus created what Thomas Kuhn terms a “scientific paradigm,” a framework through which scientists formulate the questions of research, describe the objects of the world and their relationships, and establish standards for evidence and proof.100 The Islamic paradigm presents the universe as an emanation of the Divine Intelligence, a set of hierarchically organized forms projected onto the world of matter. An illustration of how Islamic physicians located Galenic medi-
icine within Islamic cosmology may be seen in a pharmacological compendium popular in Morocco in 1900, the "Tadbkira auda al-albab wa al-jamia' lil'ajibi al-'ajab" of the Ottoman physician Dawud ibn 'Umar al-Antaki (d. 1599).101

Al-Antaki’s anatomy and physiology are purely Galenic. He compares man to the physical world; man is composed of the humors: blood (like air), phlegm (like water), yellow bile (like fire), and black bile (like earth). Change is produced by temperature and humidity: “All compounds require heat to refine, and humidity to facilitate the doing, and cold to thicken, and dryness to preserve the form.”102 He analogizes digestion to cooking and nutrition, and generation to Aristotelian “powers” that attract and repulse humors in the body.103 Reason, memory, and sense perception are motivated by mechanical powers, not a soul; “natural power” directs the beating of the heart, “animal power” moves the body, and “psychological power” draws from the sensory organs. Each remedy in his pharmaceutical dictionary has an extensive empirical description, for example: “Jar an-nahar [neighbor of the river]: It is called thus because it only exists in the water or near it. It is like chard except it is fuzzy with prickly roots and seven leaves . . . It is cold and dry in the second degree and blocks diarrhea and blood and cuts thirst when drunk. It solves tumors when applied topically and mends wounds when it is moist or dry. It harms the nerves but sugar corrects this.”104

Yet al-Antaki locates medicine within a larger, cosmological hierarchy of the sciences. The greatest sciences are the six of divinity: the necessary existence of God, the principles of existing things, proof of the Creator, classification of the concepts, states of the soul after separation from the body, and “the unseen (al-samayat), the field of prophecy and the day of judgment.”105 The next most excellent science is mathematics, because it treats pure forms that are free of matter. The other sciences follow in degree of engagement with the material: music, engineering, chemistry, biology, and medicine. The most degraded are the “sciences connected to the self of a person”: kingship, psychology, and city planning. Al-Antaki calls the person who organizes the perceptible (zahiri) world using reason “the sultan,”106 but the direct knower of God who thereby transforms the laws of nature is “the mufad”: “As for the invisible (batantiyya) science, evidence of its presence is indicated by great proofs [miracles] and it is the power of prophecy, and that person is the mufad, and he has the power of abstract matters which distinguishes him from ordinary men.”107

Sufis and physicians thus agreed that direct knowing of God opens the secret of the physical universe.108 The Qur’an speaks of the world reveal-
Galenic and Sufi paths of inquiry were thus different, but physicians validated Sufi healing as parallel practice. Al-Antaki presents illness as an organic disorder caused by mechanical blockage and imbalances of heat and humidity: “[Yarqan, jaundice]: Its cause is the weakness of the attraction of the spleen, so it pushes what belongs to it to the belly and yellows the skin by that humor [yellow bile]. And black jaundice is if [black bile] is pushed to the mouth of the stomach. [It causes] hunger and profuse excrement. [The remedy], clean the spleen from whatever was in it before and open the blockage by bloodletting.” Yet al-Antaki also has a section of his book devoted to Qur’anic amulet writing (‘ilm al-harf) and provides charts showing the “body, spirit, self, heart, and intelligence” of each Arabic letter, days of the week ruled by jinn, and the correspondences between planets, numbers, body parts, elements, and letters. Al-Antaki includes these as “sciences related to medicine” because he conceived of a cosmological human body much greater than the material entity of Galenic medicine.

“Jinn disease,” the notion that jinn cause illness, lies at the intersection of Galenic and Sufi conceptions of the body. The jinn are a race “created from the fire of a scorching wind” (15:27) who live parallel to man on earth and strike men out of jealousy or “when humans accidentally harm or hurt them by urinating on them, by pouring hot water on them, or by killing some of them.” Jinn and Galen meet in the blood; Sufis describe a “lower soul” (nafs), and Galenic physicians an “animal soul” that regulates respiration, heartbeat, growth, nutrition, and appetite. The Hanbali jurist Ibn Taymiyya synthesized Galenic and Sufi physiology: “The jinn most certainly do have an effect on humans according to the Prophet’s clear statement in the following authentic narration, ‘Verily Satan flows in the blood stream of Adam’s descendants.’ For, in the blood is the ether known to doctors as the ‘animal soul’ which is emitted by the heart and which moves throughout the body giving it life.”

The vast field of applied Moroccan medical practice defies simplification to one theoretical system; healing involved interventions at different levels of the body. The wali opened the transcendent world directly, as al-Kattani wrote, “Through sight of [the awliya’], God enlivens the dead hearts like a downpour of rain enlivens the dead earth, hardened chests are opened and difficult matters become simple.” But the wali could lo-
calize God’s baraka in the patient’s body; thus, a second intervention captured divine form in a physical substance. Water was thought to retain the forms of words; thus, the saliva of a talib, sharif, or Sufi after prayer was applied to the body as medicine or Qur’anic verses were dissolved in water and drunk. A third level targeted the jinn through exorcism or ‘ilm al-harf (the science of the letter, amulet-writing). Finally, Galenic therapies addressed the purely physical and humoral aspects of imbalance and climate.

The Moroccan body was thus “overdetermined,” a site of intersecting scientific frames within an Islamic cosmology. Moroccans lived a Jazulite idea of sovereignty not simply by using Jazulite texts as cures, though birthing mothers were washed with water over which al-Jazuli’s Dala’il al-khayrat had been recited in order to relieve the pain of childbirth, and children were dedicated to a wali by shaving their heads, an imitation of the induction ceremony for adepts to the Jazulite order. Rather, Moroccans lived Jazulite sovereignty in saintly healing itself. The moment of cure affirmed the saint as an opening between divine and material worlds and a manifestation of God’s love for His umma. Although Sufism was not necessarily medicine, it affirmed man as a soul and body, locating him in cosmological, historical, social, and physical space.

THE HERESY TRIAL OF AL-KATTANI: KILLING SAINTS WITH A POSITIVE WAY OF KNOWING

In 1909, the Moroccan sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz had the Sufi leader Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Kabir al-Kattani publicly humiliated, whipped to death, and his corpse dumped into an unmarked grave. Historically, the sultans displayed their power on the bodies of criminals and staked their severed heads to the city gates, but al-Kattani’s death was not punishment for an actual crime. Al-Kattani’s 1896 heresy trial and 1909 state execution symbolized the consolidation of a state ontological war against Sufi epistemology and its diffuse model of political sovereignty. European intrusions over the nineteenth century had created a dangerous rift between the weak sultanate (makhzan) and outspoken Islamic scholars, who demanded that the sultan lead a jihad against foreign invaders. The sultan resolved this crisis by adopting salafiyya, the rationalist Islamic reform movement elaborated in the Orient by the intellectuals Muhammad ‘Abduh (1849–1905) and Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839–1897). Salafiyya provided a means for Islamic scholars and the state to join forces, use European science, and re-imagine sovereignty from a positive way of knowing.

Reform was an urgent matter in Morocco after the European powers
defeated the Moroccan armies in 1844 and 1860, forcing the sultans to accept ruinous trade concessions, the jurisdiction of European courts over Muslim and Jewish commercial agents of European powers (“protégés”), punitive war reparations, and a set of expensive military and economic reforms. The ‘ulama’ criticized the sultan for allowing both European law to govern Moroccan society and European armies to occupy Moroccan cities, for incurring millions of francs in foreign debt, and for failing to address famine, drought, and epidemics. After 1860, many of the ‘ulama’ began to focus on the survival of Morocco without the sultanate, preparing for its inevitable demise.123

In British-occupied Egypt in 1899, the jurist Muhammad ‘Abduh confronted a similar colonizing landscape; a sphere, ever expanding, of European civil law in Egyptian society, and another sphere, ever shrinking, of Islamic shari‘a in Muslim life.124 ‘Abduh responded by reconciling the shari‘a with secular law. The true Islam of the salaf (first Islamic community) encompassed the products of reason, he argued, but the Islamic world had stagnated due to lazy scholarship, foreign contaminations, tyrannical political authorities, and the “doctrinal heresies” of Shi‘ism and Sufism. Reform (islah) consisted of replacing the scholar of imitation with a new cleric of modern science, whose progressive ijtihad (Islamic legal interpretations) would realize Islam as a Comtean social order.125 The intellectual Jamal al-Din al-Afghani responded to new Western sciences by redefining them as Islamic. Al-Afghani argued that Islam was a rational religion of proofs—“Everywhere [the Qur’an] addresses itself to reason”126—and science, “the only true ruler of the world.”127 ‘Abduh and al-Afghani inspired popular parliamentary revolutions across the Middle East and North Africa in the early twentieth century.

Oriental salafiyya found enthusiastic reception among Moroccan ministers, nizam soldiers, and ‘ulama’. The Moroccan scholar and minister Abu Shu‘ayb al-Dukkali studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo and became a pioneer of salafiyya in Morocco. Ibrahim al-Tadili (d. 1894) founded a salafi Islamic university in Rabat upon his return from Egypt. The salafi journals Al Manar, Al Abram, and Al Mu‘ayyad circulated in Moroccan intellectual circles. Muhammad al-Hajwi advocated using ‘Abduh’s modern reform of Islamic law to defend Moroccan society: “We lack a true system of laws; if the foreigner occupies our country, nothing will limit his action; we will be at the mercy of his autocratic whims.”128

On the fringes of Morocco in Algeria and the Sahara, the Sanusiyya, Qadiriyya, and Fadiliyya Sufi orders waged jihad against French colonial invaders, but they mobilized a traditional idea of Islamic renewal (tajdid),
Historically, the Moroccan renewers of religion were millenarian *mahdis* like the Almohads and Almoravids, or scholars who returned to the Qur’an and Sunna for a fresh Islamic legal interpretation (*ijtihad*). Moroccan Sufi-jurists like Ahmad ibn Idris (1749–1837) rejected both Wahhabi and *salafi* paths to Islamic renewal; he criticized especially *salafi* attacks on sainthood and the *salafi* reliance on reason alone for *ijtihad*. The hubristic use of reason could pervert God’s law, warned the Moroccan scholar Hasan al-Yusi, for “God organizes the causes, and the consequences are of His wisdom”; God orders natural phenomena as “custom” (*’adat*), which He may break in miracle as He wills. The North African Sufi jihadist Muhammad b. ‘Ali al-Sanusi agreed that absolute natural laws were a “heresy of causes.”

Only the Fez Sufi Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Kabir al-Kattani (d. 1909) synthesized Sufi and *salafi* ideas for a “Sufi modern”: “To do so he synthesized the Islamic mystical, rationalist and legal doctrines and tried to reconcile the universal Islamic concept of *tajdid* (renewal of religion) with local Moroccan concepts of political and religious power and authority.” Like the *salafis*, al-Kattani envisioned a modern clergy who would educate the people, interpret law, and draft a constitution, but he saw the reforming cleric as a Sufi *shaykh*, not a jurist. He insisted that esoteric knowledge retain an equal footing with reason for interpretation of the law: “*Ijtihad* is factual in the two realms and neither realm is more valuable than the other, for *haqiqa* without *shari’a* is as useless as is *shari’a* without *haqiqa*.” Man experienced discovery both in the empirical world, “written by the hand of the divine being on a stone or a leaf,” and directly from God, “[he] hears the Voice [say it].” Al-Kattani thus defended the esoteric knowing of Sufi sainthood; indeed, he extended the Sufi saint into the realm of the sultan’s legal administration.

At first both *salafi* and Sufi modern reforms were welcome at court, but after a series of self-styled thaumaturgical saints led rural rebellion against the sultan, as the mystic and opportunist Jilali ibn Idris al-Zarhuni “Bu Himara” did in 1902–1909, the sultanate attacked sainthood and asserted human state power (*wilaya*) over saintly knowing (*walaya*). The assault focused on the scholarly voice of saintly *walaya*, al-Kattani.

The attack on al-Kattani began with the regent Ahmad b. Musa (ruled 1894–1900), who accused him of “enticing foolish minds” and “seducing the common people” with extravagant claims for the spiritual benefits of his Sufi order’s special prayer (*wird*). The regent prodded the *qadi* of Fez to action: “Whoever appears in an ecstatic state must, by law, submit his words and deeds to measure on the scale of *shari’a*”; the Fez schol-
ars reluctantly agreed that “if interpreted in their external meaning [ʿala zahirihā],” al-Kattani’s claims were indeed blasphemous. In October of 1896, the makhzan closed the Kattaniyya zawiyah for “doctrinal corruption.” But after a critical military ally of the sultan’s government openly supported al-Kattani, the heresy charges were dropped and al-Kattani was invited to join the Qarawiyyin mosque-university hadith council.

Al-Kattani’s ability to reconcile Moroccan Sufism with secular science gained wide appeal, and rural populations, ‘ulama’, and bureaucrats of the sultan’s new administrations joined the Kattaniyya brotherhood. Al-Kattani’s Sufi modernism was so popular that the sultan’s brother ʿAbd al-Hafiz (ruled 1908–1912) solicited al-Kattani’s support for his bid for the throne. In 1907, the Fez ‘ulama’ declared the reigning sultan, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (r. 1900–1907), to be in violation of his bay’a, and the people of Fez broke their oath of allegiance to him from December 28, 1907, to January 4, 1908. The Fez scholars proclaimed ʿAbd al-Hafiz sultan on January 4, 1908, and presented him with a bay’a of fourteen conditions, including recognition of popular sovereignty, expulsion of foreign agents, and the creation of a parliament, which he refused. After ʿAbd al-Hafiz received a traditional bay’a, he set about eliminating all challengers to his power, including his former ally Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Kabir al-Kattani.

Salafiyya served ʿAbd al-Hafiz by discrediting Sufi knowing; the sultan no longer had to bow to saintly critique, only to reason and the power of men. Salafiyya recast saints as charlatans who faked thaumaturgy and miracles to dupe an ignorant public. Yet the sultan also refused the salafi idea of popular sovereignty; the Tangier-based salafi newspaper Lisan al-Maghrib proposed a draft constitution for Morocco in 1908 adapted from the Ottoman Constitution of 1876, “His Majesty cannot long refuse his people the benefits of a constitution and a parliament.” ʿAbd al-Hafiz was vulnerable to critique, for he continued his brother’s hated policies. But he created his legitimacy by denouncing al-Kattani as a heretic, at once discrediting saints, embracing positive science, and frightening the editors of Lisan al-Maghrib into leaving Morocco for Syria in 1909.

ʿAbd al-Hafiz began by criticizing al-Kattani for the ecstatic singing, dancing, and music of his Sufi brotherhood’s prayer sessions, a position popular with salafi jurists like Abu Shu’ayb al-Dukkali, the head of the Qarawiyyin hadith council. Identifying Kattaniyya prayer itself as seditious, the sultan closed the Kattaniyya lodges, imprisoned Kattaniyya disciples, and accused al-Kattani of inciting civil unrest, “creating fitna among the Muslims and involving himself in activities that do not receive the blessing of God.”
‘Abd al-Hafiz used the human body to assert himself as a sovereign king, claiming the body as the domain of his earthly law, not God’s. No miracle rescued the saintly al-Kattani from a savage beating death, and the whip demonstrated the powerlessness of saintly knowing before the sultan’s brute power. The sultan paraded his victory by amputating al-Kattani’s disciples’ hands and having the bloody stumps rubbed with salt, their mutilated survival a public testimony to the sultan’s supremacy. The sultan carved his personal law on al-Kattani by destroying his body, exacting personal revenge from a subject who “above all had struck the sovereign in the very body of his power.”

‘Abd al-Hafiz presented a new concept of the Moroccan sultan as the political sovereign and biological embodiment of the Prophet’s authority. But the people rejected him as a usurper and rose in a series of armed revolts behind five pretenders to the throne in the years 1909–1911. Surrounded by hostile tribal armies in Fez in 1911, ‘Abd al-Hafiz called upon France to liberate him and accord him recognition as the ruler of Morocco. The French sent troops to Fez, an operation that ended in the 1912 treaty establishing a French protectorate in Morocco. One person, ‘Abd al-Hafiz, signed the treaty with France on behalf of Morocco. To make possible the delegation of the Moroccan administration, state, economy, territory, and subjects to a foreign power, Article 3 of the treaty located Moroccan sovereignty in the person and throne of the sultan: “[France] prend l’engagement de prêter un constant appui à Sa Majesté chérifi enne contre tout danger qui menaçait sa personne ou son trône ou qui compromettrait la tranquillité de ses États.” (France pledges to lend constant support to His Chérifi en Majesty against all dangers that may threaten his person or his throne or would compromise the stability of his state.) France thus validated what Moroccans would not: the sultan as the embodiment of Moroccan political sovereignty itself.

In Morocco, saints were a means to imagine the body politic, remember the past, and map a narrative of memory onto the landscape. As the Fez qadi ‘Iyad wrote, “I love the stories of the scholars and their good works more than fiqh because they are the literature of the people.” Saints were so fundamental to the Moroccan concept of history that Jews also recounted the past through “Jewish saints,” and Muslims and Jews often visited the same saintly graves. As the historian Neil Kodesh has argued, such alternate ways of knowing suggest a political body transcending the king’s court, a “construct of knowledge” that exists “beyond the royal gaze.”

In Morocco, the people constructed themselves as a sovereign Islamic
umma, a geopolitical moral body, through saints and the human body. As the meeting-place of divinity and materiality, the cosmological human body was a place for the Moroccan saint to connect (murabit, “he who connects”) “the gatherer of that which is divided, [who] brings the Prophet and the Sufi adept together.” Healing was the saint’s restoration of God’s law to men and to society, parallel realms simultaneously inhabited by the human being. What remains of this alternate Islamic Moroccan umma are contemporary illness narratives and fragments of healing practices at the tombs of the saints, historical artifacts of a Sufi way of politics.

The disappearance of saints as political leaders is a story of Islamic modernist thought (salafiyya), first deployed by Sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz and later adopted by the protectorate agreement and the Moroccan nationalist movement. Esoteric knowing had always challenged the sultan’s earthly power, but concessions to the Europeans over the nineteenth century further weakened royal legitimacy. Islamic scholars divested Sultan ‘Abd al-‘Aziz of his throne, but his brother Sultan ‘Abd al-Hafiz cleverly adopted rationalist salafi ideas to strengthen his rule. The sultan found salafi thought more conducive than Sufi modernism to the consolidation of his absolutist state power.

As guardians of the Islamic umma, Muslim scholars chose a variety of responses to the French conquest in 1912. Salafi scholars like Abu Shu’ayb al-Dukkali, Muhammad al-Hajwi, and Muhammad ibn ‘Arabi al-‘Alawi entered the French protectorate’s “Chérifien” government as state functionaries, because they believed Islamic renewal lay with new sciences and European-style state reforms. Traditional Sufi scholars rejected the protectorate agreement and either continued jihad, as did the sons of Ma’ al-‘Aynayn, Ahmad al-Hiba and Murabbih Rabbuh, or else they abandoned the sultanate altogether and focused on preserving Islam among the believers. The author of the Salwa, Muhammad ibn Ja’far al-Kattani, left Morocco for Mecca in 1905 and called upon individual Muslims in his Nasihat Abl al-Islam (Advice to the People of Islam, 1908) to maintain Islam in their private lives.

With the collapse of the City of God as a body politic, there remained only the City of God of the human body, as a last refuge for knowing Him, receiving healing from Him, and obtaining the worldly guidance of His saintly friends.
NOTES TO PAGES 11–19

48. Mauchamp, La Sorcellerie au Maroc, 75.
52. Rabinow, French Modern: Norms and Forms of the Social Environment.
55. Watenpaugh, Being Modern in the Middle East: Revolution, Nationalism, Colonialism, and the Arab Middle Class.
56. Latour, We Have Never Been Modern, 20.
57. Mitchell, introduction and “The Stage of Modernity” in Questions of Modernity.
58. Latour, We Have Never Been Modern, 30.
59. Ibid., 31.
60. Ibid., 99.
64. Mitchell, introduction and “The Stage of Modernity” in Questions of Modernity.

CHAPTER 1

1. The author mentions that they adopted the “blameworthy” (malamatiyya) style affected by some Sufi saints (al-Ifrani, Nuzhat al-hadi bi akhbar muluk al-qarn al-hadi).
2. Ibid., 238.
5. Cornell, Realm of the Saint: Power and Authority in Moroccan Sufism, xxxiv.
6. Feierman, “Colonizers, Scholars, and Invisible Histories.”
7. Cornell, Realm of the Saint.
10. The sultan was invested by a public oath of allegiance; in the bay’a of 1822, the people of Rabat “swear before God and His angels to hear and execute the orders of the imam within the licit and possible . . . We obey him as God commanded us, and he respects our rights and those of all his subjects as God has prescribed” (Larouli, Les Origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain, 76–77). The sultan as servant of the umma is thus quite different from the autocratic philosopher-king of al-Farabi’s “City of Virtue” (al-madina al-fadila).

13. Consider Titus Burckhardt’s classical formulation, “Authentic Sufism can never become a ‘movement’ for the very good reason that it appeals to what is most ‘static’ in man, to wit, contemplative intellect” (Burckhardt, An Introduction to Sufism, 20). Sufi politics have been viewed either as a utilitarian use of religion by states (Ottoman and Safavid empires) or a politicization of Sufi brotherhoods as social actors. An emerging literature moves beyond these dichotomies to consider a Sufi way of politics. For example, Ross, Sufi City: Urban Design and Archetypes in Tuba; Heck, Sufism and Politics.


15. Patricia Crone argues that the Sufi path seeks freedom from the body, “The answer was that as long as they had bodies, humans had to accept their enslavement to the law . . . since it was from the union of body and soul that evil inclinations stemmed . . . it was by obeying [God’s law] that humans could hope to acquire immortality as disembodied souls” (Crone, God’s Rule: Government and Islam, 327).


17. The historians Abdallah Laroui and Amira Bennison have suggested that the Morocco of 1912 was already a nation (Laroui, Les Origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain; Bennison, Jihad and Its Interpretations in Pre-Colonial Morocco: State-Society Relations during the French Conquest of Algeria). Edmund Burke has also traced nationalism to the pre-protectorate period (Prelude to Protectorate in Morocco: Precolonial Protest and Resistance, 209).

18. On the Idrisids, see also Hart, “Moroccan Dynastic Shurfa’-hood in Two Historical Contexts: Idrisid Cult and ‘Alawid Power.”


20. Ibid., 206.

21. “Know, may God preserve you, that the Perfect Human Being is the axis (qutb) around which revolve the manifestations of being (aflak al-wujud) from the beginning to the end” (al-Jili, quoted in ibid., 210).

22. Ibid., 215.

23. Al-Andalusi, a Jazulite shaykh, quoted in ibid., 218.

24. Cornell notes the practical aspect of local pilgrimage, for the Portuguese occupied a number of Moroccan port cities and thus blocked access to Mecca by sea (Realm of the Saint, 180).


27. Ibid., 221–222, 183. Jazulite ideas are at the root of Moroccan tribal claims to baraka (Hart, “Making Sense of Moroccan Tribal Sociology and History,” 14; Pennell, “Lineage, Genealogy and Practical Politics: Thoughts on David Hart’s Last Work.”

28. The Moroccan jurist al-Tawadi called the awliya’ “places of refuge for the slaves of God . . . a door among the doors of His mercy”; al-Kattani calls them “a refuge for those who fear and a place for the sinners and rebels to find peace, and the afflicted to find sanctuary” (Kitab salwat al-anfas wa muhadathat al-akyas bi man uqbira min al-ulama’ wa al-sulaha bi Fas, 37, 40; my translation).


32. Al-Jazna’i (Djaznâi), Zabrat El-As (La Fleur du myrte), Traitant de la fondation de la ville de Fès; Texte arabe et traduction par Alfred Bel, 34–35.

33. The Berber dynasties immediately following the Idrisids let the original grave of Idris II fall into ruin (Salmon, “Le Culte de Moulay Idris et la Mosquée des Chorfa à Fès”).

34. The Marinid sultan was nevertheless killed in 1465, but Scott Kugle notes that Idris II was so essential to political legitimacy that the Sa’adiyan dynasty expanded his shrine “to rebind the body politic together” (Kugle, Sufis and Saints’ Bodies, 60–77).

35. Elite patronage of shrines often transformed social memory; see Wolper, Cities and Saints: Sufism and the Transformation of Urban Space in Medieval Anatolia, and Beck, “Sultan Isma’il and the Veneration of Idris I at Mawlay Idris in the Djabal Zarbun.”

36. Michaux-Bellaire, Quelques tribus des montagnes de la region du Habt, 64.


40. Ross, Sufi City; see also Nasr, Islamic Art and Spirituality.

41. Quoted in al-Kattani, Salwat al-anfas, 39. Al-Harithi called visitation “a cure and a light for the hearts”; his student Muhammad ibn Atiya said, “God purifies the heart of the visitor, like a white cloth washed of dirt.” Others agreed that it is a “cure for the hearts and a rest for the body” (35).

42. Ross, Sufi City, 18–20.

43. Al-Jazuli, quoted in Cornell, Realm of the Saint, 217.

44. “[The pilgrim] reaches God the Highest by means of [the wali]” (quoted in al-Kattani, Salwat al-anfas, 37).

45. Martin, “Description de la ville de Fès, Quartier de Keddan.”

46. Ibid. In Tangier, ten years after a former slave population came to work in the city (1885), a new wali appeared at the grand Sokko Square, “Sidi Bou ‘Abid at-Tanji” (the Father of Slaves). The new wali was said to be a descendant of the Sus wali Sidi Ahmad ibn Musa, and the community erected a mosque on the grave. A French observer noted that it had been one of several unmarked graves (Salmon, “Notes sur les superstitions populaires dans la region de Tanger”).

47. Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire.”

48. For an excellent overview of scholarship on the body in Islamic studies and a Sufi theory of corporeality, see Kugle, Sufis and Saints’ Bodies, 1–41.

49. Also Qur’an 51:20–21: “There are certainly Signs in the Earth for people of certainty, and in yourselves as well. Do you not then see?” For God’s hands, see Murata, “God’s Two Hands,” in The Tao of Islam: A Sourcebook on Gender Relationships in Islamic Thought, 81–114. For God’s creation of Adam, see Murata, The Tao of Islam, 9–11, and Kugle, Sufis and Saints’ Bodies, 29.

50. From the Sahih of al-Bukhari, quoted in Homerin, “Ibn Taimiya’s Al-Sufiya wa-al-Fuqara.”

51. Legey, Essai de folklore marocain: Lettre-Préface du Maréchal Lyautey, 21 (my translation). Another popular version of an emanationist universe: “Moroccans think the world is composed of seven oceans, seven earths, and seven skies. The first
sky is the one we see, composed of solidified water, the second is iron, the third copper, fourth silver, fifth gold, sixth rubies, seventh light, and all of them are inhabited” (1).

52. For an Orientalist view, see, for example, Marçais, *Manuel d’art musulman: L’architecture Tunisie, Algérie, Maroc, Espagne, Sicile*; and Marçais, *Tunis et Kairouan*.

53. “One of the best men said that he saw the Chosen One [Prophet Muhammad] standing in al-Qila mountain outside Bab Al-Guisa and he was reading the Sura al-Ilaq Quraysh and arrived at the end of it asking for protection from all that is feared by means of the *baraka* of that imam [Mawlay Idris]” (al-Kattani, *Salwat al-anfas*, 70–74). The quotation is on 75.

54. Ibid., 38, 27.

55. Ibid., 68.

56. Quotation from the *da’wa* of Idris II, which resembles that of Muhammad. The *Salwat al-anfas* describes a writing between Idris’s shoulder blades with the pen of the Almighty, “This one is from the lineage of the Prophet of God Muhammad, the messenger of God.” Idris also resembles the Prophet physically: “White color which has drunk of red, the blackest eyes, curly hair, soundness of body, a beautiful face, a long, aquiline nose, beautiful eyes, wide shoulders, small palms and feet, a small opening between his teeth, eyes of deep black” (ibid., 63–64).

57. Ibid., 65–66.


60. He was buried in a mill, and his companions bought a neighboring house, added to it, and made it a *zawiya* with a library (al-Kattani, *Salwat al-anfas*, 108).

61. Quoted in al-Kattani, *Salwat al-anfas*, 44. Al-Kattani says much the same himself: “If the visitor acts in a place from true *niya* [faith/innocence], then he benefits from that place without question” (43).


63. Kugle describes Idris II’s tomb as “a royal court of a saint, open to the public, through which the people reconfirm their allegiance to God, to the Prophet whose message they strive to follow, to the king who rules them, and to each other as citizens of the urban space of Fez” (*Sufis and Saints’ Bodies*, 59).


65. In the Najjarin neighborhood, a well-known shop called Hanut an-Nabi was said by residents to levitate in the air, for a *wali* inside lifted the people by the hand into the Prophet’s presence (ibid., 164).

66. Ibid., 30, 32. Many healing practices thus used earth from the graves of the saints, either for eating or for making into a paste.

67. Al-Kattani: “Mawlay Ahmad bin Muhammad al-Sqalli . . . visited . . . Mawlay al-Tayyib ibn Muhammad al-Wazzani in Wazzan and took *baraka* from him. He gave him one silver coin and told him that some of his friends [adepts of the Tayibiyya order] . . . would have followers in the city of Fez, because in the cities are the people of paper and God brought this to pass” (*Salwat al-anfas*, 164). The scholar ’Umar al-Sharqawi (d. 1260) was said to have received a certificate (*ijaza*) from the *qadi* of the *jinn* Shamharush (285).

68. Ibid., 142. It is worth noting that most of the scholars of al-Kattani’s text who achieve *walaya* do so through meeting a Sufi *shaykh*, rather than scientific study.

70. Geertz collected this tradition in the area of al-Yusi’s tomb (*Islam Observed*, 31–35).

71. The scholars (‘ulama’) were often simultaneously Sufis and *shurafa* (Burke, “The Political Role of the Moroccan Ulema, 1860–1912”).


74. Ibid., 281.

75. Ibid., 157.

76. Ibid., 158.

77. His bizarre behavior so outraged the people that the *qadi* had him hung in chains in the insane asylum (*maristan*). The next morning the *qadi* saw the *majdhub* pass by, stamping the ground with his feet, as was his custom. The people rushed into his cell and found the *majdhub*’s manacles closed and empty. Sidi al-Waryaghli was installed in a room in al-Sagha neighborhood, where the people visited him to be healed from sickness (ibid., 199–200).


81. Ibid.


84. Al-Kattani, *Salwat al-anfas*, 151–152. A “hair pulled from dough” describes how the angels extract the soul from the body after death (Halevi, *Muhammad’s Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society*).


89. The eponymous “Lalla Shafiya” (Secret, “Rites de magie thermale: La journée d’un berbère à Moulay Yacoub”).


92. Maimonides was born in Cordova, Spain in 1135 and lived in Fez in 1160 (Kraemer, “Maimonides and the Spanish Aristotelian School”).
94. Ibid., 149.
95. Ibid., 103.
96. Lawrence Conrad has argued that remedies against jinn and the evil eye are relics of pre-Islamic animism (Conrad, “Arab-Islamic Medicine”). Dols argues that Muslims learned zar healing from African animists or from Christians (Majnun, 174–260, 274–310).
97. See Pandolfo, “Detours of Life: Space and Bodies in a Moroccan Village”; Ensel, Saints and Servants in Southern Morocco; Combs-Schilling, Sacred Performances.
98. Thus Vincent Crapanzano and Bernard Greenwood separate organic from spiritual disease (Greenwood, “Cold or Spirits? Ambiguity and Syncretism in Moroccan Therapeutics”).
99. Byron and Mary-Jo DelVecchio Good describe Ibn Sina’s cosmology: “The Ptolemaic conception of concentric spheres, the Aristotelian understanding of the elements fire, water, earth and air, and the Plotinian view of the emanations of pure intelligences and souls” (Good and Good, “The Comparative Study of Greco-Islamic Medicine: The Integration of Medical Knowledge into Local Symbolic Contexts,” 259).
100. Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.
101. Although al-Antaki was not himself a Moroccan, there are more manuscript copies of his Tadhkira in the National Library of Rabat than of any other medical text, and the Moroccan physician Abu Salam bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-‘Alami (d. 1905) wrote a popularization of Antaki in the Fez dialect, Diya an-nibras fi hal musafadat al-antaki bi-lugha Fas (Light of the Lamp in the Vocabulary of Antaki in the Language of Fez). Nineteenth-century North African medical authors wrote glosses of the Tadhkira, including the Algerian Abu Razzak al-Jaza’iri, and French physicians in Morocco mention the Tadhkira as the most-studied medical text; see Renaud and Colin, Documents marocains pour servir à l’histoire du “Mal franc,” textes arabes, publiés et traduits avec une introduction.
102. Al-Antaki, Tadhkira wa la-alhab wa la-jamia la’ajbi la’ajab, Chapter One, 2.
103. “Indeed it is established that phlegm, as analogized to food, is not well-cooked, and blood is cooked to a perfect balance, and yellow bile is as exceeding the balance but not burned, and black bile is burned” (al-Antaki, Tadhkira, 9).
104. Ibid., 103.
105. Marginalia from ibid., 4–5.
106. “If he organizes only the visible things using evidence as a means, this is the sultanate” (ibid., 2).
107. Islamic scholars often use the verb fada to describe the action of the Prophet Muhammad receiving revelation of the Qur’an from the Angel Gabriel.
108. “In gnosis, knowledge and being coincide; it is there that science and faith find their harmony” (Nasr, An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines).
109. In particular, the animals, plants, sun, moon, life processes, and man himself are referred to as signs; see Qur’an 88:17–20, 16:68–69, 10:5–6, 87:2–5, 45:3, 42:29, 80:24–29, 30:22. See also Murata, The Tao of Islam, 11.
110. This may be why these physicians included “magic” remedies in their medical works (Musallam, Sex and Society in Islam).
111. Al-Antaki, *Tadhkira*, Section 4, 5.

112. For example:

The letters: a, h, Ta, m, f, sh, dh, b, w, y, n, S, t, Dh
The part of the body: hair on the head
The astrological sign: Aries
The nature: like fire

113. “Another *khatim* (seal) to prevent hemorrhage and miscarriage, even for animals: write the writing you see here on a lead tablet [*louh*] on Saturday of any month and hang it by colored silk thread” (al-Antaki, *Tadhkira*, Section 4, 199).

114. Muhammad brought revelation to the *jinn* as well as mankind (46:29–32); see also Philips, *Ibn Taymeeyah’s Essay on the Jinn (Demons)*, 32.

115. For non-Qur’anic discussion of the *jinn*, in law, see Philips, *Ibn Taymeeyah’s Essay on the Jinn*, 31–32. Contemporary interviews confirm Ibn Taymiyya’s claim: “Yes, as we hurt them with that hot water . . . They too, they hurt us. And if we didn’t pour it, they don’t hurt us” (My Khaddouj interview, March 22, 1999).


119. A *sharif* spit three times in the eyes of patients to cure chronic eye infections, trichiasis, corneal ulcers, and granular conjunctivitis; the ‘Isawa spit in the throats of patients with sore throats; even Moroccan Jews collected the saliva of all men praying in the synagogue and used it to treat eye ailments (Legey, *Essai de folklore marocain*, 142). On saliva as a transfer of baraka, see Bakker, *The Lasting Virtue of Traditional Healing: An Ethnography of Healing and Prestige in the Middle Atlas of Morocco*, 179. There is precedent for this in the Sunna of the Prophet, for Muhammad cured his son-in-law ‘Ali by spitting in his eyes; see Lings, *Muhammad: His Life Based on the Earliest Sources*. For the practice of dissolving verses in water, see Legey, *Essai de folklore marocain*, 83. Legey also finds that water retained the memory of death (165–166).

120. *Ilm al harf* converts letters to numbers in order to unite the patient, his mother, his zodiacal sign, the Qur’an, the names of God, days of the week, and kings of the *jinn* into a single call (*da’wa*). But that science has always been viewed as marginal (Delphin, *L’Astronomie au Maroc*, 16).

121. “This custom, which was based on the Prophet’s practice of cutting off the coiled locks of Arabs who converted to Islam from polytheism, was used by al-Jazuli as both a rite of passage and as a symbol of initiation into *At-Taifa al-Jazuliyya* as an institution” (Cornell, *Realm of the Saint*, 180–181).

122. “Salafism was essentially a method that served all the schools of thought, all group interests, service of makhzenian centralization, bourgeois reformism, magisterial position of the ulama” (Laroui, *Les Origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain*, 429).

123. Ibid., 306.

124. For a history of Islamic modernist thought, none has surpassed the magisterial *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, by Albert Hourani, 140–159.


127. “The Europeans have now put their hands on every part of the world... In reality this usurpation, aggression have not come from the French or the English. Rather it is science that everywhere manifests its greatness and power” (Al-Afghani, “Lecture on Teaching and Learning,” from Kurzman, Modernist Islam, 1840–1940, 104).


129. See Landau-Tasseron, “The ‘Cyclical Reform’: A Study of the Mujaddid Tradition.”


131. Radtke et al., The Exoteric Ahmad ibn Idris: A Sufi’s Critique of the Madhabib and the Wathabhis, ix.

132. He described Satan as a jurist whose pure rationalism leads to error (Berque, Al-Yousi: Problèmes de la culture marocaine au XVIIème siècle, 100).


135. Ibid., 91.

136. Ibid.


139. Bazzaz, Forgotten Saints, 52–53.


142. For the fourteen conditions of the first bay’a, see al-Manuni, Madhabir yaqda al-maghrib al-badith, 2:349–353.

143. ‘Abduh condemned Sufi knowledge in Risalat al-Tawhid (The Theology of Unity), and he considered Sufism a “social illness.” Reform (islah) had to remove such false beliefs and replace them with “authentic Islamic beliefs” and hard work, reason, and this-world effort (‘Abduh, “Al-Islah al-Haqiqi wa al-Wajib lil-Azhar”).


145. He honored the Treaty of Algeciras; he received the mission militaire français headed by Emile Mangin on January 4, 1909; and the loan of 104 million francs he contracted in 1910 put Morocco into complete economic dependence on France (Laroui, Les Origines sociales et culturelles du nationalisme marocain, 399–402).


147. A supporter of Mawlay Muhammad suffered a similar punishment for seditious writing (Harris, With Mulai Hafid at Fez: Behind the Scenes in Morocco, 145).
151. Legey, *Essai de folklore marocain*, 4; see also Chriﬁ-Alaoui, “Typologie du récit légendaire du saint judéo-musulman au Maroc.”

**CHAPTER 2**

1. Renan, *L’Islamisme et la science: Conférence faite à la Sorbonne le 29 mars 1883*.
5. This chair was a true collaboration of scientists and colonial interests. Senators campaigned for its creation, and the colonial governments of Algeria, Tunisia, and West Africa provided the funding. There was no allotment in the metropolitan budget for the conquest of Morocco before 1904; see Burke, “La mission scientifique au Maroc: Science sociale et politique dans l’âge d’impérialisme.”
7. Arnold, introduction to *Warm Climates and Western Medicine: The Emergence of Tropical Medicine, 1500–1900*, 4.
8. I thus reverse the argument of Patricia Lorcin, who argues in “Imperialism, Colonial Identity, and Race” that physicians were the agents of racial categorization in Algeria.