Acknowledgments

This book is the revised version of my Ph.D. dissertation (“Subject, Definition, Activity. The Epistemological Status of the Science of the Soul in Avicenna’s Kitāb al-Nafs”, Scuola Normale Superiore, November 2016). I wish to express here my sincere gratitude to Amos Bertolacci for the constant attention, outstanding competence, and friendly support with which he has guided me along the path of Graeco-Arabic studies and supervised my research since my second year as an undergraduate student. I am also deeply grateful to Marwan Rashed for reading and discussing with me several textual and interpretative aspects of this book and thus saving me from many errors, for his constant support and encouragement, and for believing in this book right from the beginning. My profound gratitude also goes to Peter Adamson for giving me many comments and advice, which improved the first draft of this book. My interest in Aristotle and his medieval interpreters dates back to 2005 when, just admitted at the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa, I met the late Francesco Del Punta, who taught me to combine philological accuracy with philosophical interpretation. I will always treasure his teaching. I wish to thank Gianfranco Fioravanti, who supervised my BA and MA thesis at the University of Pisa and whose lectures on Augustine and Thomas Aquinas instilled in me the curiosity for Medieval philosophy. I also wish to thank all the members of the board of my Ph.D. viva for their insightful comments, remarks, and suggestions: Dag N. Hasse, Concetta Luna, Ivana Panzeca, Francesco Pelosi, Marwan Rashed, Ayman Shihadeh.

This research started at the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa, where I was first an undergraduate and graduate student, and then a postdoctoral fellow within the ERC project “Philosophy on the Border of Civilizations and Intellectual Endeavours: Towards a Critical Edition of the Metaphysics (Ilāhiyyāt of Kitāb al-Šifā’) of Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā)”, led by Amos Bertolacci, and ended up finally at MUSAPh (Munich School of Ancient Philosophy), where I am currently a postdoctoral fellow within the ERC project “Animals in Philosophy of the Islamic World”, led by Peter Adamson. Here I wish to express my deep gratitude to the principal investigators of both projects, who allowed me to pursue my research, and to the members of both research groups for all the discussions on the topic we had (in alphabetical order): Alessia Astesiano, Niccolò Caminada, Gaia Celli, Gholamreza Dadkhah, Sarah de Mendonça Virgi, Stefano Di Pietrantonio, Silvia Di Vincenzo, Rotraud Hansberger, Daniele Marotta, Ivana Panzeca, Bethany Somma.

At the Scuola Normale, I met excellent researchers who contributed considerably to my education. I wish to thank, in particular, Laura M. Castelli, Cristina Cerami, Matteo di Giovanni, Gabriele Galluzzo, Concetta Luna.

I was not always able to explain to my family what the soul about which I was so curious exactly is. Despite that, they never failed to give me their unconditional support. Here I want to express my profound love to them all. During the first year of my Ph.D. studies, my beloved grandfather Saverio Covelli passed away: he will always

https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110706840-001
hold a special place in my heart. I wish to thank Emanuela and Ilaria for being always there for me. Over the past fifteen years, I realized how lucky I am to have them in my life. I also wish to thank Marie-Odile Volpoët for making me feel at home away from home.

Alberto supported and encouraged me through this long and sometimes hard journey. He taught me what being loved every moment of every day means, and made my life truly happy. I dedicate this book to him.