

**Abstract:** This article is an attempt to assess the contribution of al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup> to the science of Koranic exegesis. His work is at once erudite and extraordinary original, all the more for his rare combination of a traditionalist, *salafi* religious orientation with a spiritual, *mystic* temperament of the highest order. In fact, his *tafsir*, as this article shows, abounds with the views, dicta and mystic states of the Sufis. At first sight, then, al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup> appears to be, in both academic and spiritual terms, a paradoxical character. Hence much of the article is devoted to probing this apparent contradiction, trying to disentangle the complex strands of al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup>'s thought and the influences that have contributed to shaping his religious and intellectual outlook. The comments al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup> makes on Sufis and his references to them are closely examined with a view to determine his own stance on Islamic mysticism. The article, written in a manner that draws on al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup>'s own stylistic devices, aims among other things to reproduce the climate of opinion that prevailed at the time as well as the character and personality of al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup> himself. The analysis gives special attention to Ibn ʿArab<sup>3</sup>, as al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup> seems to have found in him, in many respects, a kindred spirit. Al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup> is, however, not just another bewitched admirer of Ibn ʿArab<sup>3</sup>'s. For despite the Andalusian master's dazzling command of Arabic and his verbal artistry, al-ʿAlḥus<sup>3</sup>'s perspicacity and his uncommon touch with common sense never depart him. He has both the courage and wit to criticize Ibn ʿArab<sup>3</sup> or to fault him where he finds him errant or swept away, by a heavy dose of mystic euphoria, from the path of *sharʿa* or reason. His criticisms are

not grounded in malice or spurred by ostentation, and he quotes chapter and verse in the course of his argument. While appealing to common sense or reason, al-ʿAlūsī never forgets the spirit and that ‘le cœur’, as Pascal put it, ‘a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît point.’

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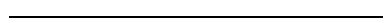
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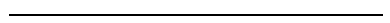
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