## ARABIC THOUGHT and ISLAMIC SOCIETIES

AZIZ AL-AZMEH



London • Sydney • Dover, New Hampshire

## Contents

## Preface Abbreviations

1.	Metaphysical Foundations of Arabic Thought, 1:	
	Hierarchy, Substance and Combination	1
	The Great Chain of Being	2
	The Constitution of Composite Beings	13
	Elemental and Somatic Composites	22
	Composition, Justice and the Social Order	31
2.	Metaphysical Foundations, 2: Relations of	
	Creation, Sympathy and Analogy	55
	Humanity and Spirituality	55
	God and Man	64
	Occult Sympathies	69
	Divine Will and Human Acts	81
3.	A Special Relation: Signification	106
	Knowledge and its Object	106
	Knowledge and the Arabic Language	114
	Interpretation and Symbolism	123
4.	The Constitution of Islamic and Foreign Sciences	146
	The Structure of Scientific Formations	146
	Authority and the Classification of Sciences	155
	The Content and Form of Islamic and Foreign	
	Sciences	166
5.	The Institution and Continuity of Scientific	
	Formations	198
	Criteria of Illicit Knowledge	201
	The Formation of Dogmatic and Legal Schools	211
	The Institutionalisation of Learning	223
	Pedagogic Authority and the Formation of Traditions	228

## **Contents**

6.	Concluding Notes: Scientific Knowledge and the			
	Social Order  The Social and Utopian Being of the 'Ulama' Official Knowledge and Social Catholicity Exemplarism, Authority and the Best of All Possible	250 251 260		
			Worlds	268
			Arabic Sources	
	Ind	ex	287	