HEKHAL · READER'S EDITION

كنت كنزا مخفيا

# The Hidden-Treasure hadith (kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan)

*Kuntu kanzan makhfiyyan*

Hekhal Targum Project (machine-assisted draft; pending scholarly review)

PROVISIONAL EDITION · MACHINE-ASSISTED · NOT YET REVIEWED BY A CREDENTIALED EDITOR

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| TRADITION | islamic-mysticism |
| LANGUAGE | Arabic |
| PERIOD | first attested in 12th-13th c. Akbarian transmission |
| ATTRIBUTION | Attributed hadith qudsi (12th-13th c. Sufi transmission); authenticity contested |
| TRANSLATION | Hekhal Targum Project (machine-assisted draft; pending scholarly review) |
| LICENCE | CC-BY-SA-4.0 |
| ONLINE | https://hekhal.org/texts/hadith-kuntu-kanzan-targum/ |

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> What this is: a machine-assisted, provisional translation. Every rendering choice and every unresolved reading is recorded in the apparatus beside the text. If you read the original and something looks wrong, write to community@hekhal.org; corrections are credited.

This edition presents the verbatim original-language text beside a fresh English rendering and a critical apparatus. It is a provisional scholarly draft, released openly for correction and not yet reviewed by a credentialed editor.



كنت كنزا مخفيا فأحببت أن أعرف
فخلقت الخلق لكي أعرف.

I was a hidden treasure, and I loved to be known, so I created creation that I might be known.

*PROVISIONAL DRAFT (PENDING SCHOLARLY REVIEW)*

*An orientation*

This edition sets the verbatim original-language text beside a fresh English rendering and a critical apparatus: a running commentary on the passage, notes on the controlled vocabulary and the rendering chosen for each term, and cross-references to the lexicon and to related sections. It is a provisional scholarly draft, released openly

for correction and not yet reviewed by a credentialed editor.

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## *hidden-treasure*

Frame controller zahir-batin active. The active relation here is veiling-as-disclosure (a borderline case between the controller's 'veiling' and 'aspect' relations). The zahir reads the saying as a cosmogonic motive-clause: God was hidden, willed to be known, made creation. The batin, in Akbarian ta'wil, reads it as the structural account of how ahadiyya (non-relational oneness) opens onto wahidiyya (relational oneness) through the divine love (mahabba), with creation as the locus of self-disclosure (tajalli). The hiddenness is not erased by the disclosure; the treasure remains hidden in being-known. This is why the primary rendering keeps the surface narrative intact and the

inner reading is surfaced here rather than substituted into the body. *Chittick, William C. 1989, p. 66-70*; *Corbin, Henry 1969, p. 184-187*

## *hadith-qudsi-status*

This saying is widely cited as a hadith qudsi but is not found in the canonical Sunni collections. Ibn Taymiyya and later hadith critics judged it without isnad; Ibn Arabi and the Akbarian school nonetheless treat it as authoritative on the basis of kashf (unveiling). The translation does not adjudicate the isnad question; it renders the text as it functions in the Akbarian corpus. *al-ʿAjluni, Isma'il ibn Muhammad, p. no. 2016*

## *ahadiyya-wahidiyya-distinction*

The sod commentary invokes the ahadiyya/wahidiyya pair, which is not lexically present in the hadith but is the standard Akbarian conceptual frame for reading it. The hiddenness corresponds to ahadiyya (oneness-as-prior-condition, prior to any relation including the knower-known relation); the loving-to-be-known is the opening into wahidiyya (relational oneness, the One-with-attributes in which knower and known are distinguished without being separated). Collapsing the two terms is forbidden by the controlled glossary; preserving them is itself the doctrinal content.

## *Editorial decisions*

- **primary-passive-rendering.** Primary translation follows the standard passive vocalization ‘that I might be known’ rather than the active ‘that I might know.’ The active reading is doctrinally live in Akbarian ta’wil and is surfaced in the ambiguity entry and sod commentary; it is not substituted into the body, per the zahir-batin controller’s no-substitution rule. *(editor-targum, 2025-01-15)*
- **no-wahdat-al-wujud-in-body.** The phrase wahdat al-wujud does not appear in the source and is not introduced into the rendering or commentary as Ibn Arabi’s own self-description, per the glossary constraint on this term. *(editor-targum, 2025-01-15)*

## *Manuscript variants*

- **common Akbarian transmission**: كنت كنزا مخفيا لا أعرف فأحببت أن أعرف فخلقت الخلق وتعرفت إليهم فبي عرفوني, An expanded recension circulating in later Sufi literature adds ‘I was unknown’ (lā u‘raf) and concludes ‘and I made myself known to them, and through me they knew me.’ The expansion makes the reciprocity of knowing explicit and tilts the saying toward the batin reading flagged in the ambiguity note on “an urafa passive or middle”. The shorter form rendered here is the one most often cited by Ibn Arabi.

# Colophon

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