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Appendix B: The Sufi Philosophers and Kolob

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Appendix B

THE SUFI PHILOSOPHERS AND KOLOB

In an unpublished 1991 paper entitled “‘And I saw the Stars:’ the Book of Abraham and Ancient Geocentric Astronomy,” William J. Hamblin, Daniel C. Peterson, and John Gee drew upon the writings of a couple of Sufi philosophers who compared the heart (Arabic *qalb*) with the throne of God. The significance of the material is that the Arabic word for “heart,” *qalb*, is one possible source for the term Kolob, which in Abraham 3:9 is said to be “set nigh unto the throne of God” (see also Abraham Facsimile 2, figure 1 and cf. Abraham 3:16). In this appendix, we reproduce the relevant Sufi text.

Mullah Sadra

Mulla Sadra is the title by which the Sufi philosopher Sadr al-Din Muhammad al-Shirazi (d. 1641) is best known. The material used here is drawn from his *The Wisdom of the Throne*, using the English translation found in James Winston Morris, *The Wisdom of the Throne: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Mulla Sadra* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), 223–24.

Paradise, likewise, has a universal Reality: It is the Spirit of the Universe and the locus of manifestation of the divine Name “the Merciful,” as indicated in His saying—*May He be exalted!—That Day We shall gather the godfearing to the Merciful, as an honored company.*¹ And It has a universal image, which is the supreme *Throne where sits the Merciful.*² Its outward form, according to the tradition, is “the Earth of Paradise [which] is the Pedestal [of the Throne], and Its roof is the Throne of the Merciful.” Paradise also has Its particular images, which are the hearts of the people of true faith, according to the tradition: “The heart of the man of true faith is the Throne of the Merciful,” and “the heart of the man of true faith is the House of God.” Finally, It has both universal and particular places where It is manifest and is witnessed (in the soul), which are the “levels” of Paradise and Its “gates.”

1. Citing Qur’an 19:85.

2. Citing Qur’an 20:5.