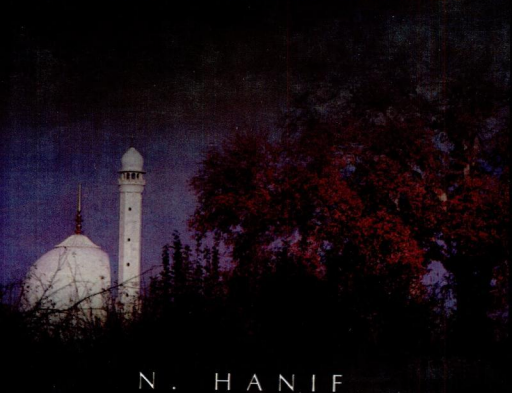


BIOGRAPHICAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF SUFIS

— CENTRAL ASIA & MIDDLE EAST —



N. HANIF

This work "*Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis*" (Central Asia and Middle East) highlights on the biographical outline of the prominent Sufis of Central Asia and Middle East in alphabetical order. The Sufis maintain that the intellect gives information concerning the phenomenal world, it does not reveal the nature of infinite God and his attributes. According to the Sufis it is the mystical experience which leads to the knowledge of God (marifa). In his communion with God, the Sufi becomes one with Him and the Divinities disclosed. God head is directly experienced by Him. Moreover, rational or intellectual knowledge is indirect. The rational proceeds with that which is different from the truth: the Gnostic begins his mystical quest for God after leaving everything which is other than God. The Sufi doctrine of Unification of God is not similar to the Quranic concept of the Unity of God. The follower of Islam believes in one God, however the sufi believes in the unity of God and releases his identity with God.

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BIOGRAPHICAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF SUFIS
(Central Asia and Middle East)

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BIOGRAPHICAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF SUFIS

CENTRAL ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST

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PREFACE

The "Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis (Central Asia and Middle East)" is a comprehensive information of life, works and philosophy of prominent sufis of Central Asia and Middle East since the bigning of Islamic Civilisation. This Encyclopaedia has been compiled in alphabetical order. The life and philosophy of Sufis are based on three cardinal doctrines—*muhabhat* or the love of God, *marifa*, or the knowledge of God, and *tawhid* or the Unification of god. Love is the sole means of Sufis unification with God and therefore he disassociates himself from everything save God. Love of God results in the attainment of the knowledge of Divine Essence. Love illuminates the heart, leading to the revelation of God head. Muinddin Chishti says:

"The Gnostic always abide in the state of passionate love of God"

and is amazed at the creation of God's universe. Another famous Sufis Nizamuddin Auliya remarks that love of God Consists in living a life a devotion and self-sacrifice. The mission of the true lover of God is nothing but to recollect the names of the beloved and to remember him unceasingly. God is the Ultimate cause of all things and he cannot be contemplated through anything which is created by Him.

Sufi's spiritual experience can neither be explained in language nor interpreted logically. The science of logic is concerned with the

mental states and its relation with one another. Its range is limited to the subjects consciousness alone and it fails to provide any account of the extra-mental facts. The Sufi mystic experience is directly concerned with the Divinity of God which is transcendental reality and hence it lies beyond the reach of a psychologist. Even his mystical experiences in relation to the fear of God the love of God are objective, i.e. unrelated to his empirical self and they awareness of his Pure-Self is not an ordinary mental state like that of a feeling or an emotion.

This is trans-subjective experience which lies beyond the study of psychology. There are certain other high spiritual states like those of the soul's contemplation of the Attributes of God, its communication with the Beloved and the revelation of gnosis through Divine illumination which lose their sanctity when the psychologist interprets them from an empirical stand point. Again, the mystical symbols manifested in the spiritual state of a Sufi's ecstasy can not be discovered through the law of causation. In other words, the transcendent side of a *Sufi's* spiritual world remains completely out of reach for the psychologist. Moreover, the science of psychology does not offer any fixed and universally accepted standard for the assessment of mystical states.

According to certain *Sufis*, the most important quality of the lover of God is his complete detachment from sensual desires.

Hence, the Sufis believe that a Sufi 'is absent from himself and present with God'. The Sufi's absence from his Self means that he attains total detachment from human qualities, so that he may experience the divine presence in his heart. Hujwiri defines the lover of God:

"the lover is he dead (*fani*) in his own attributed and living (*baqi*) in the attributed of his Beloved."

A Sufi experiences the state of perfect union with God and eternal subsistence of his soul in Him when he is completely devoted to God. Abu Bakr al-Kattani lays much stress on this aspect of a Sufi's relationship with God. The Sufi is he that regards his devotion as a crime for which it beloves him to ask pardon of God. Another feature of the servant of God is that he prefers to live a life of patience and welcomes afflictions coming from God with pleasure, treating them as gifts from his Beloved. Shaikh 'Abdullah Khafif describes the true attitude of the devotee of God, *Tasawwuf* is patience under the events of destiny, acceptance from the hand of the almighty God and traveling over desert and highland. The seeker of God develops the ideal attitude of perfect patience at the stage of his consecration. Abu 'Amr Najaud says:

"Tasawwuf is to be patient under commandment and prohibition."

The Sufi enjoys his nearness to God when his soul comes in direct communion with Him. Shaikh Abu Sa'id b. Muhammad al-Mayhani defines Sufism in these words:

"Sufism is the subsistence of the heart with God without any mediation."

God purifies the heart of His devotee so that love is established in it.

"The Sufi is made pure by his Lord and is filled with splendours and in the quintessence of delight from praise of God."

At this stage the seeker entirely leaves himself on the mercy of his Beloved since he passes away from himself. Abu Muhammad al-Rasibif observes:

"The Sufi is not a Sufi until no earth supports him and no heaven shadows him; until he finds no favour with mankind and until his resort in all circumstances is to the most high God."

The devotee of God becomes God intoxicated when his self is completely consumed in the first of love. It means that the idea of God dominates the heart of the seeker and he develops an everlasting consciousness of his Beloved. Shaikh Abu Sa'id Abu'l-Khayr explains this quality of Sufi's unceasing concentration of God in these words:

"That is the true man of God who sits in the midst of his fellowmen, and rises up and eats and sleeps and buys and sells and gives and takes in the bazaars amongst other folk, and yet is never for one moment forgetful of God."

Such a mystical quest for God, leading to a state of subsistence of Him has been recognised as the most significant mark of the spiritual perfection by Muslim saints of all the sects. Mansur al-Hallaj says:

"the Sufi is he who aims, from the first, at reaching God, the Creative Truth. Until he has found what he seeks, he takes no rest, nor does he give heed to any person. For thy sake I have over Land and water, over the plane I pass and the mountain I cleave and from everything, I meet, I turn my face, until the time when I reach that place where I am alone with Thee."

Such a concept of complete identification between a Sufi and his Beloved is probably based on the Quranic teaching of the Unity of God (*tawhid*). Most of the Sufis regard the theory of 'One God alone' as the substratum of their mystical philosophy. Abu Baker al-Shibli defines Sufism thus:

"Sufism is polytheism, because it is the guarding of the heart from the vision of 'other', and other does not exist."

This definition of Sufism implies that the idea of any existent thing other than God cannot be accepted along with the idea of any existent thing other than God cannot be accepted along with the idea of there is no God but God.' A Sufi, who is a true seeker after the Ultimate Truth, discovers only one Truth. It refers to the mystical stage when the lover of God dwells in the unitive state.

Ghazali, an orthodox Sufi, concluded that God alone should be the object of love and worship for the mystics. For him, the essential qualities of a Sufi are:

"His (sufi's) heart is free from defilement and from distraction, because of his love for his Lord, and he looks towards Him in his inmost self, committing all thing to Him and having fellowship with Him. He does not rely upon anything, most does he have fellowship with any, save Him whom he worships, preferring God to all else."

The early Islamic mystics had seriously followed such a monotheistic doctrine. Abu' Amar' al-Dimashqi regards one god as the else. The early Islamic mystics had seriously followed such a monotheistic doctrine. Abu; Amar' al-Dimashqi regards one God as the Most Perfect Being and hence preaches the detachment from that which is imperfect. He says:

"Tasawwuf is to behold the imprecation of the phenomenal world, nay to close the eye to everything imperfect in contemplation of Him who is remote from all imperfection."

The spiritual state of annihilation of human qualities is the most significant landmark on the Sufi's way to his unification with God. Each Sufi Describes this mystical attitude according

to his own state and mystical experience. In fact, such a personal experience cannot be adequately expressed in any form because the soul of the mystic passes beyond all symbols and categories related to human understanding. Shaikh Abu Ali Juzajani says:

"The saint is annihilated in his own state and subsists in the contemplation of Truth: he cannot tell anything concerning himself, nor can he rest with anyone except God."

A Sufi is completely lost in his inner world and becomes separated from the phenomenal world. Abu'l-Hasan al-Husri thus speaks about this spiritual state:

"The Sufi is He who having once become dead to (worldly) taints, does not go back there, and having once turned his face Godward, does not relapse there from and passing events do not affect him."

The Sufi recommend self-mortification for the training of the soul. Abu'l-Hasan al-Muzayyin says:

"Tasawwuf is, to let one's self be led to the Truth."

It implies that the Truth is attained when the aspirant abandons his lower self and develops his pure self. Junayd also believes that since the Sufi's mission is to experience Godly qualities, he should guard himself against his association with human attributes.

A Sufi seeks self-mortification so that he may realise perfect state of resignation from empirical self. Abul Muhammad Ruwaym explains the real features of 'Tasawwuf:

"Tasawwuf is based on three qualities: a tenacious attachment to poverty and indigence; a profound sense of sacrifice and renunciation; and absence of self-observation and personal volition."

The effacement of all human desires and individual qualities takes place and the veil of the unreal self is lifted. Abu Yazid Bayazid says:

"I stood before the Presence and cried, 'Lord God', I desire not but Thee. If I possess Thee, I possess all...when God recognised my sincerity, the first grace that he accorded me was that He removed chaff of the self before me".

It is at this stage that the seeker attains gnosis and gains the knowledge of the Essence of God in his pure and illuminated heart.

After realisation of the state of annihilation of all human attributes, a Sufi's soul experiences the state of Godhead. Now, the Sufi realises that he is other than the rest of the creation and that God had detached him from the world from His revelation. The real devotees of God abstain from all kinds of formal ceremonies and rituals. Abu'l-Hasan al-Khorqani says:

"The Sufi is not a Sufi in virtue of patched cloak and prayer-carpet, the Sufi is not a Sufi by rules and customs; the true Sufi is he that is nothing."

As he is in-himself, he is nothing' or nonexistent' for the rest of the creation. The being of the Sufi is veiled for those who have their being in the visible world. In other words, a Sufi's existence transcends the existence of everything and hence his existence speaks for itself. Abu'l-Hasan al-Khuraqni says:

"A Sufi is a day that needs no sun, a night that needs no moon or star and a non-being that needs no being."

From the aforesaid, it is evident that the Sufis interpret their mystical system from the ethical, psychological and philosophical aspects.

From the ethical standpoint, the Sufis regard the moral attitude of the devotee of God as the foremost condition moral attitude of the devotee of God as the foremost condition for attaining spiritual perfection. The wayfarer firmly believes that he can reach his goal, i.e. the union with God when he lives a virtuous and pious life. The moral development of the soul means the purification of soul which is necessary for the realisation of Divine Attributes. The orthodox mystics linked moral consciousness with religious belief and recognised *sharia* (the Law of Religion) as a means of reaching ethical perfection and the attainment of Divine knowledge (*ma'rifa*).

In their logical approach to saintliness, the Sufis think that the saint moves towards God when he experiences the mortification (*mujahad*) of 'self. He has to pass through various psychic states, particularly at the initial stages of the Journey to God, and he has to attain purity of heart in order to reach higher spiritual states. The self-mortification of the psychological assessment of 'self' leads to the spiritual perfection of a mystic. Philosophically, the Sufi concentrates on his ego and differentiates between its outward qualities and inward manifestations, experiences a true relationship between himself and God, looks forward for the annihilation of his human qualities and thus becomes conscious of Godly attributes and his subsistence in the Creative Truth.

I am thankful to all those scholars whose works have been utilised either directly or indirectly in this compiled and edited works. I am also thankful to the publisher, who has given me opportunity to edit this comprehensive works.

EDITOR

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A

‘Abd Ahmad, Shah Muhammad b. (1584–1661)

Shah Muhammad b. ‘Abd Ahmad popularly known as Mulla Shah (992–1072/1584–1661). According to Djahan Ara, the name of his father was Mawlana Abdi, but Mulla Shah refers to him in his *mathnawi Risala-yi nisbat* as ‘Abd Ahmad. Born in 992/1584, in Arkasa, a village of Badakhshan, he lived there for about 21 years. Later he visited Balkh, Kabul and other places in search of a spiritual teacher. He reached Lahore in 1023/1614–15 and felt attracted towards Miyan Mir, remaining in this latter’s service for about thirty years.

At the direction of his master, he settled in Kashmir and built there a garden house for himself. Dara Shukoh and Djahan Ara also built buildings and fountains there, and the Emperor Shah Djahan visited him. Mulla Shah used to spend his summers in Kashmir and winters in Lahore. He breathed his last in Lahore in 1072/1661, and was buried there in a small mosque at some distance from the mausoleum of Miyan Mir.

Mulla Shah’s spiritual fame attracted the Mughal prince Dara Shukoh, and his sister Djahan Ara to his mystic fold, and both of them wrote their accounts of him. Mulla Shah was a

believer in pantheism. His poetic works, for which he used the nomde-plume of Mulla, particularly his *Mathnawiyyat* and *Ruba’iyyat*, are known for their spiritual sensitivity, though they lack poetic elegance.

Some of his verses, steeped as they were in pantheistic ideas, provoked orthodox criticism, and Awrangzib summoned him from Kashmir in order to question him about these verses; Dara Shukoh’s association with him must have also created suspicion in the new Emperor’s mind but Mulla Shah wrote a congratulatory chronogram on Awrangzib’s accession and thus saved his skin. He wanted to write a commentary on the Kur’an in the light of his mystic ideology, but was unable to proceed beyond the first part. His works have not been published. The following 10 *mathnwis*, interspersed with prose lines, are found in an excellent India Office ms. (dated 1580), with some autographic remarks: (i) *Risala-yi walwala*, (ii) *Risala-yi hosh*, (iii) *Risala-yi ta’rifat khanaha wa baghha wa manazil-i Kashmir*, (iv) *Risala-yi nisbat*, (v) *Risala-yi murshid*, (vi) *Yusuf a Zalaykha*, (vii) *Risala-yi diwana*, (viii) *Risala-yi shahiya*, (ix) *Risala-yi hamd wa na’t*, (x) *Risala-yi bismillah*. A copy of his *Kulliyat* is found in the Bankipore Library (ms. no. 326).

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K.A. NIZAMI

'Abd Allah Wali, Shah Ni'mat Allah Nur al-Din b. (1330/31–)

Shah Ni'mat Allah Nur al-Din b. 'Abd Allah Wali (sometimes designated additionally as Kirmani, especially in Indian sources) was born in Aleppo, in either 730/1329–30 or 731/1330–1. His father was a sayyid, claiming descent from Isma'il b. Dja'far (which may help

to account for the loyalty given the Ni'mat Allahi order by several Nizari imams of the Kasim-Sahi line) and his mother was descended from the Shabankara rulers of Fars. The stylistic superiority of Ni'mat Allah's Persian to his Arabic writings suggests that he must have been brought to a Persian-speaking environment while still a child.

In any event, he is recorded to have studied during his early youth in Shiraz with theologians such as Sayyid Djalal al-Din Khwarazmi and 'Adud al-Din al-Idji (d. 756/1355). Ni'mat Allah was initiated into Sufism by the well-known Yemeni historian and muhaddith, 'Abd Allah al-Yafi'i (d. 768/1367), whose spiritual lineage went back through three generations to Abu Madyan (d. 590/1194). Ni'mat Allah joined al-Yafi'i's circle in Mecca when he was twenty-four years of age, and stayed with him until his death. Most probably it was al-Yafi'i, who frequently described the Sufis as 'kings' in his writings, who bestowed the title of Shah on Ni'mat Allah.

After the death of his master, Ni'mat Allah embarked on a long series of travels. These brought him first to Egypt, where he spent a period of retreat in the cave on Mt. Mukattam that had been used for the same purpose by the Bektashi saint Kayghusuz Abdal. He then travelled through Syria and 'Irak to Adharbaydjan, meeting in Ardabil with the progenitor of the Safawids, Shaikh Sadr al-Din and possibly with Kasim al-Anwar (although the latter had been little more than an adolescent).

It was in Transoxiana that Ni'mat Allah first presented himself as a murshid and the propagator of a new order. Conditions there must have appeared propitious, for the Turkic nomads of the area, awaiting Islamisation;

offered a vast pool of potential recruits on which other Sufi Shaikh were already drawing. It was, however, precisely the extent of Ni'mat Allah's success in establishing khanakahs in several locations and more importantly, in recruiting a large number of nomads in the area of Shahr-i Sabz that aroused the suspicion of Timur and led to Ni'mat Allah's expulsion from Transoxiana. Accounts differ regarding the precise circumstances of his departure; several of them attribute it to the jealousy of Amir Kulal (d. 772/1370), the spiritual master of Baha' al-Din Nakshband (J. Aubin, *Materiaux pour la biographie de Shah Ni'matullah Wali Kirmani*, 12–15). There is, however, no mention in the sources on Amir Kulal of any clash with Ni'mat Allah, which could, after all, have been presented in favourable and even triumphant terms. On the other hand, the clearly deliberate omission of Ni'mat Allah by the Nakshbandi 'Abd al-Rahman Djami from his *Nafahat al-uns* may indeed reflect some inherited distaste for the founder of the Ni'mat-Allahiyya.

From Transoxiana, Ni'mat Allah went first to Tus and then to Herat, arriving there probably in 774/1372–3. He emerged from a period of seclusion to marry the granddaughter of Amir Husayn Harawi, a wellknown poet, and to engage in agriculture, a pursuit he continued to follow for the rest of his life and to recommend to his disciples as 'the true alchemy'. At the suggestion of the following year to Kirman, an area which may have seemed desirable because of its comparative remoteness from the main centres of power of the day. At first, he settled in Kuhbana, outside the city; it was there that Shah Khalil Allah, his only son, was born. Later, he moved to the city itself and then to its suburb of Mahan, leaving the Kirman area only rarely to visit Yazd, Taft and, in 816/1413–14, Shiraz, in

response to an invitation by Iskandar b. 'Umar Shaikh, the Timurid governor of Fars. Ni'mat Allah died in Mahan in 834/1430–1 and was buried in the proximity of the madrasa and khanakah he had constructed there.

This last period in the life of Ni'mat Allah was by far the most fruitful. Apart from his disciples in Kirman, he had several thousand devotees in Shiraz, who are said to have included the Sufi poet Shah Da'l Shirazi, the theologian Mir Sayyid Sharif Djurdjani and the gastronome-poet Bushak-i At'ima (by contrast, a somewhat later poet, Hafiz, is said to have condemned Shah Ni'mat Allah obliquely for his claims to spiritual eminence, in the poem that begins "Might those who transmute the soil with their gaze also glance briefly on us?" *Diwan*, ed. Kazwini and Ghani, Tehran n.d., 132–3).

Shah Ni'mat Allah also wrote profusely, many hundreds of treatises have been attributed to him. Even allowing for exaggeration and misattribution and taking into account the fact that many of the 'treatises' are brief notes or communications, the size of Shah Ni'mat Allah's literary corpus remains impressive. His writings include exegetical essays on the Kur'an and the dicta of earlier shaikhs and, more importantly, treatises that expound leading themes in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi, especially *wahdat al-wujud*. He also composed a commentary on Ibn 'Arabi's *Fusus al-hikam*, claiming that he had been vouchsafed a perfect comprehension of the book by inspiration from the Prophet, just as the author had received the book itself from the same infallible source.

Better known and more widely read than Ni'mat Allah's treatises is, perhaps, his *Diwan*, which consists for the most part of verses expounding *wahdat al-wujud* with a particular

emphasis on the impossibility of ontological multiplicity. Despite the manifest influence on Ni'mat Allah's poetry of 'Attar and Rumi, his fondness for the technical terminology and conventional symbols of Sufism detracts heavily from the poetic effect of his verse. The most frequently cited poems in his Diwan are those of prophetic or apocalyptic picture which have been interpreted as fore-telling events as diverse as the rise of the Safawids, the separation of Bangladesh from Pakistan and the Islamic Revolution in Iran of 1978–9. These verses, the authenticity of at least some of which is open to question, have tended to make of Sha Ni'mat Allah the Persian equivalent of Nostradamus.

There can be little doubt that Ni'mat Allah remained a Sunni throughout his life. His master al-Yafi'i was a Shafi'i, and he himself frequently cited the hadiths of Abu Hurayra in his works, something unthinkable in a Shi'i author. Nonetheless, elements that may have facilitated the later transition of the Ni'mat-Allahiya to Shi'ism are also to be encountered in his writings. These include a belief in Twelve Poles (*aktab-i dawazdah-gana*) of the spiritual universe and an emphasis on wilaya as the inner dimension of prophethood.

Shah Ni'mat Allah Wali was succeeded by his son Shah Khalil Allah, then fifty-nine years of age. Not long after his father's death, he was summoned to the court of the Timurid Shahrukh in Herat. According to the hagiographical sources, this invitation was a sign of the monarch's veneration for him, but it is more likely that Shahrukh sensed a political danger in the strength and number of the Ni'mat-Allahis. That relations between Khalil Allah and the ruler were not altogether harmonious is shown by Shahrukh's refusal to

exempt the family lands from taxation. For whatever reason, some time between 836/1432 and 840/1436, Khalil Allah decided to leave Persia. Entrusting the shrine at Mahan to one of his sons, Mir Shams al-Din, he departed for the Deccan with his two other sons, Muhibb al-Din Habib Allah and Habibi al-Din Muhibb Allah.

Ahmad Shah Bahman, the ruler of the Deccan [see Bahmanids], had already sent a delegation to Shah Ni'mat Allah inviting him to settle at Bidar in his kingdom. Formerly a devotee of the Chishti saint Gisu daraz, he was searching for a new preceptor, one who might enjoy prestige among the immigrant elite, the so-called Afakis, on which he was coming increasingly to rely. Shah Ni'mat Allah had refused the invitation, but he sent Ahmad Shah a letter of initiation that also granted him the title of wali. Some years later, Ahmad Shah sent a second delegation to Mahan, this time asking for Khalil Allah to be sent to the Deccan. This request, too, was refused, but his grandson Nur Allah was sent by way of compensation. Ahmad Shah received him with great honour, giving him his daughter in marriage and elevating him over all the indigenous Sufis by naming him malik al-mashayikh.

Now that Khalil Allah had finally come, he and his party were greeted with similar enthusiasm. Although links with Persia were not entirely broken, the leadership of both the Ni'mat-Allahi family and order was now to remain in the Deccan for several generations: Khalil Allah died in 860/1456 and was succeeded in turn by Habib al-Din; Mir Shah Kamal al-Din; Burhan al-Din Khalil Allah II; Mir Shah Shams al-Din Muhammad; Mir Shah Habib al-Din Muhibb Allah II; Mir Shah Shams al-Din Muhammad II; Mir Shah Kamal al-Din

Khalil Allah II; Mir Shah Shams al-Din Muhammad III. The leadership of the Ni'mat-Allahis retained their influence among the Deccani aristocracy even after the dynasty that had brought them there was replaced by the Kutb Shahis, they never succeeded in putting down roots among the population at large.

The Ni'mat-Allahis who stayed in Persia initially enjoyed good relations with the Safawids. one of them, Mir Nizam al-Din 'Abd al-Baki, was appointed *sadr* by Shah Isma'il in 917/1511-12 and subsequently became the *wakil-i nafs-i humayun* (regent). 'Abd al-Baki's son mediated between the next Shah, Tahmasp and his brother in 956/1549 and the new reign saw several marriages between the Ni'mat-Allahi family and the Safawid house.

The relationship began to sour in the time of Shah 'Abbas I when one member of the family, Amir Ghiyath al-Din Mirmiran, became involved in an Afshar rebellion in Kirman. Thereafter, although members of the family continued to hold the posts of *nakib* and *kalantar* in Yazd until at least 1082/1671-2, the Ni'mat-Allahiyya seems to have disappeared from Persia as a functioning Sufi order. The only trace left of its existence consisted of the Ni'mati gangs that, oblivious to their Sufi origins, waged intermittent warfare with their Haydari rivals in a number of Persian cities, often with royal encouragement.

The Ni'mat-Allahi order was reintroduced into Persia by a certain Ma'sum 'Ali Shah Dakkani, sent there for the purpose by Rida 'Ali Shah Dakkani (d. 1214/1799), the grandson and second successor of Mir Muhamud Dakkani. With his ecstatic mode of preaching, Ma'sum 'Ali Shah swiftly gained a large following, particularly in Shiraz, Isfahan, Hamadan, and Kirman. The resurgent Ni'mat-

Allahiyya had, however, to confront the hostility of the Shi'i mudjtahids, newly invigorated by the triumph of the Usuli doctrine which assigned them supreme authority in all religious affairs. Ma'sum 'Ali Shah and several of his followers fell victim to this hostility; he was put to death himself at Kirmanshah in 1212/1797-8, while en route from Nadjaf to Mashhad, by Aka Muhammad 'Ali Bihbahani, a mudjtahid popularly known as *sufikush* ("Sufi killer").

Ma'sum 'Ali Shah's principal companion and disciple was Nur 'Ali Shah of Isfahan, a prolific author in both poetry and prose. His works are replete with theopathic utterances; themes of ghulat Shi'ism that seem to echo the verse of Shah Isma'il; and criticisms of the Shi'i 'ulama'. (The combination of these elements suggests that the nascent Ni'mat Allahiyya of the time had doctrinally little in common with the order as first established by Shah Ni'mat Allah and his immediate descendants). Particularly provocative of 'ulama' indignation was, no doubt, Nur 'Ali Shah's assertion that the Sufi master is the true deputy (*na'ib*) of the Hidden Imam. Nur 'Ali Shah accompanied his master on all his journeys except the last, fatal one, dying himself the same year in Mawsil, allegedly from poison administered by agents of Bihbahani.

Four years later, Bihbahani himself died and the antagonism between the Ni'mat-Allahis and the 'ulama' began to decline. This development was furthered by the addition of more circumspect doctrines and attitudes by the Ni'mat-Allahis themselves, which permitted them to establish themselves as a lasting although subordinate element of Persian religious life. No longer seeming subversive, the Ni'mat-Allahi order was thus able to grow throughout the 13th/19th century.. However, as

it expanded, it divided into several, often mutually hostile branches, only the more important of which will be mentioned here.

Muhammad Dja'far Kabudar-ahangi Madjdhub rise undisputed control over the whole order. Three separate claimants to the leadership arose after him: Kawthar 'Ali Shah (d. 1247/1831); Sayyid Husayn Astarabadi; and Zayn al-'Abidin Shirwani Mast 'Ali Shah (d. 1253/1837-8). The first became the eponym of a sub-order known as the Kawthariyya, which has survived down to the present, although with a very small membership.

Its best-known leader in modern times was Nasir 'Ali Shah Malik-niya (still living in the late 1970s). The line descended from Astarabadi also reached into the 20th century, producing one of the most celebrated Persian Sufis of recent times, Sayyid Husayn Husayni Shams al-'Urafa' (d. 1353/1935), after whom it is retrospectively known as the Shamsiyya. Its following, too, has generally been very restricted.

The main line of Ni'mat-Allahi descent is that which passes through Mast 'Ali Shah. He was the author of several important works refuting the legalistic criticisms that were still being directed against Ni'mat-Allahi Sufism in particular his *Kashf al-ma'arif*, Tehran, 1350 Sh./1971 and three compendious travelogues, valuable for the detailed information they contain on the Sufis of diverse affiliations whom Mast 'Ali Shah met in the course of his travels.

After the death in 1278/1861 of Zayn al-'Abidin. Rahmat 'Ali Shah, the successor of mast 'Ali Shah, a further trifurcation took place, one more serious than the first because it affected the main body of the Nimat-Allahis. The first of the three claimants to leadership

was Sa'adat 'Ali Shah Tawus al-'Urafa' (d. 1293/1876 in Tehran), who is said to have been a Sufi of the traditional ecstatic type, the clarity of whose heart was unclouded by any learning. His successor, Sultan 'Ali Shah Gunabadi from Bidukht in Khurasan, was a man of quite different type.

He studied philosophy with the celebrated Mulla Hadi Sabzawari before embarking on the Sufi path and even after beginning to train his own murids he continued to give instruction in the formal religious sciences at his khanakah in Bidukht. He wrote a well-regarded commentary on the Kur'an of a mystical philosophical nature, entitled *Bayan al-sa'ada*. Murdered by an unknown assailant in 1327/1909, he was succeeded by his son, Hadjdi Mulla 'Ali Gunabadi Nur 'Ali Shah-i Thani (d. 1337/1918).

This introduction of hereditary succession gave rise to a new sub-order known as the Gunabadi, with reference to the area surrounding Sultan 'Ali Shah's place of origin. Hadidi Mulla 'Ali was succeeded first by Salib 'Ali Shah (d. 1386/1966) and then by Rida 'Ali Shah Tabanda (still living in 1992). Although the Gunabadis generally eschew the designation Ni'mat Allahi and cannot therefore be regarded as representing the main line of the Ni'mat-Allahi descent in Iran. It is no doubt because of the sober, Shari'a-oriented nature of their Sulfism that they have been able to retain this position even after the establishment of the Islamic Republic.

The Safi-'Ali-Shahiyya, another off-shoot of the Ni'mat-Allahi order emerging from the dispute over the succession to Rahmat 'Ali Shah, developed in a quite different direction. Its eponym, Hadjdi Mirza Hasan Isfahani Safi 'Ali Shah, spent some time in India promoting

his father's mercantile interests before returning to Iran and becoming a disciple of Rahmat 'Ali Shah. On the death of his master, he initially accepted the authority of Munawwar 'Ali Shah, another of Rahmat 'Ali Shah's disciples, but the following year he declared himself the immediate successor of Rahmat 'Ali Shah and proclaimed his independence. Like his contemporary and rival, Sultan 'Ali Shah Gunabadi, he also wrote a commentary on the Kur'an, but it was widely criticised, both because of its contents and because it was composed in verse.

On Safi 'Ali Shah's death in 1316/1899, the leadership of the order was assumed by Zahir al-Dawla Safa 'Ali Shah, minister of the court and brother-in-law of the ruling monarch, Muzaffar al-Din Shah; not surprisingly, this gave a somewhat aristocratic complexion to the Safi Ali-Shahiyya. Given the incipient westernising tendencies among the Iranian political elite, it was perhaps, natural that a further transformation should also have set in during Safa 'Ali Shah's life-time.

He established a twelve-man committee to supervise the operations of the order which under its new designing Andjuman-i Ukhuwwat ('Society of Brotherhood') was effectively transformed into a pseudo-masonic lodge; many of its members were, in fact, also initiates of Bidan-yi Iran ('The Awakening of Iran'), the first masonic lodge in Iran affiliated with the French Grand Orient. The society abandoned virtually all the traditional rites of Sufism, but continued to flourish among certain classes until the advent of the Islamic Republic, when its activities were brought to an end, together with those of all other masonic organisations. Its last leader was 'Abd Allah Intizam (d. 1982). It is the line of a third claimant to the succession of

Rahmat 'Ali Shah, Hadjdi Muhammad Aka Munawwar 'Ali Shah (d. 1310/1884) that has the best claim to be regarded as the main line of Ni'mat-Allahi descent; its adherents continue to designate themselves exclusively as Ni'mat-Allahi, although the clarificatory expression "line of Dhu 'l-Riyasatayn" (an epithet borne by the third successor to Munawwar 'Ali Shah) is sometimes additionally used. Munawwar 'Ali Shah was succeeded in turn by Wafa' 'Ali Shah (d. 1336/1918), Sadik 'Ali Shah (d. 1340/1922) and Hadjdi Mirza 'Ali Shah (d. 1372/1953). A man of wide erudition Mu'nis 'Ali Shah enjoyed great respect during the thirty years he directed the order, but its unity could not be maintained on his death. The traditional pattern of discord reasserted itself as thirteen claimants to the succession came forward.

The most visibly successful of them was Dr. Djawad Nurbakhsh, a psychiatrist. He managed to recruit many members of Tehran high society at a time when the profession of a certain type of Sufism was becoming fashionable; to build a whole series of new khanakhs around the country; and to publish a large quantity of Ni'mat-Allahi literature, including many of his own writings. As the Islamic Revolution of 1978-9 approached victory, Nurbakhsh left Iran, and he now administers a mixed following of Iranian emigres and Western converts resident in many cities of Europe and North America.

When Khalil Allah b. Ni'mat Allah arrived in the Bahmani capital Bidar after his father's death in 834/1431, he established there a khankah for his kins-folk and followers and his own tomb (cawkhandi) became a prominent landmark near the royal tombs, where many of his descendants still live. The Bahmani sultan Ahmad Shah's own tomb is liberally

embellished with extracts from the diwan and other writings of Nimat Allah.

The tomb of Ni'mat Allah at Mahan, some 20 miles/36 km south-east of Kirman in eastern Persia, was erected in 840/1437 by Ahmad Shah Bahmai's orders, although the splendid dome dates from the time of the Safawid Shah Abbas I and the minarets at the entrance are from the early Kadjar period.

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J. BURTON-PAGE

Abi 'l-Khayr, Abu Sa'id Fadl Allāh B. (967-1049)

Abu Sa'id Fadl Abi 'l-Khayr is a Persian mystic, born 1st Muharram 357/7 December 967 in Mayhana (Mehana, Mehna), the present-day Me'ana in Khurasan, between Abiward and Sarakhs and died there 4 Sha'ban 440/2 January 1049. His biography was written by his descendant Muh. b. Abi Rawh Lutf Allāg b. Abi Sa'id b. Abi Tahir b. Abi Sa'id b. Abi 'l-Khayr under the title *Halat u-Sukhunan-i Shaikh abi Sa'id b. Abi 'l-Khayr*, ed. V. Zhukowski, St. Petersburg 1899 and much more fully, by the cousin of the foregoing Muhammad b. al-Munawwar b. Abi Sa'id under the title *Asrar al-Tawhid fi Makmat al-Shaikh Abi Sa'id*, ed. Zhukowski, St. Petersburg 1899, after two defective manuscripts; reprint Teheran 1313 H. Sh., new ed., Teheran 1332 H. Sh. (quoted as

AT). (Manuscripts also Skutari, Huda'i, Tas 238; Istanbul, Shehid 'Ali Pasha 1416). This work was the source used in the *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'* c. 'Attar and the *Nafahat al-Uns* of Djami. The father of Abu Sa'id was a druggist known as Babu Bu'l-Khayr. He took the boy with him occasionally to the sacred performances of dances (*sama'*) which the sufis of the town gave by turns in their houses.

Abu Sa'id received his first instruction in mystical devotion from Abu 'l-Kasim Bishr-i Yasin (d. 380/990), who had a poetic streak in him and is the author of the majority of the verses which Abu Sa'id later quoted in his sermons. As a young man Abu Sa'id studied Shafi'ite law in Marw under Abu 'Abd Allāh al-Husri, and Abu Bakr al-Kaffal (d. 417; al-Subki, *Tabakat*, iii 198-200). Among his fellow-students was Abu Muhammad al-Djuwayni (d. 438), the father of Imam al-Haramayn. Then he studied exegesis of the Kur'ān, dogmatics and Hadith in Sarakhs under Abu 'Ali Zahir (d. 389), who succeeded in rooting out Mu'tazilism from Sarakhs.

In Sarakhs, the crazy saint Lukman al-Sarakhsi introduced him to the Sufi Abu 'l-Fadl Muh. b. Hasan al-Saraskhsi. It was he who induced Abu Sa'id to abandon the study of learned subjects and to devote himself entirely to sufism and became his *pir* whom he consulted in all difficulties: moreover after Abu 'l-Hasan's death Abu Sa'id was in the habit of visiting his grave in Sarakhs when dejection (*kabd*) overtook him. He had, at the injunction of Abu 'l-Fadl, the *khirka* bestowed upon him by the celebrated sufi al-Sulami. After the death of Abu 'l-Fadl, he went through Nasa to Amul and spent some time with Abu 'l-'Abbas al-Kassab, who likewise bestowed the *khirka* upon him. Upon his return to Mayhana—the exact chronology of this period is by no means easy

to establish—he gave himself up with extreme zeal to severe ascetic and mystic exercise.

He spent his time partly in total seclusion in a room in his father's house, but also stayed in neighbouring monasteries, in particular the so-called *ribat-i kuhan*. Here he was sometimes observed by his father in the midst of extraordinary practices of self-castigation. He went beyond the prescribed measures in his religious ablutions, washed the doors and walls of his cell, never reclined, ate nothing whatever during the day, at night only a morsel to bread, spoke to people only when it was unavoidable, and shut himself off during the performance of *dhikr* by padding his ears so as to be undisturbed. At times, he could not bear so much as the sight of his fellow-men and would disappear for months in the mountains or the neighbouring desert.

This period of forming himself through asceticism with the object of subduing the sensual soul (*nafs*) and breaking asunder all bonds with the world, as well as of following up an ideal model of the Prophet in the minutest detail, is said to have lasted up to the fortieth year of his life. Already at this time the social motive of sufism, the 'service of the poor' (*khidmat-i darwishan*) begins to assume importance for him. He begged for the poor, swept mosques, cleaned washing-places, and so on.

This 'service of the poor', conceived principally for self-abasement at first, came ever more to the fore in the course of his life. 'The shortest way to God', he put it once, 'lies in bestowing comfort upon the soul of a Muslim' (*rahati ba dil-i musulmani rasandan*). This mode of life is exhibited in its fully-developed form at the period of his one year's residence in the capital of Khurasan, Nishapur, where he

stayed in the monastery of Abu 'All Tarsusi in the quarter of 'Adanikuban.

There young men flocked to him: he preached before larger audiences and displayed himself as a kind of spiritual guide (*sidk ma' al-Hakk, rifk ma' al-khalk*). At this juncture the gift of thought-reading (*firasat*), peculiar to him and esteemed a miracle (*karamat*) by his followers, stood him in good stead: it revealed to him the most intimate impulses of the hearts even of his enemies, disarmed his adversaries and converted many of them into followers instead. He liked to arrange lavish, even extravagant entertainments for his followers, culminating in sacred dance music (*sama'*).

During these, dancing and crying out (*na'ra zadan*) were, as was customary, were thrown off, torn up, and distributed around. To finance these luxurious occasions, at which as much as a thousand *dinars* is supposed to have been spent in a day, and which moved 'Awfi to remark that in later years Abu Sa'id lived hardly as an ascetic but rather as a sultan, he did not hesitate to incur debts; these were the cause of frequent embarrassment to his household manager Hasan-i Mu'addib. Some wealthy devotee, however, was always found, who, often at the last moment, provided the requisite money.

Sometimes, he sent Hasan to followers, even to opponents, with whom he stayed, in order to raise money in an almost barefaced manner. The money was immediately spent, as it was regarded as a principle to possess no assured property (*ma'lum*) and to accumulate nothing. His way of living caused offence the Karramite Abu Bakr Muh. b. Ishak b. Mih-mashadh made common cause with the Hanafite Kadi Sa'id b. Muhammad al-Ustuwa'i (d. 432) and laid information about Abu Sa'id before

sultan Mahmud b. Subukitign, who ordered an enquiry, perhaps in conjunction with a universal heresy hunt carried out by the aforementioned Karramite governor Abu Bakr (Barthold, *Turkestan*, 290). However, Abu Sa'id contrived to disarm both through his skill in thought-reading, with the result that they abandoned the prosecution.

The indictments were, that the *shaikh* recited on the pulpit verses in place of the Kur'ān and Hadith, that he gave too luxurious feasts and that he had made the young people dance. The great al-Kushayri, who encountered Abu Sa'id in Nishapur, took exception to the excessively liberal way of life of the *shaikh* and to his dance music. The contrast between the characters of the two men is illustrated by an apt anecdote: al-Kushayri had repudiated a derwish and banished him from the town. Abu Sa'id showed him at a banquet how by very much gentler methods a derwish may be sent travelling.

A strong kindliness of nature and an affection for his fellow-men were conspicuous characteristics of Abu Sa'id. He was no preacher of repentance; seldom, if ever did he refer in his sermons to the verses of the Kur'ān threatening the torments of Hell. Numerous stories were related of how by means of his *firasa* he saw through the intimate thoughts of sinners and opponents and thoroughly abashed them. The guiding motif of his life is said to have been the *hadith*: *Sil man kata'ak wa-a'ti man haramak wa'ghfir man zalamak*.

The celebrated sufi Ibn Bakuya (d. 442/1050) reproached him for allowing young people to sit together with old and for treating them just as he did the old, for allowing them to dance and for giving back the cast-off *khirka* to its owner, whereas it should by being cast

off have become common property. Abu Sa'id contrived to give plausible reasons for these innovations. Ibn Hazm brands him as an unbeliever, since he wore now wool, now silk, sometimes prayed a thousand *rak'as* a day, sometimes not at all. At all events social work played a very much greater role in the second period of his life than individual mystic experience: and from this point of view he is comparable (in spite of substantial differences) with Abu Ishak al-Kazaruni.

However, he once gave tongue to a pronouncement similar to al-Halladj's *Ana 'l-Hakk*. In the course of a sermon he was overcome by a state of inner excitement and called out *Laysa fi l-djubbat illa 'llah*, (There is none other than God in this robe). So saying he ran his forefinger through the gown. It was divided and the portion with the hole made by his finger preserved.

In Nishapur, he also met the philosopher Ibn Sina and is supposed to have held lengthy conversations with him. A correspondence between the two is preserved. Abu Sa'id asked the philosopher what was the way to God according to his experience, and received a reply. At the end of his stay in Nishapur he wished to accompany his son Abu Tahir on the pilgrimage, but was restrained from this in Kharakan by the celebrated sufi Abu 'l-Hasan Kharakani. He then went to Bistam where he visited the grave of Abu Yazid, and to Damghan, eventually reaching Rayy before returning with his son. He spent the rest of his life in his home town of Mayhana.

Abu Sa'id is supposedly the author of a great number of quatrains. However it has been expressly stated that he composed only one verse and one quatrain. The quatrains may not then be attributable to him. One of them, with

which he is supposed to have cured his Kur'an-teacher Abu Salih of an illness (AT, 229) and which opens with the word *hawra* was made the subject of a commentary by 'Abd Allāh b. Mahmud al-Shashi under the title *Risala-yi Hawra'iyya*.

Abu Sa'id left a numerous family, who tended his grave for more than a hundred years and were held in great respect in Mayhana. His eldest son Abu Tahir Sa'id (d. 480) continued the 'service of the poor' and thereby involved himself in debts which were paid by Nizam al-Mulk. He was an uncultured individual, however, who left school before he was ten years old and knew by heart only the 48th sura of the Kur'an, and did not have the personality to found an order after his father's death (as did the son of Djamal al-Din Rumi, Sultan Walad), although Abu Sa'id did leave behind a kind of statute for an order.

The tradition was however broken by political events. Abu Sa'id lived to see the entry of the Saldjuks into Khurasan. They occupied Mayhana, and Abu Sa'id was on friendly relations with Tughril and Caghri Beg. Sultan Mas'ud laid siege to the town and captured it shortly before his decisive defeat at Dandanakan in the year 431/1040.

During the devastation of Khurasan by the Ghuzz in the year 548/1153 the place was absolutely laid waste, no fewer than 115 members of Abu Sa'id's family being tortured and put to death. A follower of Abu Sa'id, Dust Bu Sa'id Dada, whom the *shaikh* had sent to Ghazna not long before his death to have the Sultan discharge his accumulated debts, found Abu Sa'id dead, went to Baghdad on his return, and founded a daughter monastery there. At the time of Ibn al-Munawwar his family held the position of *shaikh al-shuyukh* in Baghdad,

but nothing is known of the subsequent destiny of this offshoot.

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H. RITTER

Abu'l Khayr (11th Century)

Sufi Abu Sa'id ibu Abi'l-Khayr (A.D. 1048) of Mayhana learned the Islamic Traditions and the mystical doctrines, particularly those of recollection of God (*dhikr*) and freedom from self-interest (*tama'*) in relation to God, from Shaikh Abul-Qasim Bishr-i Yasin. He took his theological training from the great scholars Abu'abdullah al-Husri and Abu Bakr al-Qaffal.

Afterwards, he was associated with Abu 'Ali Zahir who made him familiar with the doctrine of Divinity and the *Qur'anic* teaching. He was spiritually initiated by Shaikh Abu'l-Qassab who taught him the various forms of ascetic practices on the mystic path.

He discarded them as a source of attainment of spiritual perfection and followed the ascetic practices to reach Truth after a serious study of the Traditions and Theology. He was convinced that complete unveiling of the Divine qualities takes place in the heart of the Sufi who does not pursue any rational

knowledge in his quest after Truth. Abu Sa'id believes:

"The first step in this affair (Sufism) is the breaking of inkpot and the tearing-up of books and the forgetting of all kinds of (intellectual) knowledge".

Abu Sa'id was the first Islamic saint who was sincerely devoted to the realisation of Pure Self in order to reach God. The Sufi discovers his real self through the negation of self (*nafs*) because it is associated with the different passions and desires which create obstacles in attaining mystical perfection. Freedom from lower qualities (*sifat-i bashriyya*) is an essential qualification required for spiritual progress. Abu Sa'id has explained such views about the self in a number of ways:

"the true servant is he who fears the Majesty of God and frees himself from carnal desires. Until you empty yourself of self, you will not be able to escape from it. If you wish that God should dwell in your heart, purify your heart from all save Him, for the King will not enter a house filled with stores and furniture, He will only enter a heart which is empty of all save Himself and which does not admit yourself with Him. Take one step out of Thyself, that thou mayest arrive at God. Hell is where thou art and Paradise where thou art not. Evil is 'thou'; and the words evil is 'thou', when thou knowest it not".

This can be said to be the negative side of his mystical teachings on the self which the ascetic has to pursue in his practice of self-mortification (*mujahada*). As regards the positive aspect of self-realisation, Abu Sa'id thinks that God bestows purity of self upon him who earnestly desires it and is eternally nourished by Him through His contemplation. Abu Sa'id says:

"At first God implanted in man's heart a sense of need and a longing desire and sorrow. Then, he looked upon that need and sorrow with favour and pity and placed His gift within the heart and that gift is called the mystic shrine (*sirr*) of God. It is immortal and cannot be destroyed, for it is continually contemplated by God and belongs to Him. It is free from all creatureliness and is only lent to the body. Whoever has that mystic shrine of God is living in truth and whoever has it not, is but an animal."

The carnal self, for Abu Sa'id, is unreal since it believes in polytheism (*shirk*) and remains sceptical about the existence of One God. The negation of this unreal self is necessary for knowing Divine Unity.

"You cannot believe in God until you deny yourself, that self which keeps you far from God Most High and which says, so-and-so has done you an injury and such a one has treated you well".

Knowledge of the unity of God (*tawhid*) is revealed in the illuminated hearts of the saints.

"God, in His purity, looks upon the inmost self (*sirr*) of man and help is given to it from that pure Divine contemplation. This Divine assistance is the guardian of that inmost self and he who acknowledge the Divine Unity is enabled to do so by that inmost self".

Abu Sa'id explains his doctrines of self-realisation:

"God Almighty has created two fires, one unto life one unto death: the living fire is the fire of supplication which He has placed in the hearts of His servants in this world, so that their carnal selves may be consumed that fire burns brightly and when the self is consumed away, suddenly that fire of longing will never die either in this world or the next".

In fact, the idea of 'self-realisation' through 'self-denial' is a common Sufi concept of '*al-baqa ba'd al-fana*' (being in existence after the passing-away from self) which Abu Sa'id has explained in such a remarkable style.

A perfect saint does not believe in orthodoxy of religion. Similarly, a belief in God from a ritual stand-point is not true. The Sufi's faith in God is more lasting than the Muslim's belief in Allah. The truth of the matter is that the wisdom revealed to the Prophet and contained in his sermons is not a Universal Truth, cast by God in the hearts of His lovers.

"Ye imagine that the word of God is of fixed quantity and extent. Nay, the infinite word of God that was sent down to Mohammad is the whole seven sevenths of the *Koran*; but that which He causes to come into the hearts of His servants does not admit of being numbered and limited, nor does it ever cease".

Abu Sa'id had a firm faith in the service of humanity. In his opinion, the behaviour of a true saint of God towards His creation always remains friendly and affectionate. A spiritual recluse who ignores mankind and remains involved merely in the ascetic practices, is not a true friend of God.

"If men wish to draw near God, they must seek Him in the hearts of men... That is the true man of God, who sits in the midst of his fellow-men and rises up and eats and sleeps and buys and sells and gives and takes in the bazaars amongst other people and who marries and has social intercourse with other folk and yet is never for one moment forgetful of God".

Abu Sa'id believes in the teachings of Abu'l-Abbas Bash shari who says:

"When a disciple performs an act of kindness to a dervish, it is better for him than a hundred genuflexions; and if he gives him a mouthful

of food, it is better for him than a whole night spent in prayer".

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EB

Abu 'l-Kasim 'Abd Al-Karim B. Hawazin (986-1072)

Abu 'l-Kasim 'Abd Al-Karim B. Hawazin, was an eminent theologian and mystic. He was born in 376/986 in Ustawa (the region of actual Kucan on the upper Atrak), the son of a man of Arab descent (from B. Kushayr) and a woman from an Arab (from B. Sulaym) dihqan family. He got the education of a country squire of the time: adab, the Arabic language, chivalry (*furusiyya*) and weaponry (*isti'mal al-silah*).

When as a young man he came to Naysabur with the intention to get the taxes on one of his villages reduced, he became acquainted with the Sufi shaykh Abu 'Ali al-Dakkak, who became his master on the mystical path. Later on, he married Abu 'Ali's daughter Fatima (born 391/1001).

Besides his mystical exercises, he studied fiqh with the Shafi'i jurist Abu Bakr Muhammad b. Bakr al-Tusi (d. 420/1029) in nearby Tus; he seems also to have visited the city of Marw fi talab al-'ilm (Subki, v, 158). In Naysabur he studied kalam and usul al-fiqh with the Ash'ari scholars Abu Bakr b. Furak (d. 406/

1015-16) and Abu Ishak al-Isfara'ini (d. 418/1027).

After the death of Abu Ali in 405/1015, he seems to have become the successor of his master and father-in-law as leader of the mystic sessions (*madjalis al-tadhkir*) in the madrasa of Abu 'Ali (built in 391/1001), which henceforth was known as al-madrasa al-Kushayriya (later on as madrasat al-Kushayriyya, 'the madrasa of the Kushayri family').

At an indeterminable date, al-Kushayri performed the Pilgrimage in company with Abu Muhammad al-Djuwayni (d. 438/1047), the father of the Imam al-Haramayn, and other Shafi'i scholars. During these travels he heard hadith in Baghdad and the Hijaz. Probably, after his return to Naysabur he held his first *madjalis al-impla*, i.e. session for the teaching of hadith, in 437/1046.

After Naysabur had passed under the control of the Saldjuks in 429/1038, al-Kushayri was involved in the struggles between the Hanafi and Ash'ari-Shafi'i factions in the city. In 436/1045, he issued a manifesto defending the orthodoxy of Abu 'l-Hasan al-Ash'ari; the document (preserved by Ibn 'Asakir, Tabyin, 112-14; cf. Subki, iii, 374f.; Halm, Der Wesir al-Kunduri, 214 ff.) was signed by the most renowned Shafi'i scholars of the city. When in 446/1054 the Hanafi-Shafi'i conflict broke out into a violent fitna, al-Kushayri was imprisoned by his adversaries, but was rescued some weeks later by his partisans by force of arms.

As a reaction to these events, he wrote his famous 'Complaint', *Shikayat ahl al-sunna bima nalahum min al-mihna*, by which he defended al-Ash'ari against the slanderous accusations of his adversaries.

In 448/1056, al-Kushayri went to Baghdad, where the caliph al-Ka'im commissioned him

to teach hadith in his palace. After his return to Khurasan he left Naysabur, now dominated by the Hanafi faction and emigrated with his family to Tus, where he stayed until the accession to the throne of sultan Alp Arslan in 455/1063. When the vizier, Nizam al-Mulk re-established the balance of power between the Hanafis and the Shafi'is, he returned to Naysabur where he lived until his death. He died on 16 Rabi' II 465/30 December 1072 and was buried in his madrasa besides his father-in-law Abu 'Ali al-Dakkak. He left six sons and several daughters; some of his numerous descendants officiated as khatib of Shafi'i Mani'l mosque in Naysapur.

Even if al-Kushayri's studies covered the whole scale of the traditional Islamic sciences, his writings mostly deal with mystical topics. His great mystical tafsir, the *Lata'if al-isharat*, was composed before 410/1019; the *Tartib al-suluk* is introduction to the practice of tasawwuf and the famous *Risala* (composed in 438/1045) is a most important compendium of the principles and terminology of Sufism (analysed by R. Hartmann). In all his works, al-Kushayri tried to reconcile mystical practices, suspected by so many scholars, with the principles of the Shari'a.

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EB

Abu Sa'id, ibn abi 'l Khayr (967-1049)

Abu Sa'id and Omar Khayyam are associated in the history of Persian literature by the circumstance that each of them is the reputed author of a famous collection of *ruba'iyyat* in which his individuality has almost disappeared. That these collections are wholly, or even mainly, the work of Abu Sa'id and Omar no one who examines the evidence is likely to assert; they should rather be regarded as anthologies—of which the nucleus, perhaps, was formed by the two authors in question—containing poems of a particular type composed at various periods by many different hands.

It is possible, no doubt, that Omar's view of life and his general cast of thought are more

or less reflected in the quatrains attributed to him, but we can learn from them nothing definite and distinctive. The same considerations apply with equal force to the mystical *ruba'is* passing under the name of Abu Sa'id. In his case, however, we possess excellent and copious biographical materials which make us intimately acquainted with him and throw a welcome light on many aspects of contemporary Persian mysticism.

The oldest of these documents is a short treatise on his life and sayings, which is preserved in a manuscript of the British Museum (Or. 249). It bears neither title nor indication of authorship, but Zhukovski in his edition of the text (Petrograd, 1899) identifies it with the *Halal u Sukhunan-i Shaikh Abu Sa'id ibn Abi' 'l-Khayr*, work composed about a century after Abu Sa'id's death by one of his descendants whose name is unknown. He was a cousin of Muhammad ibn 'I-Munawwar, the great-great-grandson of Abu Sa'id.

Using the *Halal-u-Sukhunan* as a foundation, Muhammad ibn I-Munawwar compiled a much larger biography of his ancestor which he entitled *Asraru 'l-tawhid fi maqamati 'l-Shaikh Abi Sa'id* (ed. by Zhukovski, Petrograd, 1899) and dedicated to the Ghurid prince, Ghiyathu'd din Muhammad ibn Sam (A.D. 1203). The author, like Abu Sa'id himself, was a native of Mayhana or Mihna in Khurasan.

From his earliest youth it had been a labour of love for him to gather the sayings of the Saint and to verify the records and traditions which were handed down in his family and were still fresh in the minds of his fellow-townsmen. The task was undertaken not a moment too soon. It A.D. 1154, the Turcoman tribe of the Ghuzz swept over the borders of Khurasan and

carried fire and sword through that flourishing province. Everywhere the population was massacred.

The author tells us that 115 descendants of Abu Sa'id, young and old, were tortured to death in Mayhana alone, and that no memorial of him was left except his tomb. Religion, he says, fell into utter ruin. The search after Truth ceased, unbelief became rampant; of Islam only the name, and of Sufism only the form survived. Impelled by divine grace, he complied with the request of some novices that he should write an account of the spiritual experiences and memorable sayings of Shaikh Abu Sa'id, for the encouragement of those who desired to enter upon the Path (*tariqa*) and for the guidance of those who were travelling on the road of the Truth (*haqiqa*).

Abu Sa'id died in A.D. 1049, and the *Asraru 'l-tawhid* was probably completed not less than 120 or more 150 years later. As Zhukovski points out, it is almost the first example in Persian of a separate work having for its subject the life of and individual mystic. The portrait of Abu Sa'id amidst the circle of Sufis and dervishes in which he lived is drawn with extra-ordinary richness of detail, and gains in vividness as well as in value from the fact that a great part of the story is told by himself. Although the Mohammedan system of oral tradition by which these authbiographical passages have been preserved forbids us to suppose that we have before us an exact transcript of Abu Sa'id's words as they were spoken to the original reporter, there is no reason to doubt that in most cases the substance of them is given correctly. His own veracity is not incontestable, but this question, which leads at once into the darkest abysses of psychology, I must leave in suspense.

The *Halalu Sukhunan* and the *Asraru 'l-tawhid* render the more recent biographies of Abu Sa'id all but superfluous. A certain amount of new material is found in the Supplement to Faridu'ddin 'Attar's *Tadhkiratu 'l-Awliya* and Jami's *Nafahatu 'l-Uns*.

For the sake of clearness, I have divided the following study into three sections, of which the first deals with the life of Abu Sa'id, the second with his mystical sayings and doctrines, and the third with miracles and other matter belonging to his legend.

Abu Sa'id Fadlu'llah was born at Mayhana, the chief town of the Khawaran district of Khurasan, on the 1st of Muharram, A.H. 357 (December 7th, A.D. 967). His father Abu 'l-Khayr, known in Mayhana as Babu Bu 'l-Khayr, was a druggist, "a pious and religious man, well acquainted with the sacred law of Islam (*shari'a*) and with the Path of Sufism (*tariqa*). He and other Sufis were in the habit of meeting every night in the house of one of their number. Whenever a strange Sufi arrived in the town, they would invite him to join them, and after partaking of food and finishing their prayers and devotions they used to listen to music and singing (*sama*). One night, when Babu Bu 'l-Khayr was going to meet his friends, his wife begged him to take Abu Sa'id with him in order that the dervishes might look on him with favour; so Bu 'l-Khayr let the lad accompany him. As soon as it was time for the music to begin, the singer (*qawwal*) chanted this quatrain:

"God gives the dervish love—and love is woe;
By dying near and dear to Him they grow.
The generous youth will freely yield his life,
The man of God cares naught for worldly show".

On hearing this song the dervishes fell into ecstasy and kept up the dance till day-break.

The *qawwal* sang the quatrain so often that Abu Sa'id got it by heart. When he returned home, he asked his father the meaning of the verses that had thrown the dervishes into such transports of joy. "Hush!" said his father, "you cannot understand what they mean: what does it matter to you?" Afterwards, when Abu Sa'id had attained to a high spiritual degree, he used sometimes to say of his father, who was then dead, "I want Babu Bu 'l-Khayr today, to tell him that he himself did not know the meaning of what he heard on that night."

Abu Sa'id was taught the first rudiments of Moslem education—to read the *Koran*—by Abu Muhammad 'Ayyari, an eminent divine, who is buried at Nasa. He learned grammar from Abu Sa'id Ayyari and the principles of Islam from Abu 'l-Qasim Bishr-i Yasin, both of Mayhana. The latter seems to have been a remarkable man.

It has already referred to the mystical quatrains which Abu Sa'id was fond of quoting in his discourses and which are commonly thought to be his own. Against this hypothesis we have his definite statement that these quatrains were composed by other Sufis and that Bishr-i Yasin was the author of most of them. From Bishr, too, Abu Sa'id learned the doctrine of disinterested love, which is the basis of Sufism.

One day Abu 'l-Qasim Bishr-i Yasin (may God sanctify his honoured spirit!) said to me: "O Abu Sa'id, endeavour to remove self-interest (*tama'*) from thy dealings with God. So long as that exists, sincerity (*ikhlas*) cannot be attained. Devotions inspired by sincerity are work done to serve God. Learn by heart the Tradition of the Prophet:

"God said to me on the night of my Ascension, O Mohammed! as for those who would draw night to Me, their best means of drawing night

is by performance of the obligations which I have laid upon them. My servant continually seeks to win My favour by works of supere-rogation until I love him; and when I love him, I am to him an ear and an eye and a hand and a helper: through Me he hears, and through Me he sees, and through Me he takes."

Bishr explained that to perform obligations means 'to serve God,' while to do works of super-erogation means 'to love God'; then he recited these lines:

"Perfect love proceeds from the lover who hopes naught for himself; what is there to desire in that which has a price?"

Certainly the Giver is better for you than the gift:

"How should you want the gift, when you possess the very Philosopher's Stone?"

On another occasion Bishr taught his young pupil how to practise 'recollection' (*dikr*). "Do you wish," he asked him, "to talk with God?" "Yes, of course, I do," said Abu Sa'id. Bishr told him that whenever he was alone he must recite the following quatrain, no more and no less:

"Without Thee, O Beloved, I cannot rest;
Thy goodness towards me I cannot reckon.
Thou every hair on my body becomes a tongue,
A thousandth part of the thanks due to Thee I cannot tell."

Abu Sa'id was constantly repeating these words. He says:

"By the blessing which they brought the Way to God was opened to me in my childhood."

Bishr died in A.H. 380 (A.D. 990). Whenever Abu Sa'id went to the grave-yard of Mayhana his first visit was always paid to the tomb of the venerated teacher who had given him his first lesson in Sufism.

If we can believe Abu Sa'id when he declares that in his youth he knew by heart 30,000 verses of Pre-Islamic poetry, his knowledge of profane literature must have been extensive. After completing this branch of education, he set out for Merv with the purpose of studying theology under Abu 'Abdallah al-Husri, a pupil of the famous Shafi'ite doctor, Ibn Surayj. He read with al-Husri for five years, and with Abu Bakr al-Qaffal for five more. From Merv he moved to Sarakhs, where he attended the lectures of Abu 'Ali Zahir on *Koranic* exegesis (in the morning), on systematic theology (at noon), and on the Traditions of the Prophet (in the afternoon).

Abu Sa'id's birth and death are the only events of his life to which a precise date is attached. We know that he studied at Merv for ten years, and if we assume that his *Wanderjahre* began at the usual time, he was probably between 25 and 28 years when he first came to Sarakhs. Here, his conversion to Sufism took place. He has described it himself in the following narrative, which I will now translate without abridgement. I have relegated to the foot of the page, and distinguished by means of square brackets, certain passages that interrupt the narrative and did not form part of it originally. Abu Sa'id said as follows:

"At the time when I was a student, I lived at Sarakhs and read with Abu 'Ali, the doctor of divinity. One day, as I was going into the city, I saw Luqma of Sarakhs seated on an ash-heap near the gate, sewing a patch on his gaberdine. I went up to him and stood looking at him, while he continued to sew."

As soon as he had sewn the patch on, he said:

"O Abu Sa'id! I have sewn thee on this gaberdine along with the patch."

Then, he rose and took my hand, leading me to the convent (*khanaqah*) of the Sufis in

Sarakhs, and shouted for Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl Hasan, who was within. When Abu 'l-Fadl appeared, Luqman placed my hand in his, saying

"O Abu 'l-Fadl, watch over this young man, for he is one of you."

The Shaikh took my hand and led me into the convent. I sat down in the portico and the Shaikh picked up a volume and began to pause it. As is the way of scholars, I could not help wondering what the book was. The Shaikh perceived my thought. He said:

"Abu Sa'id! all the hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets were sent to preach one word. They bade the people say *Allah* and devote themselves to Him. Those who heard this word with the ear alone, let it go out by the other ear; but those who heard it with their souls imprinted it on their souls and repeated it until it penetrated their hearts and souls, and their whole being became this word. They were made independent of the pronunciation of the word, they were released from the sound and the letters. Having understood the spiritual meaning of this word, they became so absorbed in it that they were no more conscious of their own non-existence."

This saying took hold of me and did not allow me to sleep that night. In the morning, when I had finished my prayers and devotions, I went to the Shaikh before sunrise and asked permission to attend Abu 'Ali's lecture on *Koranic* exegesis. He began his lecture with the verse:

"Say *Allah!* then leave them to amuse themselves in their folly."

At the moment of hearing this word a door in my breast was opened, and I was rapt from myself. The Imam Abu 'Ali observed the change in me and asked, "Where were you last

night?" I said, "With Abu 'l-Fadl, saying, "It is unlawful for you to come from that subject (Sufism) to this discourse." I returned to the Shaikh, distraught and bewildered, for I had entirely lost myself in this word. When Abu 'l-Fadl saw me, he said:

"Abu Sa'id! *mastak shuda'i hami nadani pas u pish.*

Thou art drunk, poor youth! Thou know'st not head from tail."

"O Shaikh!" I said, "what is thy command?" He said, "Come in and sit down and devote thyself wholly to this word, for this word hath much work to do with thee."

After I had stayed with him for a long time, duly performing all that was required by this word, he said to me one day:

"O Abu Sa'id! the doors of the letters of this word have been opened to thee. Now the hosts (of spiritual grace) will rush into thy breast, and thou wilt experience diverse kinds of self-culture (*adab*)."

Then he exclaimed:

"Thou hast been transported, transported, transported! Go and seek a place of solitude, and turn aside from men as thou hast turned aside from thyself, and behave with patience and resignation to God's will."

I abandoned my studies and came home to Mayhana and retired into the niche of the chapel in my own house. There, I sat for seven years, saying continually, "Allah! Allah! Allah!" Whenever drowsiness or inattention arising from the weakness of human nature came over me, a soldier with a fiery spear—the most terrible and alarming figure that can possibly be imagined—appeared in front of the niche and shouted at me, saying, "O Abu Sa'id say Allah!" The dread of that apparition used to keep me burning and trembling for whole days

and nights, so that I did not again fall asleep or become inattentive; and at last every atom of me began to cry aloud, "Allah ! Allah ! Allah!"

Countless records of mystical conversion bear witness to the central fact in this description—the awakening of the soul in response to some unsuspected stimulus, by which, as Arnold says,

A bolt is shot back somewhere in the breast, opening a way for the flood of transcendental consciousness to burst through. The accompanying ecstasy is a normal feature, and so is the abandonment of past occupations, habits, ambitions, and the fixing of every faculty upon that supreme reality which is henceforth the single object of desire. All these phenomena, however sudden they may seem, are the climax of an interior conflict that perhaps, only makes itself known at the moment when it is already decided. Probably in Abu Sa'id's case the process was at least to some extent a consciousness. He had been long and earnestly engaged in the study of theology. I possessed many books and papers, but though I used to turn them over and read them one after the other, I was never finding any peace. I prayed to God, saying:

"O Lord, nothing is revealed to my heart by all this study and learning: it causes me to lose Thee, O God! Let me be able to do without it by giving me something in which I shall find Thee again."

Here, Abu Sa'id acknowledges that he sought spiritual peace, and that all his efforts to win it from intellectual proofs ended in failure. The history of that struggle is written, but not until the powers of intellect were fully tried and shown to be of no avail, could mightier forces drawn from a deeper source

come overwhelmingly into action. As regards the perpetual iteration of the name Allah, I need hardly remind my readers that this is a method everywhere practised by Moslem mystics for bringing about *fana*, i.e. the passing-away from self, or in Pascal's phrase, "*oubli du monde et de tout hormis Dieu*."

We have seen that the first act of Abu Sa'id after his conversion was to enquire of Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl what he must do next. That is to say, he had implicitly accepted Abu 'l-Fadl as his spiritual director, in accordance with the rule that:

"if anyone by means of asceticism and self-mortification shall have risen to an exalted degree of mystical experience, *without having a Pir to whose authority and example he submits himself*, the Sufis do not regard him as belonging to their community."

In this way a continuous tradition of mystical doctrine is secured, beginning with the Prophet and carried down through a series of dead Pirs to the living director who forms the last link of the chain until he too dies and is succeeded by one of his pupils. Abu Sa'id's lineage as a Sufi is given in the following table:

Mohammed, the Prophet
|
'Ali (ob. A.D. 661)
|
Hasan of Basra (ob. A.D. 728)
|
Habib 'Ajami (ob. A.D. 737)
|
Dawud Ta'i (ob. A.D. 781)
|
Ma'ruf Karkhi (ob. A.D. 815)
|
Sari Saqati (ob. A.D. 867)
|
Junayd of Baghdad (ob. A.D. 909)
|

Murta'ish of Baghdad (ob. A.D. 939)
|
Abu Nasr al-Sarraj of Tus (ob. A.D. 988)
|
Abu 'l-Fadl Hasan of Sarakhs
|
Abu Sa'id ibn Abi 'l-Khayr

The appearance of Mohammed and his son-in-law at the head of a list of this kind fits in with the fiction—which was necessary for the existence of Sufism within Islam—that the Sufis are the legitimate heirs and true interpreters of the esoteric teaching of the Prophet. Hasan of Basra, Habib 'Ajami, and Dawud Ta'i were ascetics and quietists rather than mystics. Even if we take the ninth century as a starting point, it must not be supposed that any fixed body of doctrine was handed down. Such a thing is foreign to the nature of Sufism, which essentially is not a system based on authority and tradition, but a free movement assuming infinitely various forms in obedience to the inner light of the individual soul.

Before the time of Abu Sa'id, certain eminent theosophists—Junayd, for instance—had founded schools which owed their origin to controversies over particular questions of mystical theory and practice, while at a later period Sufism branched off into great organisations comparable to the Christian monastic orders. Everywhere we find divergent tendencies asserting themselves and freely developing a vigorous life.

There is no difficulty in believing that Abu Sa'id, after passing through the spiritual crisis which has been described, returned to Mayhana and spent some time in solitary meditation, though doubts are suggested by the statement, which occurs in the two oldest biographies, that his seclusion (*khalwat*) lasted for seven years. According to the *Halat u Sukhunan*, at the end

of this period—Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl having died in the meanwhile—he journeyed to Amul in order to visit Shaikh Abu 'l-'Abbas Qassab. The *Asrar*, however, mentions a second period during which he practised the most severe austerities, first at Sarakhs under the care of Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl and then, for seven years, in the deserts and mountains of Mayhana, until at the age of 40 he attained to perfect saintship.

These numbers can only be regarded as evidence of a desire to make him exemplify a theoretically symmetrical scheme of the mystic's progress towards perfection but it is none the less probable that for many years after his conversion Abu Sa'id was painfully treading the *via purgativa*, which Sufis call "the Path (*tariqqa*). His biographers give an interesting account of his self-mortification (*mujahada*). The details are derived either from his public discourses or from the testimony of eye-witnesses.

The author of the *Asrar* relates that after seven years of solitary retirement Abu Sa'id came back to Shaikh Abu'l-Fadl, who gave him a cell opposite his own, in order that he might keep him always under observation, and prescribed such moral and ascetic discipline as was necessary. When some time had passed, he was transferred to the cell of Abu 'l-Fadl himself and subjected to still closer supervision (*muraqabat-i ahwal*). We are not told how long he remained in the convent at Sarakhs.

At last, Abu 'l-Fadl bade him return to Mayhana and take care of his mother. Here, he lived in a cell, apparently in his father's house, though he also frequented several cloisters in the neighbourhood, especially one known as 'The Old Cloister' (*Ribat-i Kuhan*) on the Merv road. Among the ascetic exercises in which he

was now constantly engaged the following are recorded:

"He showed excessive zeal in his religious ablutions, emptying a number of water-jugs for every single *wudu*. He was always washing the door and walls of his cell. He never leaned against any door or wall, or rested his body on wood or on a cushion, or reclined on a couch. All the time he wore only one shirt, which gradually increased in weight because, whenever it was torn, he would sew a patch on it. At last, it weighed 20 maunds. He never quarrelled with anyone nor spoke to anyone, except when necessity forced him to do so. He ate no food by day, and broke his fast with nothing more than a piece of bread. He did not sleep by day or night but shut himself in his cell, where he had made an excavation in the wall, just high and broad enough to stand in, which could be closed by means of a door. He used to stand here and close the door and occupy himself with recollection (*dhikr*), stuffing his ears with cotton wool in order that no disturbing sound might reach him, and that his attention might remain concentrated. At the same time he never ceased to watch over his inmost self (*muraqabat-i sirr*), in order that no thought except of God might cross his mind."

After a while, he became unable to bear the society or even the sight of men. He wandered alone in desert and mountainous places and would often disappear for a month or more. His father used to go in search of him and find out where he was, from labourers or travellers who had seen him. To please his father, he would come home, but ere long he would feel the presence of human creatures to be unendurable and would again flee to mountains and wildernesses, where he was sometimes seen roaming with a venerable old man clad in white raiment. Many years

afterwards, when Abu Sa'id had risen to eminence, he declared to those who questioned him that this old man was the prophet Khadir.

Although he was carefully watched, Abu Sa'id contrived to escape from his father's house night after night. On one occasion, his father (who felt a natural anxiety as to the object of these nocturnal excursions) followed him, unperceived, at a little distance.

My son (he relates) walked on until he reached the Old Cloister (*Ribat-i Kuhan*). He entered it and shut the gate behind him, while I went up on the roof. I saw him go into a chapel, which was in the *ribat*, and close the door. Looking through the chapel window, I waited to see what would happen. There was a stick lying on the floor, and it had a rope fastened to it. He took up the stick and tied the end of the rope to his foot. Then, laying the stick across the top of a pit that was at the corner of the chapel, he slung himself into the pit head downwards, and began to recite the *Koran*. He remained in that posture until day-break, when, having recited the whole *Koran*, he raised himself from the pit, replaced the stick where he had found it, opened the door, came out of the chapel, and commenced to perform his ablution in the middle of the *ribat*. I descended from the roof, hastened home, and slept until he came in. The following passage illustrates another side of Abu Sa'id's asceticism. He said:

"One day I said to myself, Knowledge, works, meditation—I have them all; now I want to become absent from them (*ghaybati az in*). On consideration I saw that the only way to attain this was by acting as a servant to the dervishes, for when God wishes to benefit a man, He shows to him the path of self-abasement. Accordingly, I made it my business to wait

upon them, and I used to clean their cells and privies and lavatories. I persevered in this work for a long time, until it became a habit. Then, I resolved to beg for the dervishes, which seemed to me the hardest thing I could lay upon myself. At first, when people saw me begging, they would give me a piece of gold, but soon it was only copper, and by degrees it came down to a single raisin or nut. In the end, even this was refused. One day, I was with a number of dervishes, and there was nothing to be got for them. For their sake I parted with the turban I had on my head, then I sold one after the other my slippers, the lining of my *jubba*, the cloth of which it was made, and the cotton quilting."

During the period of ascetic discipline which he underwent at Mayhana, Abu Sa'id sometimes visited Sarakhs for the purpose of receiving spiritual guidance from Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl. His biographer says that he travelled on his bare feet, but if we may trust 'Abdu 'l-Samad, one of his disciples, he usually flew through the air; it is added that this phenomenon was witnessed only by persons of mystical insight. According to the *Asrar*, he returned to Abu 'l-Fadl for another year's training and was then sent by him to Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, who invested him with the patched frock (*khirqqa*) that proclaims the wearer to be a recognised member of the brotherhood of Sufis. Al-Sulami of Nishapur (A.D. 1021), a pupil of Abu 'l-Qasim al-Nasrabadi, was a celebrated mystic. He is the author of the *Tabaqatu 'l-Sufiyya*—biographies of the early Sufi Shaikhs—and other important works. On Abu Sa'id return, Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl said to him:

"Now all is finished. You must go to Mayhana and call the people to God and admonish them and show them the way to the Truth."

He came back to Mayhana, as his Director enjoined, but instead of contenting himself with Abu 'l-Fadl's assurance that all was now finished, he increased his austerities and was more assiduous than ever in his devotions. In the following discourse he refers to the veneration which the people began to manifest towards him at this time.

When I was a novice, I bound myself to do eighteen things: I fasted continually; I abstained from unlawful food; I practised recollection (*dhikr*) uninterruptedly; I kept awake at night; I never reclined on the ground; I never slept but in a sitting posture; I sat facing the Ka'ba; I never leaned against anything; I never looked at a handsome youth or at women whom it would have been unlawful for me to see unveiled; I did not beg; I was content and resigned to God's will; I always sat in the mosque and did not go into the market, because the Prophet said that the market is the filthiest of places and the mosque the cleanest.

In all my acts I was a follower of the Prophet. Every four-and-twenty hours I completed a recitation of the *Koran*. In my seeing I was blind, in my hearing deaf, in my speaking dumb. For a whole year I conversed with no one. People called me a lunatic, and I allowed them to give me that name, relying on the Tradition that a man's faith is not made perfect until he is supposed to be mad. I performed everything that I had read or heard of as having been done or commanded by the Prophet. Having read that when he was wounded in the foot in the battle of Uhud, he stood on his toes in order to perform his devotions—for he could not set the sole of his foot upon the ground—I resolved to imitate him, and standing on tiptoe I performed a prayer of 400 genuflexions. I modelled my actions,

outward and inward, upon the Sunna of the Prophet, so that habit at last became nature.

Whatever I had heard or found in books concerning the acts of worship performed by the angels, I performed the same. I had heard and seen in writing that some angels worship God on their heads. Therefore, I placed my head on the ground and bade the blessed mother of Abu Tahir tie my toe with a cord and fasten the cord to a peg and then shut the door behind her. Being left alone, I said:

"O Lord! I do not want myself: let me escape from myself!"

and I began a recitation of the whole *Koran*. When I came to the verse, *God shall suffice thee against them, for He heareth and knoweth all*, blood poured from my eyes and I was no longer conscious of myself. Then things changed.

Ascetic experiences passed over me of a kind that can be described in words, and God strengthened and aided me therein, but I fancied that all these acts were done by me. The grace of God became manifest and showed me that this was not so, and that these were the acts of divine favour and grace. I repented of my belief and realised that it was mere self-conceit. Now, if you say that you will not tread this path because it is self-conceit, I reply that your refusal to tread it is self-conceit. Until you have undergone all this, its self-conceit will not be revealed to you. Self-conceit appears only when you fulfil the Law, for self-conceit lies in religion, and religion is of the Law. To abstain from religious acts is infidelity and to perform such acts self-consciously is dualism. You must put your self away altogether.

I had a cell in which I sat and sitting there I was enamoured of passing-away from myself.

A light flashed upon me, which utterly destroyed the darkness of my being. God Almighty revealed to me that I was neither that nor this: that this was His grace even as that was His gift. So it came to pass that I said:

When I mine eyes have opened, all Thy beauty
I behold;
When I tell Thee my secret, all my body is
ensouled.
Methinks, unlawful 'tis for me to talk with other
men,
But when with Thee I am talking, ah! the tale
is never told.

Then the people began to regard me with great approval. Disciples gathered round me and were converted to Sufism. My neighbours too showed their respect for me by ceasing to drink wine. This proceeded so far that a melon-skin which I had thrown away was bought for twenty pieces of gold. One day, when I was riding on horse-back, my horse dropped dung. Eager to gain a blessing, the people came and picked up the dung and smeared their heads and faces with it. After a time it was revealed to me that I was not the real object of their veneration. A voice cried from the corner of the mosque, *Is not thy Lord enough for thee?* A light gleamed in my breast, and most veils were removed.

The people who had honoured me now rejected me, and even went before the *cadi* to bear witness that I was an infidel. The inhabitants of every place that I entered declared that their crops would not grow on account of my wickedness. Once, whilst I was seated in the mosque, the women went up on to the roof and bespattered me with filth; and still I heard a voice saying, *Is not thy Lord enough for thee?* The congregation desisted from their prayers, saying, "We will not pray together so long as this madman is in the mosque." Meanwhile, I was reciting these verses:

"I was a lion—the fierce pard was ware
Of my pursuit. I conquered everywhere.
E'er since I drew Thy love close to my heart,
Lame foxes drive me from my forest-lair".

This joyous transport was followed by a painful contraction (*qabd*). I opened the *Koran*, and my eye fell on the verse, *We will prove you with evil and with good, to try you; and unto Us shall ye return*, as though God said to me, "All this which I put in thy way is a trial. If it is good, it is a trial, and if it is evil, it is a trial. Do not stoop to good or to evil, but dwell with Me!" Once more my "self" vanished. His grace was all in all.

After the death of his father and mother—which the biographer leaves undated, only observing, in the spirit of a true Sufi, that these events removed the obstacle of filial affection from his path—Abu Sa'id is said to have roamed for seven years in the deserts between Mayhana and Baward (Abiward) and between Merv and Sarakhs. He then returned to Mayhana. By this time Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl, to whom he had hitherto confided all his perplexities, was dead. Feeling that he required a spiritual Director, Abu Sa'id set out for Amul in Tabaristan, whither many Sufis were flocking in consequence of the fame of Shaikh Abu 'l-'Abbas Qassab. He was accompanied by Ahmad Najjar and Muhammad Fadl, his disciple and life-long friend, who is buried at Sarakhs.

They journeyed to Baward and these along the Gaz valley (*Darra-i Gaz*) to Nasa. At Shah Mayhana, a village in this valley, having performed their ablutions and prayers on the rocky bank of a stream, they were approaching the tomb of Abu 'Ali (?), which it was their purpose to visit, when they saw a lad driving an ox and ploughing, and on the edge of the

field an old man sowing millet-seed. The old man seemed to have lost his wits, for he was always looking towards the tomb and uttering loud cries. Abu Sa'id said Abu Sa'id:

"We were deeply moved by his behaviour. He came to meet us and salaamed and said, 'Can you lift a burden from my breast?' 'If God will,' I replied. 'I have been thinking,' he said, 'if God, when He created the world, had created no creatures in it; and if He had filled it full of millet from East to West and from earth to heaven; and if then He had created one bird and bidden it eat one grain of this millet every thousand years; and if, after that, He had created a man and had kindled in his heart this mystic longing and had told him that he would never win to his goal until this bird left not a single millet-seed in the whole world, and that he would continue until then in this burning pain of love—I have been thinking, it would still be a thing soon ended!' The words of the old peasant (said Abu Sa'id) made all the mystery plain to me".

Nasa, which the travellers skirted but did not enter, was known amongst Sufis by the name of "Little Syria" (*Sham-i kuchak*), because it boasted as many tombs of saints as Syria of prophets. The author of the *Asrar* says that in his time the cemetery overlooking the town contained 400 sepulchres of great Shaikhs and holy men. The prevailing belief that the sanctity of the place protected it from devastation he declares to have been verified by what he himself witnessed during the massacres and ravages of more than thirty years.

Every calamity that threatened Nasa has been averted by the favour and kindness of God and by the blessings of the tombs of departed Shaikhs and sufis, richly endowed with inward experiences, as well as numerous hidden saints who exert a powerful and beneficent influence.

In the upper part of the town, adjoining the cemetery, stood a convent for Sufis, the Khanaqah-i Sarawi. It had recently been founded by the famous mystic, Abu 'Ali Daqqaq of Nishapur (A.D.1015). The legend concerning its foundation was that Abu 'Ali had a dream in which the Prophet ordered him to build a house for Sufis, and not only pointed out the site but also drew a line showing its dimensions.

Next morning, when Abu 'Ali went to the place indicated, he and all those who were with him saw a line distinctly marked on the ground; and upon this line the outer wall of the convent was raised. When Abu Sa'id arrived at Yaysama, a village in the neighbourhood of Nasa, he went to visit the tomb of Ahmad 'Ali Nasawi. Meanwhile, Shaikh Ahmad Nasr, who was then in charge of the convent at Nasa, put out his head from his cell and said to the Sufis seated in the portico:

"The royal falcon of the mystic Way (*shahbaz-i tariqa*) is passing! Whoever wants to catch him must go to Yaysama."

While passing through the village, Abu Sa'id and his friends noticed a butcher who wore a fur gaberline (*pustin*) and was seated in his shop, with pieces of meat hanging in front of him. He came forward to greet the strangers, and bade an apprentice follow them and see where they lodged. They found quarters in a mosque beside the river, and when they had performed their ablutions and prayers the butcher appeared, bringing some viands of which they partook. Abu Sa'id said:

"After we had done, he asked whether any of us could answer a question. My friends pointed to me. He then said, 'What is the duty of a slave and what is the duty of a labourer for hire?' I replied in terms of the religious law.

He asked, 'Is there nothing else?' I remained silent. With a stern look he exclaimed, 'Do not live with one whom thou hast divorced!' meaning that since I had discarded exoteric knowledge ('ilm-i *zahir*), I must not have any further dealings with it. Then he added, 'Until thou art free, thou wilt never be a slave, and until thou art an honest and sincere labourer, thou wilt never receive the wages of everlasting bliss.'"

To digress a little, as the leisurely style of Oriental biography permits, it will be remembered that on his conversion to Sufism Abu Sa'id immediately abandoned the study of theology and jurisprudence in which he had spent so much of his youth. He collected all the volumes that he had read, together with his own note-books, buried them, and erected over them a mound of stone and earth (*dukani*). On this mound he planted a twig of myrtle, which took root and put forth leaves, and in the course of time became a large tree. The people of Mayhana used to pluck boughs from it, hoping thereby to win a blessing for their new-born children, or in order to lay them on their dead before interment. The author of the *Asrar*, who had often seen it and admired its beautiful foliage, says that it was destroyed, with other relics of the saint, during the invasion of Khurasan by the Ghuzz. When Abu Sa'id buried his books, it was suggested that he might have done better to give them to someone who would profit by reading them. He said:

"I wished that my heart should be entirely void of the consciousness of having conferred an obligation and of the recollection of having bestowed a gift."

Once, he was heard wailing in his cell the whole night long. Next morning he explained that he had been visited with a violent tooth-ache as a punishment for having dipped into a tome

which he took away from a student. Here are two more of his sayings on the same topic:

"Books! ye are excellent guides, but it is absurd to trouble about a guide after the goal has been reached. The first step in this affair (Sufism) is the breaking of ink-pots and the tearing-up of books and the forgetting of all kinds of (intellectual) knowledge."

We left Abu Sa'id on his way to Amul. He is said to have resided there for one year in the convent of which Shaikh Abu 'l-'Abbas Qassab was the head. The Shaikh gave him a cell in the assembly-room (*jama' 'at-khana*), facing the oratory reserved for himself, where he had sat for forty-one years in the midst of his disciples. It was the custom of Shaikh Abu 'l-'Abbas, when he saw a dervish performing supere-rogatory prayers at night, to say to him:

"Sleep, my son! All the devotions of your Director are performed for your sake, for they are of no use to him and he does not need them himself; but he never said this to Abu Sa'id, who used to pray all night and fast all day. During the night Abu Sa'id kept his eyes continually fixed upon his navel, and his mind upon the spiritual "states" (*ahwal*) and acts of the Shaikh. One day, the Shaikh had some blood let from his arm. At night the bandage slipped off, uncovering the vein, so that his garment was stained with blood. As he came out of the oratory, Abu Sa'id, who was always on the watch to serve him, ran up to him, washed and bandaged his arm, and taking from him the soiled garment offered his own, which the Shaikh put on, while Abu Sa'id clad himself in a *khashan* that he had. Then he washed and cleaned the Shaikh's garment, hung it on the rope (*habl*) to dry, rubbed and folded it, and brought it to the Shaikh. "It is thine," said the Shaikh, "put it on!" "Nay," cried Abu Sa'id, "let the Shaikh put it on me with his own blessed hand!"

This was the second gaberidine (*khirqa*) with which Abu Sa'id was invested, for he had already received one from Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami of Nishapur.

Here, the author of the *Asrar* introduces a disquisition on the meaning of such investiture, with the object of refuting those who hold that a Sufi ought not to accept a *khirqa* from more than one Pir. In the first place, he describes the endowments in virtue of which the Pir is privileged to invest a disciple with the *khirqa*. The Pir should be worthy of imitation, i.e., he should have a perfect knowledge, both theoretical and practical, of the three stages of the mystical life—the Law, the Path, and the Truth; he should also be entirely purged of fleshly attributes (*sifat-i bashariyya*), so that nothing of his lower 'self' (*nafs*) remains in him.

When such a Pir has become thoroughly acquainted with a disciple's acts and thoughts and has proved them by the test of experience and, through spiritual insight, knows that he is qualified to advance beyond the position of a famulus (*maqam-i khidmat*)—whether his being thus qualified is due to the training which he has received from this Pir or to the guidance and direction of another Pir possessing a like authority—then he lays his hand on the disciple's head and invests him with the *khirqa*. By the act of investiture he announces his conviction that the disciple is fit to associate with the Sufis, and if he is a person of credit and renown amongst them, his declaration carries the same weight as, in matters of law, the testimony of an honest witness and the sentence of an incorruptible judge.

Accordingly, whenever an unknown dervish comes into a convent or wishes to join a company of Sufis, they ask him, "Who was

the Pir that taught thee?" and "From whose hand didst thou receive the *khirqa*?" Sufis recognise no relationship but these two, which they regard as all-important. They do not allow anyone to associate with them, unless he can show to their satisfaction that he is lineally connected in both these ways with a fully accredited Pir.

Having insisted that the whole Path of Sufism turns upon the Pir (*madar-i tariqa bar pir ast*), the author of the *Asrar* comes to the question in dispute—"Is it right to receive investiture from the hands of more than one?" He answers, in effect, "Yes, it is right, provided that the second investiture is not accompanied with the intention of annulling the first." His argument is a universal principle, which can be stated in a few words. Ultimately and essentially all things are one.

Difference and duality are phenomena which disappear when unity is reached. The sayings of the great mystics differ in expression, but their meaning is the same. There are many religions, but only one God; diverse ways, but only one goal. Hence, those who raise an objection against the double investiture proclaim themselves to be still on the plane of dualism, which the Pirs have transcended. In reality, all Sufis, all Pirs, and all *khirqas* are one. Amidst these sublime truths it is rather a shock to meet with the remark that the novice who receives two *khirqas* resembles a man who calls two witnesses to attest his competence.

On his departure from Amul, Abu Sa'id was directed by Shaikh Abu 'l-'Abbas Qassab to return once more to Mayhana. This event approximately coincides with the beginning of a new period in his spiritual history. The long discipline of the Path, broken by fleeting visions and ecstasies, brought him at last into the full

and steady splendour of illumination. The veil, which had hitherto been lifted only to fall again, was now burst asunder.

Henceforth, no barrier (*hijab*) in the shape of "self"—that insidious obstacle which it is the whole business of the *via purgativa* to remove—could even temporarily shut off his consciousness of the Unseen. While conversing with Abu 'Ali Daqqaq, Abu Sa'id asked him whether this experience was ever permanent. "No," said Abu 'Ali. Abu Sa'id bowed his head, then he repeated the question and received the same answer, whereupon he bowed his head as before. On being asked for the third time, Abu 'Ali replied, "If it ever is permanent, it is extremely rare." Abu Sa'id clapped his hands joyfully and exclaimed several times, "This"—referring to his own case—"is one of these rarities." Continuous though his illumination may have been, it was not of uniform intensity, but was subject to the fluctuations which are described in the technical language of Sufism as contraction (*qabd*) and expansion (*bast*). Often, when he fell into the former state, he would go about adding questions of everyone, in the hope of hearing some words that might relieve his oppression. When *qabd* was violent, he would visit the tomb of Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl Hasan at Sarakhs. His eldest son, Abu Tahir, relates that one day Abu Sa'id, while preaching, began to weep, and the whole congregation wept with him. Giving orders that his horse should be saddled, he immediately set out for Sarakhs, accompanied by all who were present. As soon as they entered the desert, his feeling of contraction was dispelled. He began to speak freely, while those around him shouted with joy. On arriving at Sarakhs he turned aside from the high-road in the direction of the tomb of Shaikh Abu 'l-Fadl Hasan and bade the *qawwal* sing this verse:

Here is the mansion of delight, the home of bounty and of grace! All eyes towards the Ka'ba turn, but ours to the Beloved's face. During the *qawwal*'s chant Abu Sa'id and the dervishes with bare heads and feet circumambulated the tomb, shrieking ecstatically. When quiet was restored, he said:

"Mark the date of this day for you will never see a day like this again."

Afterwards, he used to tell any of his disciples who thought of making the pilgrimage to Mecca that they must visit the tomb of Shaikh Abu 'l—Fadl Hasan and perform seven circumnavigations there.

It is stated on the authority of Abu Sa'id's grandson, Shaikh 'l-Islam Abu Sa'id, who was the grandfather of Muhammad ibn 'l-Munawwar, the compiler of the *Asrar*, that Abu Sa'id attained to perfect illumination at the age of forty. That statement may be approximately correct, though we cannot help regarding as suspicious its combination with the theory founded on a passage in the Koran, that no one under forty years of age ever attained to the rank of prophecy or saintship, excepting only Yahya ibn Zakariyya (John the Baptist) and Jesus.

At this point the biographer concludes the first chapter of his work, describing Abu Sa'id's conversion and novitiate, and enters on the mature period of his mystical life—the period of illumination and contemplation.

In the foregoing pages we have been mainly concerned with his progress as an ascetic. We are now to see him as Theosophist and Saint. It must be added, however, that in this higher stage he did not discontinue his austerities. He took pains to conceal them, and all our information about them is derived from

allusions in his public speeches or from the exhortations which he addressed to novices. According to his disciples, after becoming an adept there was no rule or practice of the Prophet that he left unperforated.

From this time (*circa* A.H.400/A.D.1009) until his death, which occurred in A.H. 440/A.D. 1049, the materials available for Abu Sa'id's biography, consisting for the most part of miscellaneous anecdotes, are of such a kind that it is impossible to give a connected account of events in their chronological order. Concerning his movements we know nothing of importance beyond the following facts:

- (a) He left Mayhana and journeyed to Nishapur, where he stayed for a considerable time.
- (b) Shortly before quitting Nishapur he paid a visit to Abu 'l-Hasan Kharaqani at Kharaqan.
- (c) Finally, he returned from Nishapur to Mayhana.

The anecdotes in the second chapter of the *Asrar* form three groups in correspondence with this local division:

1. Nishapur (pp. 68–174).
2. Kharaqan (pp. 175–190).
3. Mayhana (pp. 191–247).

Various circumstances indicate that his residence in Nishapur was a long one, probably extending over several years, but we find no precise statement, and the evidence that can be obtained from his reported meetings with famous contemporaries is insufficient, in my opinion, to serve as a basis for investigation. His visit to Kharaqani is known to have died in A.H. 425/A.D. 1033–4. Unless the stories of his friendship with Qushayri are inventions,

he can hardly have settled in Nishapur before A.H. 415/A.D., 1024, since Qushayri (born A.H. 376/A.D. 986) is described at the date of Abu Sa'id's arrival as a celebrated teacher with numerous pupils.

For the reasons mentioned above, we must now content ourselves with the barest outline of a narrative and seek compensation in episodes, incidents, and details which often reveal the personality and character of Abu Sa'id in a surprising manner and at the same time let us see how the monastic life was lived and by what methods it was organised.

When Abu Sa'id set out for Nishapur, he did not travel alone, but was attended by the disciples whom he had already gathered round him at Mayhana, while many new converts joined the party at Tus. Here, he preached to crowded assemblies and moved his audience to tears. On one of these occasions, an infant fell from the gallery (*bam*), which was thronged with women. Abu Sa'id exclaimed, "Save it!" A hand appeared in the air and caught the child and placed it unhurt on the floor. The spectators raised a great cry and scenes of ecstasy ensued. Sayyid Abu said:

"I swear Ali, who elates the story, "that I saw this with my own eyes. If I did not see it, may both my eyes become blind!"

At Tus Abu Sa'id is said to have passed by a number of children standing together in the street of the Christians (*kuy-i tarsayan*) and to have pointed out one of them to his companions, saying:

"If you wish to look at the prime minister of the world, there he is!"

The boy, whose future eminence was thus miraculously foretold, and who, forty years afterwards, repeated those prophetic words to

a great-grandson of Abu Sa'id, was the illustrious statesman Nizamu 'l-Mulk (born A.D. 1018).

On entering Nishapur Abu Sa'id was met by an influential patron of the Sufis, Khwaja Mahmud-i Murid, who installed him and his disciples in the monastery (*khanagah*) of Abu 'Ali Tarasusi in the street of the carpet-beaters (?), which seems to have been his headquarters as long as he remained in Nishapur. His preaching and, above all, the extra-ordinary powers of telepathy which he displayed in public made many converts and brought in large sums of money. Hasan-i Mu'addib—afterwards, his principal famulus and major-domo—relates his own experience as follows:

When people were proclaiming everywhere in Nishapur that a Sufi Pir had arrived from Mayhana and was preaching sermons in the street of the carpet-beaters and was reading men's secret thoughts, I said to myself—for I hated the Sufis—"How can a Sufi preach, when he knows nothing about theology? How can he read men's thoughts, when God has not given knowledge of the Unseen to any prophet or to any other person?" One day, I went to the hall where he preached, with the intention of putting him to the proof, and sat down in front of his chair.

I was handsomely dressed and had a turban of fine Tabari stuff wound on my head. While the Shaikh was speaking, I regarded him with feelings of hostility and disbelief. Having finished his sermon, he asked for clothes on behalf of a dervish. Everyone offered something. Then he asked for a turban. I thought of giving mine, but again I reflected that it had been brought to me from Amul as a present and that it was worth ten Nishapuri dinars, so I resolved not to give it. The Shaikh

made a second appeal, and the same thought occurred to me, but I rejected it once more. An old man who was seated beside me asked, "O Shaikh! does God plead with His creatures?" He answered, "Yes, but He does not plead more than twice for the sake of a Tabari turban. He has already spoken twice to the man sitting beside you and has told him to give to this dervish the turban which he is wearing, but he refuses to do so, because it is worth ten pieces of gold and was brought to him from Amul as a present."

On hearing these words, I rose, trembling, and went forward to the Shaikh and kissed his foot and offered my turban and my whole suit of clothes to the dervish. Every feeling of dislike and incredulity was gone I became a Moslem anew, bestowed on the Shaikh all the money and wealth I possessed, and devoted myself to his service.

While Abu Sa'id was enthusiastically welcomed by the Sufis of Nishapur, he met with formidable opposition from the parties adverse to them, namely, the Karramis, whose chief was Abu Bakr Ishaq, and the *Ashab-i ra'y* (liberal theologians) and Shi'ites led by Qadi Sa'id. The leaders of those parties drew up a written charge against him, to the following effect: A certain man has come hither from Mayhana and pretends to be a Sufi. He preaches sermons in the course of which he recites poetry but does not quote the Traditions of the Prophet. He holds sumptuous feasts and music is played by his orders, whilst the young men dance and eat sweet-meats and roasted fowls and all kinds of fruit. He declares that he is an ascetic, but this is neither asceticism nor Sufism. Multitudes have joined him and are being led astray. Unless measures be taken to repair it, the mischief will soon become universal.

The authorities at the court of Ghazna, to whom the document was sent, returned it with the following answer written on the back:

"Let the leaders of the Shafi'ites and Hanafites sit in council and inquire into his case and duly inflict upon him whatever penalty the religious law demands."

This answer was received on a Thursday. The enemies of Abu Sa'id rejoiced and immediately held a meeting and determined that on Saturday he and all the Sufis should be gibbeted in the market-place. His friends were anxious and alarmed by rumours of what was impending, but none dared tell him, since he desired to have nothing communicated to him, and in fact always knew by miraculous intuition all that was going on. When we had performed the afternoon prayers (says Hasan-i Mu'addib), the Shaikh called me and asked:

"How many are the Sufis? I replied, 'A hundred and twenty—eighty travellers (*musafir*) and forty residents (*muqim*).' "Tomorrow," said he, "what will you give them for dinner?" "whatever the Shaikh bids," I replied. "You must place before each one," said he, "a lamb's head and provide plenty of crushed sugar to sprinkle on the lamb's brains, and let each one have a pound of *khalifati* sweets and see that there is no lack of aloes-wood for burning and rose-water for spraying over them, and get well-laundered linen robes. Lay the table in the congregational mosque, in order that those who slander me behind my back may behold with their own eyes the viands that God sends from the unseen world to his elect."

Now, at the moment when the Shaikh gave me these directions, there was not a single loaf in the store-room of the convent, and in the whole city I did not know anyone of whom I could venture to bet a piece of silver, because

these rumours had shaken the faith of all our friends; nor had I courage to ask the Shaikh how I should procure the things which he required.

It was near sunset. I left him and stood in the street of the carpet-beaters, utterly at a loss what to do, until the sun had almost set and the merchants were closing their shops and going home. When the hour of evening prayer arrived and it was now dark, a young man running to his house—for he was late—saw me as I stood there, and cried, "O Hasan! what are you doing?" I told him that the Shaikh had given me certain orders, that I had no money, and that I would stay there till morning, if necessary, since I durst not return. Throwing back his sleeve, he bade me put my hand in. I did so and drew forth a handful of gold, with which I returned in high spirits to the convent. On making my purchases, I found that the sum was exactly right—not a dirhem too much or too little. Early next morning I got the linen robes and laid the table in the congregational mosque, as the Shaikh had directed. He came thither with all his disciples, while many spectators occupied the galleries above. Now, when Qadi Sa'id and Ustad Abu Bakr Karrami were informed that the Shaikh had prepared a feast for the Sufis in the mosque, Qadi Sa'id exclaimed:

"Let them make merry today and eat roast lamb's head, for tomorrow their own heads will be devoured by crows";

and Abu Bakr said,

"Let them grease their bellies today, for tomorrow they will grease the scaffold."

These threats were conveyed to the Sufis and made a painful impression. As soon as they finished the meal and washed their hands, the Shaikh said to me:

"Hasan! take the Sufis' prayer-rugs to the chancel (*maqsurah*) after Qadi Sa'id (who was the official preacher), for today we will perform our prayers under his leadership."

Accordingly, I carried twenty prayer-rugs into the chancel and laid them in two rows; there was no room for any more. Qadi Sa'id mounted the pulpit and delivered a hostile address; then he came down and performed the service of prayer. As soon as he pronounced the final salutation (*salam*), the Shaikh rose and departed, without waiting for the customary devotions (*sunna*). Qadi Sa'id faced towards him, whereupon the Shaikh looked at him askance. The Qadi at once bowed his head. When the Shaikh and his disciples returned to the convent, he said:

"Hasan! go to the Kirmani market-place. There is a confectioner there who has fine cakes made of white sesame and pistachio kernels. Buy ten maunds' worth. A little further on, you will find a man who sells raisins. Buy ten maunds' worth and clean them. Tie up the cakes and raisins in two white cloths (*du izari futa-i kafuri*) and put them on your head and take them to Ustad Abu Bakr Ishaq and tell him that he must break his fast with them tonight."

I followed the Shaikh's instructions in every particular. When I gave his message to Abu Bakr Ishaq, the colour went out of his face and he sat in amazement, biting his fingers. After a few minutes he bade me be seated and having summoned Bu 'l-Qasimak, his chamberlain, despatched him to Qadi Sa'id. He said:

"Tell him that I withdraw from our arrangement, which was that tomorrow we should bring this Shaikh and the Sufis to trial and severely punish them. If he asks why, let him know that last night, I resolved to fast.

Today, while riding on my ass to the congregational mosque, I passed through the Kirmani market-place and saw some fine cakes in a confectioner's shop. It occurred to me that on returning from prayers I would send to purchase them and break my fast with them tonight. Further on, I saw some raisins which I thought would be very nice with the cakes, and I resolved to buy some. When I came home, I had forgotten all about the matter and I had not spoken of it to anyone".

Now, Shaikh Abu Sa'id sends me the same cakes and raisins which I noticed this morning and desired to buy and bids me break my fast with them! I have no course but to abandon proceedings against a man who is so perfectly acquainted with the thoughts of his fellow-creatures. The chamberlain went to Qadi Sa'id and returned with the following message:

"I was on the point of sending to you in reference to this affair. Today, the Shaikh was present when I conducted public worship. No sooner had I pronounced the salutation than he went off without performing the *sunna*. I turned towards him, intending to ask how his neglect of devotions on Friday was characteristic of ascetics and Sufis and to make this the foundation of a bitter attack upon him. He looked askance at me. I almost fainted with fear. He seemed to be a hawk and I a sparrow which he was about to destroy. I struggled to speak but could not utter a word. Today, he has shown to me his power and majesty. I have no quarrel with him. If the Sultan has issued an edict against him you were responsible. You were the principal and I was only a subordinate."

When the chamberlain had delivered this message, Abu Bakr Ishaq turned to me and said:

"Go and tell your Shaikh that Abu Bakr Ishaq Karrami with 20,000 followers, and Qadi Sa'id with 30,000 and the Sultan with 100,000 men

and 750 war elephants, made ready for battle and tried to subdue him, and that he has defeated all their armies with ten maunds of cake and raisins and has routed right wing, left wing, and centre. He is free to hold his religion, as we are free to hold ours. *Ye have your religion and I have my religion.*"

I came back to the Shaikh (said Hasan-i Mu'addib) and told him all that had passed. He turned to his disciples and said:

"Since yesterday ye have been trembling for fear that the scaffold would be soaked with your blood. Nay, that is the lot of such as Husayn-i Mansur Hallaj, the most eminent mystic of his time in East and West. Scaffolds drip with the blood of heroes, not of cowards."

Then he bade the *qawwal* sing these lines:

"With shield and quiver meet thine enemy!
Vaunt not thyself but make thy vaunt of Me.
Let Fate be cool as water, hot as fire,
Do thou live happy, whichso'er it be!"

The *qawwal* sang and all the disciples began to shout and fling their gaberdines away. After that day no one in Nishapur ventured to speak word in disparagement of the Sufis. The story may not be entirely fictitious. It shows, at any rate, that Moslems ascribe a miraculous character to telepathic powers, nor does it exaggerate the awe inspired by a holy man who displays them effectively. Most of Abu Sa'id's recorded miracles are of this kind. That Mohammedan saints have often been thought-readers seems to me beyond question, whatever doubts one may feel as to a great part of the evidence preserved in their legends.

Whether Abu Sa'id was actually threatened with legal prosecution or not, we can well believe that the orthodox parties were scandalised by his luxurious manner of living and by the unlicensed practices in which he

and his disciples indulged. He made no attempt to rebut the charges brought against him, and from numerous anecdotes related by those who held him in veneration it is clear that if the document said to have been sent to Ghazna be genuine, his accusers set down nothing but what was notoriously true. They gain sympathy, if not active support, from many Sufis who perceived the danger of anti-nomianism and desired above all things to secure the position of Sufism within Islam.

Of this party the chief representative in Nishapur was Abu 'l-Qasim Qushayri, well-known as the author of *al-Risalat al-Qusayriyya fi 'ilmi 'l-tasawwuf*, which he composed in A.H. 437/A.D. 1045-6 with the avowed object of demonstrating that the history and traditions of Sufism are bound up with strict observance of the Mohammedan religious law.

The biographer gives an interesting but probably untruthful account of Abu Sa'id's public and private relations with Qushayri, who is depicted as having been induced by personal experience of his miraculous intuition to repent of the hostile feelings with which he regarded the new-comer. During the first year of Abu Sa'id's stay in Nishapur, his prayer-meetings were attended by seventy disciples of Qushayri, and finally he himself agreed to accompany them. While Abu Sa'id was preaching, Qushayri reflected:

"This man is inferior to me in learning and we are equal in devotion: whence did he get this power of reading men's thoughts?"

Abu Sa'id at once paused in his discourse and fixing his eye on Qushayri reminded him of a certain ritual irregularity of which he had been guilty in private on the preceding day. Qushayri was dumb-founded. Abu Sa'id, as soon as he left the pulpit, approached him and

they embraced each other. Their harmony, however, was not yet complete, for they differed in the great controversy, which had long been raging, whether audition (*sama'*) was permissible; in other words. Did the religious law sanction the use of music, singing, and dancing as a means of stimulating ecstasy? One day, Qushayri, while passing Abu Sa'id's convent, looked in and saw him taking part with his disciples in an ecstatic dance. He thought to himself that, according to the Law, no one who dances like this is accepted as a witness worthy of credit.

Next day, he met Abu Sa'id on his way to a feast. After they had exchanged salutations, Abu Sa'id said to him, When have you seen me seated amongst the witnesses? Qushayri understood that this was the answer to his unspoken thought. He now dismissed from his mind all unfriendly feelings, and the two became so intimate that not a day passed without one of them visiting the other, while on Qushayri's invitation Abu Sa'id conducted a service once a week in the former's convent.

These anecdotes and others of the same tendency may be viewed, not as records of what happened, but rather as illustrations of the fact that in balancing the rival claims of religious law and mystical truth Qushayri and Abu Sa'id were inclined by temperament to take opposite sides. In every case, needless to say, the legalist is worsted by the theosophist, whose inner light is his supreme and infallible authority. The following stories, in which Qushayri plays his usual role, would not have been worth-translating unless they had incidentally sketched for us the ways and manners of the dervishes whom Abu Sa'id ruled over.

One day, Shaikh Abu Sa'id with Abu 'l-Qasim Qushayri and a large number of Sufi

disciples were going through the market-place of Nishapur. A certain dervish let his eye fall on some boiled turnips set out for sale at the door of a shop and felt a craving for them. The Shaikh knew it by clairvoyance (*firasa*). He pulled in the reins of his horse and said to Hasan:

"Go to that man's shop and buy all the turnips and beet-root that he has and bring them along."

Meanwhile he and Qushayri and the disciples entered a neighbouring mosque. When Hasan returned with the turnips and beetroot, the dinner-call was given and the dervishes began to eat. The Shaikh joined them, but Qushayri refrained and secretly disapproved, because the mosque was in the middle of the market-place and was open in front. He said to himself:

"They are eating in the street!"

The Shaikh, as was his custom, took no notice. Two or three days afterwards he and Qushayri with their disciples were present at a splendid feast. The table was covered with viands of all sorts. Qushayri wished very much to partake of a certain dish, but he could not reach it and was ashamed to ask for it. He felt extremely annoyed. The Shaikh turned to him and said:

"Doctor, when food is offered, you refuse it, and when you want it, it is not offered."

Qushayri silently begged God to forgive him for what he had done.

One day, Qushayri unfrocked a dervish and severely censured him and ordered him to leave the city. The reason was that the dervish admired Isma'ilak-i Daqqaq, one of Qushayri's disciples and had requested a certain friend to make a feast and invite the singers (*qawwalan*) and bring Isma'ilak with him.

"Let me enjoy his company this evening (he pleaded) and shout in ecstasy at the sight of his beauty, for I am on fire with love for him."

The friend consented and gave a feast which was followed by music and singing (*sama*). On hearing of this, Qushayri stripped the dervish of his gaberdine and banished him from Nishapur. When the news came to the convent of Shaikh Abu Sa'id, the dervishes were indignant, but they said nothing about it to the Shaikh, knowing that he was acquainted by clairvoyance with all that passed. The Shaikh called Hasan-i Mu'addib and bade him make ready a fine banquet and invite the reverend Doctor (Qushayri) and all the Sufis in the town. He said:

"You must get plenty of roast lamb and sweet-meats, and light a great many candles."

At night fall, when the company assembled, the Shaikh and the Doctor took their seats together on a couch, and the Sufis sat in front of it in three rows, a hundred men in each row. Khwaja Abu Tahir, the Shaikh's eldest son, who was exceedingly handsome, presided over the table. As soon as the time came for dessert, Hasan placed a large bowl of *lawzina* before the Shaikh and the Doctor. After they had helped themselves, the Shaikh said to Abu Tahir:

"Take this bowl and go to younger dervish, Bu 'Ali Turshizi, and pour half of this *lawzina* in his mouth and eat the other half yourself."

Abu Tahir went to the dervish, and kneeling respectfully before him, took a portion of the sweet-meat, and after swallowing a mouthful put the other half in the dervish's mouth. The dervish raised a loud cry and rent his garment and ran forth from the convent, shouting Labbayk! The Shaikh said:

"Abu Tahir! I charge you to wait upon that dervish. Take his staff and ewer and follow him and be assiduous in serving him until he reaches the Ka'ba."

When the dervish saw Abu Tahir coming after him, he stopped and asked him where he was going. Abu Tahir said, "My father has sent me to wait upon you," and told him the whole story. Bu Ali returned to the Shaikh and exclaimed, "For God's sake, bid Abu Tahir leave me!" The Shaikh did so, whereupon the dervish bowed and departed. Turning to Qushayri, the Shaikh said:

"What need is there to censure and unfrock and disgrace a dervish whom half a mouthful of *lawzina* can drive from the city and cast away into the Hijaz? For four years he has been devoted to my Abu Tahir, and except on your account I should never have divulged his secret."

Qushayri rose and prayed God to forgive him and said:

"I have done wrong. Every day I must learn from you a new lesson in Sufism."

All the Sufis rejoiced and there were manifestations of ecstasy. Abu Sa'id's invariable success in conciliating his opponents is perhaps, the greatest miracle that his biographers record, but their belief in it will hardly be shared by us. His mode of life in Nishapur, as depicted by his own friends and followers, must have shocked Sufis of the old school who had been taught to model themselves upon the saintly heroes of Moslem asceticism.

What were they to think of a man whose visitors found him lolling on cushions, like a lord, and having his feet masaged by one of his dervishes? A man who prayed every night

that God would give his disciples something nice to eat and spent all the money he received on costly entertainments? Could their objections be removed by exhibitions of thought reading or by appeals to the divine right of the saint:

"Thou art thus because thy lot is thus and thus, I am so because my lot is so and so"—

or by exhortations to regard the inward nature and disposition rather than the outward act? From the following anecdote it appears that such arguments did not always suffice.

When Abu Sa'id was at Nishapur, a merchant brought him a present of a large bundle of aloes-wood and a thousand Nishapuri dinars. The Shaikh called Hasan-i Mu'addib and bade him prepare a feast; and in accordance with his custom he hand edover the thousand dinars to him for that purpose. Then he ordered that an oven should be placed in the hall and that the whole bundle of aloes-wood should be put in it and burned, saying:

"I do this that my neighbours may enjoy its perfume with me."

He also ordered a great number of candles to be lighted, though it was still day. Now, there was at that time in Nishapour a very powerful inspector of police, who held rationalistic views and detested the Sufis. This man came into the monastery and said to the Shaikh:

"What are you doing? What an unheard-of extravagance, to light candles in the day-time and burn a whole bundle of aloes-wood at once! It is against the law."

The Shaikh replied:

"I did not know that it is against the law. Go and blow out these candles."

The inspector went and puffed at them, but the flame flared over his face and hair and dress.

and most of his body was scorched. Did not you know, said the Shaikh:

"Whoever tries to blow a candle out;
That God hath lighted, his moustache gets
burnt?"

The inspector fell at the Shaikh's feet and became a convert.

While the relations which Abu Sa'id established with the jurists and theologians of Nishapur cannot have been friendly, it is likely enough that he convinced his adversaries of the wisdom or necessity of leaving him alone. In order to understand their attitude, we must remember the divinity that hedges the Oriental saint not merely in the eyes of mystics but amongst all classes of society. He wields an illimitable and mysterious power derived from Allah, whose chosen instrument he is. As his favour confers blessing, so his displeasure is fraught with calamity. Countless tales are told of vengeance inflicted on those who have annoyed or insulted him, or shown any want of respect in his presence. Even if his enemies are willing to run the risk, they must still reckon with the widely spread feeling that it is impious to criticise the actions of holy men, which are inspired and guided by Allah Himself.

Naturally, Abu Sa'id required large sums of money for maintaining the convent with, perhaps, two or three hundred disciples, on such a liberal scale of living as he kept up. A certain amount was contributed by novices who, on their conversion, put into the common stock all the worldly goods they possessed, but the chief part of the revenues came in the shape of gifts from lay brethren or wealthy patrons or persons who desired the Shaikh to exert his spiritual influence on their behalf.

No doubt, much food and money was offered and accepted; much also was collected

by Hasan-i Mu'addib, who seems to have been an expert in this business. When voluntary contributions failed, the Shaikh's credit with the tradesmen of Nishapur enabled him to supply the needs of his flock. Here are some anecdotes which describe how he triumphed over financial difficulties. The 'Amid of Khurasan relates as follows:

"The cause of my devotion to Shaikh Abd Sa'id and his disciples was this. When I first came to Nishapur, my name was Hajib Muammad and I had no servant to attend upon me. Every morning I used to pass the gate of the Shaikh's convent and look in and whenever I saw the Shaikh that day brought me a blessing, so that I soon began to regard the sight of him as a happy omen. One night, I thought that on the morrow I would go and pay my respects to him and take him a present. I took a thousand silver dirhems of the money which had been recently coined—thirty dirhems to the dinar—and wrapped them in a piece of paper, intending to visit the Shaikh next day and lay them before him. I was alone in the house at the time when I formed this plan, nor did I speak of it to anyone. Afterwards, it occurred to me that a thousand dirhems are a great sum, and five hundred will be ample; so I divided the money into two equal parts which I placed in two packets. Next morning, after prayers, I went to visit the Shaikh, taking one packet with me and leaving the other behind my pillow.

As soon as we had exchanged greetings, I gave the five hundred dirhems to Hasan-i Mu'addib, who with the inmost courtesy approached the Shaikh and whispered in his ear— "Hajib Muammad has brought some pieces of money (*shikasta-i*).” The Shaikh said, "God bless him! but he has not brought the full amount: he has left half of it behind his pillow. Hasan owes a thousand dirhems. Let him give Hasan the whole sum in order that Hasan may satisfy his creditors and be freed from anxiety.” On

hearing these words, I was dumb-founded and immediately sent a servant to bring the remainder of the money for Hasan. Then I said to the Shaikh, "Accept me.” He took my hand and said, "It is finished. Go in peace.”

During Shaikh Abu Sa'id's stay in Nishapur Hasan-i Mu'addib, his steward, had contracted many debts in order to provide the dervishes with food. For a long time he received no gift of money and his creditors were dunning him. One day, they came in a body to the convent gate. The Shaikh told Hasan to let them in. On being admitted, they bowed respectfully to the Shaikh and sat down. Meanwhile, a boy passed the gate, crying, Sweet cakes (*natif*)! Go and fetch him, said the Shaikh. When he was brought in, the Shaikh bade Hasan seize the cakes and serve them out to the Sufis. The boy demanded his money, but the Shaikh only said, "It will come.” After waiting an hour, the boy said again, I want my money and got the same reply. At the end of another hour, having been put off for the third time, he sobbed, My master will beat me, and burst into tears. Just then someone entered the convent and placed a purse of gold before the Shaikh, saying:

"So-and-so has sent it and begs that you will pray for him.”

The Shaikh ordered Hasan to pay the creditors and the cake-boy. It was exactly the sum required, neither more nor less. The Shaikh said:

"It came in consequence of the tears of this lad.”

There was in Nishapur a rich Broker, Bu'Amr by name, who was such an enthusiastic admirer (*muhibbi*) of Shaikh Abu Sa'id that he entreated Hasan-i Mu'addib to apply to him for anything that the Shaikh might want, and not to be afraid of asking too much. One day,

(said Hasan) the Shaikh had already sent me to him seven times with diverse requisitions which he satisfied in full. At sunset the Shaikh told me to go to him once more and procure some rose-water, aloes-wood, and camphor. I felt ashamed to return to him, however, I went. He was closing his shop. When he saw me, he cried:

"Hasan! what is it? You come late."

I expressed to him the shame which I felt for having called upon him so frequently in one day and I made him acquainted with the Shaikh's instructions. He opened the shop-door and gave me all that I needed; then he said:

"Since you are ashamed to apply to me for these trifles, tomorrow I will give you a thousand dinars on the security of the caravan-seray and the bath-house, in order that you may use that sum for ordinary expenses and come to me for matters of greater importance."

I rejoiced, thinking that now I was quit of this ignoble begging. When I brought the rose-water, aloes-wood, and camphor to the Shaikh, he regarded me with disapproval and said. 'Hasan! go and purge thy heart of all desire for worldly vanities, that I may let thee associate with the Sufis.' I went to the convent gate and stood with bare head and feet and repented and asked God to forgive me and wept bitterly and rubbed my face on the ground, but the Shaikh did not speak to me that night.

Next day, when he preached in the hall, he paid no attention to Bu 'Amr, although he was accustomed to look at him everyday in the course of his sermon. As soon as he had finished. Bu 'Amr came to me and said, 'Hasan! what ails the Shaikh? He has not looked at me today.' I said that I did not know, and then I told him what had passed between the Shaikh and me. Bu Amr went up to the Shaikh's chair

and kissed it, saying:

"O prince of the age, my life depends on thy look. Today thou hast not looked at me. Tell me what I have done, that I may ask God's forgiveness and beseech thee to pardon my offence."

The Shaikh said:

"Will you fetch me down from the highest heaven to search and demand a pledge from me in return for a thousand dinars? If you wish me to be pleased with you, give me the money now, and you will see how little it weighs in the scales of my lofty spirit!"

Bu 'Amr immediately went home and brought back two purses, each containing five hundred Nishapuri dinars. The Shaikh handed them to me and said:

"Buy oxen and sheep. Make a hotchpotch (*harisa*) of the beef and a *zira-ba* of the mutton, seasoned with saffron and oato of roses. Get plenty of *lawzint* and rose-water and aloes-wood, and light a thousand candles in the day-time. Lay the tables at Pushangan (a beautiful village, which is a pleasure resort of the people of Nishapur), and proclaim in the city that all are welcome who wish to eat food that entails neither obligation in this world nor calling to account in the next."

More than two thousand men assembled at Pushangan. The Shaikh came with his disciples and entertained high and low and with his own blessed hand sprinkled rose-water over his guests while they partook of the viands.

Abu Sa'id's methods of raising money are further illustrated by the story in which it is recorded that, while preaching in public, he held up a sash and declared that he must have three hundred dinars in exchange for it, which sum was at once offered by an old woman in the congregation. On another occasion, being in

debt to the amount of five hundred dinars, he sent a message to a certain Abu' I-Fadl Furati that he was about to visit him. Abu' "I-Fadl entertained him sumptuously for three days, and on the fourth day presented him with five hundred dinars, adding a hundred for travelling expenses and a hundred more as a gift. The Shaikh said:

"I pray that God may take from there the riches of this world, Nay, cried Abu' I-Fadl, "for had I lacked riches, the blessed feet of the Shaikh would never have come here, and I should never have waited upon him and gained from him spiritual power and peace."

Abu Sa'id then said:

"O God! do not let him be a prey to worldliness: make it a means of his spiritual advancement, not a plague!"

In consequence of this prayer Abu' I-Fadl and his family prospered greatly and reached high positions in church and state. Apparently, Abu Sa'id did not scruple to employ threats when the prospective donor disappointed him. And his threats were not to be despised! For example, there was the Amir Mas'ud who, after once paying the Shaikh's debts, obstinately refused to comply with a second demand; whereupon Abu Sa'id caused the following verse to be put into his hands by Hasan-i Mu'addib:

"Perform what thou hast promised, else thy might
and valour will not save thy life from me!"

The Amir flew into a rage and drove Hasan from his presence. On being told of this Abu Sa'id uttered no word. That same night Mas'ud, as is the custom of Oriental princes, slipped out from his tent in disguise to make a round of the camp and hear what the soldiers were saying. The royal tent was guarded by a number

of huge Ghuri dogs, kept in chains by day but allowed to roam at night, of such ferocity that they would tear to pieces any stranger who approached. They did not recognise their master, and before anyone could answer his cries for help he was a mangled corpse.

Stories of this type, showing the saint as a minister of divine wrath and vengeance, must have influenced many superstitious minds. The average Moslem's fatalism and belief in elairvoyance lead him to justify acts which to us seem desperately immoral. Abu Sa'id is said to have corresponded with his famous contemporary, Ibn Sina (Avicenna). I cannot regard as historical the account of their meeting in the monastery at Nishapur, or the report that after they had conversed with each other for three days and nights the philosopher said to his pupils. 'All that I know he sees', while the mystic declared, 'All that I see he knows'. Even less probable is the statements that Avicenna's mystical writings were the result of a miracle wronged by Abu Sa'id, which first opened his eyes to the reality of saintship and sufism.

Among the eminent Persian mystics of this epoch none was so nearly akin to Abu Sa'id in temperament and character as Abu' I-Hasan of Kharaghan. Before leaving Nishapur and finally settling at Mayhana, Abu Sa'id paid him a visit, which is described with great particularity. A complete version would be tedious, but I have translated the most interesting passages in full. When Abu Tahir, the eldest son of Abu Sa'id, announced his intention of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, his father with a numerous following of Sufis and disciples resolved to accompany him. As soon as the party left Nishapur behind them, Abu Sa'id exclaimed:

"Were it not for my coming, the holy man could not support this sorrow."

His companions wondered whom he meant. Now, Ahmad the son of Abu' I-Hasan Kharaqani had just been arrested and put to death on his wedding-eve. Abu' I-Hasan did not know until next morning, when, hearing the call to prayer, he came forth from his cell and trod upon the head of his son, which the executioners had flung away. On arriving at Kharaqan, Abu Sa'id went into the convent and entered the private chapel where Abu' I-Hasan usually sat. Abu' I-Hasan rose and walked half-way down the chapel to meet him, and they embraced each other.

Abu' I-Hasan took Abu Sa'id's hand and led him to his own chair, but he declined to occupy it; and since Abu' I-Hasan was equally averse to take the place of honour, both seated themselves in the middle of the chapel. While they sat there weeping, Abu' I-Hasan begged Abu Sa'id to give him a word of counsel, but Abu Sa'id said, 'It is for thee to speak.' Then he bade the *Koran-readers* who were with him read the *Koran* aloud, and during their chant the Sufis wept and wailed. Abu' I-Hasan threw his gaberline (*khirqā*) to the readers.

After that, the bier was brought out, and they prayed over the dead youth and buried him with manifestations of ecstasy. When the Sufis had retired to their cells, a dispute arose between them and the readers for the possession of Abu' I-Hasan's *khirqā*, which the Sufis claimed in order that they might tear it to pieces. Abu' I-Hasan sent a message by his servant to say that the readers should keep the *khirqā*, and he gave the sufis another *khirqā*, to be torn to pieces and distributed among them. A separate chamber was prepared for Abu Sa'id, who lodged with Abu I-Hasan three days and nights. In spite of his host's entreaties he refused to speak, saying:

"I implored God that He would send to me one of His friends, with whom I might speak of these mysteries, for I am old and feeble and could not come to thee. He will not let thee go to Mecca. Thou art too holy to be conducted to Mecca. He will bring the Ka'ba to thee, that it may circumambulate thee."

Every morning Abu 'I-Hasan came to the door of Abu Sa'id's room and asked—addressing the mother of Khwaja Muzaffar, whom Abu Sa'id had brought with him on this journey:

"How art thou, O *faqira*? Be sage and vigilant, for thou consortest with God. Here, nothing of human nature remains, nothing of the flesh (*nafs*) remains. Here, all is God, all is God."

And in the day-time when Abu Sa'id was alone. Abu 'I-Hasan used to come to the door and draw back the curtain and beg leave to come in and beseech Abu Sa'id not to rise from his couch; and he would kneel beside him and put his head close to him, and they would converse in low tones and weep together; and Abu 'I-Hasan would slip his hand underneath Abu Sa'id's garment and lay it upon his breast and cry, 'I am laying my hand upon the Everlasting Light'. Abu 'I-Hasan said:

"O Shaikh, every night I see the Ka'ba circumambulating thy head: what need for thee to go to the Ka'ba? Turn back, for thou was brought hither for my sake. Now, thou hast performed the pilgrimage."

Abu Sa'id said:

"I will go and visit Bistam and return here. Thou wishest to perform the 'umra,' after having performed the *haji*."

Then Abu Sa'id set out for Bistam where he visited the shrine of Bayazid-i Bistami. From Bistam the pilgrims journeyed west-ward to

Damghan, and thence to Rayy. Here, Abu Sa'id made a halt and declared that he would go no farther in the direction of Mecca. Bidding farewell to those who still persisted in their intention of performing the pilgrimage, the rest of the party, including Abu Sa'id and his son Abu Tahir, turned their faces towards Kharagan and Nishapur.

The last years of Abu Sa'id's life were spent in retirement at Mayhana. We are told that his final departure from Nishapur was deeply regretted by the inhabitants, and that the chief men of the city urged him in vain to alter his decision. With advancing years he may have felt that the duties which devolved upon him as a director of souls (not to speak of bodies) were too heavy a burden: in his old age he could not rise without being helped by two disciples who took hold of his arms and lifted him from his seat. He left no money in the convent, saying that God would send whatever was necessary for its upkeep. According to the biographer, this predicting was fulfilled, and although the convent never possessed a sure source of income (*ma'lum*), it attracted a larger number of dervishes and received more spiritual and material blessings than any other religious house in Nishapur, until it was destroyed by the invading Ghuzz.

Abu Sa'id lived 1000 months (83 years + 4 months). He died at Mayhana on the 4th of Sha'ban, A.H. 440/12th of January, A.D. 1049, and was buried in the mosque opposite his house. His tomb bore the following lines in Arabic, which he himself had chosen for an epitaph:

"I beg, nay, charge thee: Write on my grave-stone,
This was love's bondsman, that when I am gone,

Some wretch well-versed in passion's ways
may sigh
And give me greeting, as he passes by".

Apart from several allusions to his corpulence, the only description of Abu Sa'id's personal appearance that his biographers have preserved is the following, which depicts him as he was seen by an old man whom he saved from dying of thirst in the desert:

"tall, stout, with a white skin and wide eyes and a long beard falling to the navel; clad in a patched frock (*muraqqa*); in his hands a staff and a ewer; an prayer-rug thrown over his shoulder, also a razor and tooth-pick; a Sufi cap on his head, and on his feet shoes of cotton soled with linen-rags (*jumjum*); light was shining from his face".

This sketch of his life has shown us the saint and the abbot in one. Before coming into closer touch with the former character, I should like to refer to a few passages of specially monastic interest.

The first gives ten rules which Abu Sa'id caused to be put in writing, in order that they might be observed punctiliously by the inmates of his convent. In the original, after every rule there follow some words of the *Koran* on which it is based.

- I. Let them keep their garments-clean and themselves always pure.
- II. Let them not sit in the mosque or in any holy place for the sake of gossiping.
- III. In the first instance let them perform their prayers in common.
- IV. Let them pray much at night.
- V. At dawn let them ask forgiveness of God and call unto Him.

- VI. In the morning let them read as much of the *Koran* as they can, and let them not talk until the sun has risen.
- VII. Between evening prayers and bed-time prayers let them occupy themselves with repeating some litany (*wirdi u dhikri*).
- VIII. Let them welcome the poor and needy and all who join their company, and let them bear patiently the trouble of (waiting upon) them.
- IX. Let them not eat anything save in participation with one another.
- X. Let them not absent themselves without receiving permission from one another.

Furthermore, let them spend their hours of leisure in one of three things: either in the study of theology or in some devotional exercise (*wirdi*) or in bringing comfort to someone. Whosoever loves this community and helps them as much as he can is a sharer in their merit and future recompense.

Pir Abu Salih Dandani, a disciple of Shaikh Abu Sa'id, used continually to stand beside him with a pair of nail-scissors in his hand. Whenever the Shaikh looked at his woolen gaberde and saw the nap (*purz*) on it, he would pull the nap with his fingers, and then Abu Salih would at once remove it with the nail-scissors, for the Shaikh was so absorbed in contemplation of God that he did not wish to be disturbed by perceiving the state of his clothes. Abu Salih was the Shaikh's barber and used regularly to trim his moustache. A certain dervish desired to be taught the proper way of doing this. Abu Salih smiled and said:

"It is no such easy matter. A man needs seventy masters of the craft to instruct him

how the moustache of a dervish ought to be trimmed."

This, Abu Salih related that the Shaikh, towards the end of his life, had only one tooth left. "Every night, after supper, I used to give him a tooth-pick, with which he cleansed his mouth; and when he washed his hands, he would pour water on the tooth-pick and lay it down. One evening I thought to myself, 'He has no teeth and does not require a tooth-pick: why should he take it from me every night?' The Shaikh raised his head and looked at me and said:

"Because I wish to observe the Sunna and because I hope to win divine mercy. The Prophet has said, '*May God have mercy upon those of my people who use the tooth-pick in their ablutions and at their meals!*' I was overcome with shame and began to weep."

Pir Hubbi was the Shaikh's tailor. One day, he came in with a garment belonging to the Shaikh which he had mended. At that moment the Shaikh was taking his noon-day siesta and reclining on a couch, while Khwaja 'Abdu 'l-Karim, his valet, sat beside his pillow and faced him. Khwaja 'Abdu 'l-Karim exclaimed, What are you doing here? Pir Hubbi retorted:

"Wherever there is room for you there is room for me."

The valet laid down the fan and struck him again and again. After seven blows the Shaikh said, 'That is enough.' Pir Hubbi went off and complained to Khwaja Najjar, who said to the Shaikh, when he came out for afternoon prayers:

"The young men lift their hands against the elders: what says the Shaikh?"

The Shaikh replied:

"Khwaja 'Abdu 'l-Karim's hand is my hand."

and nothing more was said about it.

In describing Abu Sa'id's mystical doctrines and their relation to the historical development of Sufism, European scholars have hitherto relied almost exclusively on the quatrains which he is said to have composed and of which more than six hundred have been published. As I have shown above, it is doubtful whether Abu Sa'id is the author of any of these poems, and we may be sure that in the main they are not his work and were never even quoted by him. To repeat what has been already said, they form a miscellaneous anthology drawn from a great-number of poets who flourished at different periods and consequently they reflect the typical ideas of Persian mysticism as a whole.

Abu Sa'id helped to bring its peculiar diction and symbolism into vogue, by quoting Sufi poetry in his sermons and allowing it to be chanted in the *sama*, but we may hesitate to accept the view that he invented this style (which occurs, full-blown, in the odes of his contemporary, Baba Kuhl of Shiraz) or was the first to embody it in quatrains.

The mysticism which his sayings and sermons unfold has neither the precision of a treatise nor the coherence of a system. It is experimental, not doctrinal or philosophical. It does not concern itself with abstract speculations, but sets forth in simple and untechnical language such principles and maxims as bear directly on the religious life and are the fruit of dearly-bought experience.

As we read, we seem to hear the voice of the teacher addressing his disciples and expounding for their benefit the truths that had been revealed to him. Abu Sa'id borrows much from his predecessors, sometimes mentioning them by name, but often appropriating their wisdom without a word of acknowledgement.

Amongst Moslems, this kind of plagiarism is considered respectable, even when the culprit is not a saint.

The sayings of Abu Sa'id include several definitions of Sufism, which it will be convenient to translate before going further.

1. To lay aside what thou hast in thy head, to give what thou hast in thy hand, and not to recoil from whatsoever befalls thee.
2. Sufism is two things: to look in one direction and to live in one way.
3. Sufism is a name attached to its object; when it reaches its ultimate perfection, it is God (*i.e.* the end of Sufism is that, for the Sufi, nothing should exist except God).
4. It is glory in wretchedness and riches in poverty and lordship in servitude and satiety in hunger and clothedness in nakedness and freedom in slavery and life in death and sweetness in bitterness.
5. The Sufi is he who is pleased with all that God does, in order that God may be pleased with all that he does.
6. Sufism is patience under God's commanding and forbidding, and acquiescence and resignation in the events determined by divine providence.
7. Sufism is the will of the Creator concerning His creatures when no creature exists.
8. To be a Sufi is to cease from taking trouble (*takallf*); and there is no greater trouble for thee than thine own self (*tu'i-yi tu*), for, when thou occupied with thyself, thou remainest away from God."

9. He said, "Even this Sufism is polytheism (*shirk*). " "Why, O Shaikh" they asked. He answered, "Because Sufism consists in guarding the soul from what is other than God; and there is nothing other than God.

The quietism and pantheistic self-abandonment, on which these definitions lay so much stress, forms only the negative side of Abu Sa'id's mystical teaching. His doctrine of *fana*. The passing-away from self, is supplemented by an equally characteristic positive element, of which I shall have more to say presently. Both aspects are indicted in the following maxim:

"A man ought to be occupied with two things; he ought to put away all that keeps him apart from God, and bring comfort to dervishes."

Innumerable are the ways to God, yet the Way is but a single step take one step out of thyself, that thou mayst arrive at God. To pass away from self (*fana*) is to realise that self does not exist, and that nothing exists except God (*tawhid*). The Tradition, He who knows himself knows his Lord, signifies that he who knows himself as not-being ('*adam*') knows God as Real Being (*wujud*).

This knowledge cannot be obtained through the intellect, since the Eternal and Uncreated is inaccessible to that which is created, it cannot be learned, but given by divine illumination. The organ which receives it is the 'heart' (*qalb* or *dil*), a spiritual faculty, not the heart of flesh and blood. In a remarkable passage Abu Sa'id refers to a divine principle, which he calls *sirr Allah*, i.e., the conscience or consciousness of God and describes it as something which God communicates to the heart. Answering the question, what is sincerity (*ikhlas*)? he said:

"The Prophet has said that *ikhlas* is a divine *sirr* in man's heart and soul, which *sirr* is the object of His pure contemplation is replenished by God's pure contemplation thereof. Which declares God to be One, is belief in the divine Unity depends on that *sirr*".

Being asked to define it, he continued as follows:

"That *sirr* is a substance of God's grace (*latifa*)—for He is gracious (*latif*) unto His servants (*Koran*, 42, 18)—and it is produced by the bounty and mercy of God, not by the acquisition and action of man. At first, He produces a need and longing and sorrow in man's heart; then He contemplates that need and sorrow and in His bounty and mercy deposits in that heart a spiritual substance (*latifa*) which is hidden from the knowledge of angel and prophet. That substance called *sirr Allah*, and that is *ikhlas*.... That pure *sirr* is the Beloved of Unitarians. It is immortal and does not become naught, since it subsists in God's contemplation of it. It belongs to the Creator: the creatures have no part therein, and in the body it is a loan. Whoever possesses it is 'living' (*hayy*), and whoever lacks it is 'animal' (*hayawan*). There is a great difference between the 'living' and the animal."

Students of medieval Christian mysticism will find many analogies to this *sirr Allah*, e.g. the 'synteresis' of Gerson and Eckhart's 'spark' or 'ground of the soul'.

I will now translate some of Abu Sa'id's discourses and sayings on the Way to God through self-negation. He was asked:

"When shall a man be freed from his wants?
When God shall free him."

He replied:

"this is not effected by a man's exertion, but by the grace and help of God. First of all, He brings forth in him the desire to attain this

goal. Then He opens to him the gate of repentance (*tawba*). Then He throws him into self-mortification (*mujahada*), so that he continues to strive and, for a while, to pride himself upon his efforts, thinking that he is advancing or achieving something; but afterwards, he falls into despair and feels no joy. Then he knows that his work is not pure, but tainted, he repents of the acts of devotion which he had thought to be his own, and perceives that they were done by God's grace them and help, and that he was guilty of polytheism (*shirk*) in attributing them to his own exertion. When this becomes manifest, a feeling of joy enters his heart. Then, God opens to him the gate of certainty (*yaqin*), so that for a time he takes anything from anyone and accepts contumely and endures abasement, and known for certain by Whom it is brought to pass, and doubt concerning this is removed from his heart.

Then, God opens to him the gate of love (*mahabba*), and here too egoism shows itself for a time and he is exposed to blame (*malama*), which means that in his love of God he meets fearlessly whatever may befall him and reckons not of reproach; but still he thinks 'I love' and finds no rest until he perceives that it is God who loves him and keeps him in the state of loving, and that this is the result of divine love and grace, not his own endeavour. Then God opens to him the gate of unity (*tawhid*) and causes him to know that all action depends on God Almighty. Hereupon, he perceives that all is He, and all is by Him, and all is His; that He has laid this self-conceit upon His creatures in order to prove them, and that He in His omnipotence ordains that they shall hold this false belief, because omnipotence is His attribute, so that when they regard His attributes they shall know that He is the Lord. What formerly was hearsay now becomes known to him intuitively as he contemplates the works of God. Then, he entirely recognises that he has not the right to

say 'I' or mine. At this stage he beholds his helplessness; desires fall away from him and he becomes free and calm. He wishes that which God wishes: his own wishes are gone, he is emancipated from his wants, and has gained peace and joy in both worlds.... First, action is necessary then knowledge, in order that thou may know that thou knowest naught and art no one. This is not easy to know. It is a thing that cannot be rightly learned by instruction, nor sewn on with needle nor tied on with thread. It is the gift of God."

The heart's vision is what matters, not the tongue's speech. Thou wilt never escape from thy self (*nafs*) until thou slay it. To say "There is no god but Allah" is not enough. Most of those who make the verbal profession of faith are polytheists at heart, and polytheism is the one unpardonable sin. Thy whole body is full of doubt and polytheism. Thou must cast them out in order to be at peace. Until thou deny thyself thou wilt never believe in God. Thy self, which is keeping thee far from God and saying, 'So-and-so has treated thee ill, such and such a one has done well by thee,' points the way to creatureliness; and all this is polytheism. Noting depends on the creatures, all depends on the Creator.

This thou must know and say, and having said it thou must stand firm. To stand firm (*istiqama*) means that when thou hast said 'One,' thou must never again say 'Two.' Creator and creature are 'Two.'...Do not double like a fox, that ye may suddenly start up in some other place: that is not right faith. Say 'Allah!' and stamp firm there. Standing firm is that, that when thou hast said 'God' thou shouldst no more speak or think of created things, so that it is just as though they were not... Love that One who does not cease to be when thou ceasest, in order that thou mayst be such a being that thou never wilt cease to be!

So long as anyone regards his purity and devotion, he says:

"Thou and I,' but when he considers exclusively the bounty and mercy of God, he says 'Thou! Thou!' and then his worship becomes a reality. He was asked, "What is evil and what is the worst evil?" He replied, "Evil is 'thou'; and the worst evil is 'thou,' when thou knowest it not."

Abu Sa'id belief that he had escaped from the prison of individuality was constantly asserting itself. Once he attended a part of mourners, (*ta'ziya*) where the visitors, as they arrived, were announced by a servant (*mu'arrif*) who with a loud voice enumerated their titles of honour (*alqab*). When Abu Sa'id appeared, the *mu'arrif* inquired how he should announce him. He said:

"Go and tell them to make way for Nobody, the son of Nobody."

In speaking of himself, he never used the pronouns 'I' or 'we,' but in variable referred to himself as 'they' (*ishan*). The author of the *Asraru 'l-tawhid* apologises for having restored the customary form of speech, pointing out that if he had retained 'they' in such cases, the meaning of the text would have been confused and unintelligible to most.

While the attainment of selflessness is independent of human initiative, the mystic participates, to some extent, in the process by which it is attained. A power not his own craws him on towards the goal, but this divine attraction (*kashish*) demands, on his part, an inward striving (*kushish*), without which there can be no vision (*binish*). Like many Sufis, Abu Said admits free will in practice but denies it in theory. As a spiritual director, he could not teach what, as a panthist, he was bound to believe—that the only real agent is God.

Speaking from the stand-point of the religious law, he used often to say:

"O God! whatever comes from me to Thee I beseech Thee to forgive, and whatever comes from Thee to me, Thine is the praise!"

On the other hand, he says that had there been no sinners, God's mercy would have been wasted; and that Adam would not have been visited with the tribulation of unless forgiveness were the dearest of all things to God. In the following passage he suggests that although sin is an act of disobedience to the divine commandment (*atar*) it is none the less determined by the divine will (*irada*).

On the Day of Resurrection Iblis (*Satan*) will be brought to judgment with all the devils, and he will be charged with having led multitudes of people astray. He will confess that he called on them to follow him, but will plead that they need not have done so. Then God will say:

"Let that pass! Now worship Adam, in order that thou mayst be saved."

The devils will implore him to obey and thereby deliver himself and them from torment, but Iblis will answer, weeping:

"Had it depended on my will, I would have worshipped Adam at the time when I was first bidden. God commands me to worship him, but does not will it. Had He willed it, I should have worshipped him then."

It is significant that Abu Sa'id Iblis lets have the last word whereas Hallaj, who was faced with the same dilemma insisted that the saint must fulfil the divine command (*anu*) at whatever cost of suffering to himself. The 'inward striving' after selflessness is identical with the state which Abu Sa'id calls 'want' (*niyaz*). There is no way nearer to God than

this. It is described as a living and luminous fire placed by God in the breasts of His servants in order that their 'self' (*nafs*) may be burned; and when it has been burned, the fire of 'want' becomes the first of 'longing' (*shawq*) which never dies, neither in this world nor in the next, and is only increased by vision.

Complete negation of individuality involves complete affirmation of the real and universal Self—a fact which is expressed by Sufis in the formula, 'Abiding after passing-away' (*al-baqa ba'd al-fana*). The perfect mystic abides in God and yet (as Ruysbroeck says):

"he goes out towards created things in a spirit of love towards all things, in the virtues and in works of righteousness."

He is not an ecstatic devotee lost in contemplation of the Oneness, nor a saintly recluse shunning all commerce with mankind, but a philanthropist who in all his words and actions exhibits and diffuses amongst those around him the divine life with which he has been made one. Abu Sa'id said:

"The true saint goes in and out amongst the people and eats and sleeps with them and buys and sells in the market and marries and takes part in social intercourse, and never forgets God for a single moment."

His ideal of charity and brotherhood was a noble one, however he may have abused it. He declared that there is no better and easier means of attaining to God than by bringing joy to the heart of a Moslem, and quoted with approval the saying of Abu'l-Abbas Bashshar:

"When a disciple performs an act of kindness to a dervish, it is better for him than a hundred genuflexions; and if he gives him a mouthful of food, it is better for him than a whole night spent in prayer."

His purse was always open and he never quarrelled with anyone, because he regarded all creatures with the eye of the Creator, not with the eye of the creatures. When his followers wished to chastise a bigot who had cursed him, he restrained them, saying:

"God forbid! He is not cursing me, but he thinks that my belief is false and that his own belief is true: therefore, he is cursing that false belief for God's sake."

He seldom preached on *Koranic* texts describing the pains of Hell, and in his last years, when reciting the *Koran*, he passed over all the 'verses of torment' (*ayat-i 'adhab*). He cried:

"O God! inasmuch as men and stones have the same value in Thy sight, feed the flames of Hell with stones and do not burn these miserable wretches!"

Although Abu Sa'id's charity embraced all created beings, he makes a clear distinction between the Sufis and the rest of his fellow-men. The Sufis are God's elect and are united by a spiritual affinity which is more binding than any ties of blood.

Four thousand years before God created these bodies, He created the souls and kept them beside Himself and shed a light upon them. He knew what quantity of light each soul received and He was showing favour to each in proportion to its illumination. The souls remained all that time in the light until they became fully nourished. Those who in this world live in joy and agreement with one another must have been akin to one another in yonder place.

Here, they love one another and are called the friends of God, and they are brethren who love one another for God's sake. These souls

know each other by the smell, like horses. Though one be in the East and the other in the West, yet they feel joy and comfort in each other's talk, and one who lives in a later generation than the other is instructed and consoled by the words of his friend. Abu Sa'id said:

"Whoever goes with me in this Way is my kinsman, even though he be many degrees removed from me, and whoever does not back me in this matter is nobody to me, even though he be one of my nearest relatives."

To many Christians the description of Abu Sa'id as a Moslem saint will seem doubly paradoxical. The Mohammedan notion of Saintship, which is founded on ecstasy, justifies the noun; but we may still wonder that the adjective should be applied to a man who on one occasion cried out in a transport of enthusiasm:

"There is nothing inside this coat except Allah!"

I need not discuss here the causes which gradually brought about such a revolution that, as Professor D.B. Macdonald says:

"the devout life within the Muslim church led to a more complete pantheism than ever did the Christian trinity."

At any rate, the question whether Abu Sa'id was a Moslem cannot be decided against him on this count, unless we are prepared to excommunicate most of the saints, some of the profoundest theologians, and well-nigh all the earnestly religious thinkers of Islam. This was recognised by his orthodox opponents, who ignored his theosophical doctrines and attacked him as an innovator in matters connected with the religious law. Within reasonable limits, he might believe and say what he liked, they would

take notice only of his overt acts. The following pages, which set forth his attitude towards positive religion, will prove to every impartial reader that in their treatment of heretics the medieval Christian divines had much to learn from their Moslem contemporaries. Union toleration also *ex Oriente lux*.

At the time of Abu Sa'id's residence in Nishapur Shaikh Bu 'Abdallah Baku was in the convent of Shaikh Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, of which he became the director after the death of Abu 'Abd al-Rahman. (Baku is a village in the district of Shirwan). This Bu 'Abdallah Baku used frequently to talk with Shaikh Abu Sa'id in a controversial spirit and ask him questions about the Sufi Path. One day, he came to him and said:

"O Shaikh! we see our doing some things that our Elders never did. What are these things? One of them, is this, that you let the young men sit beside the old and put the juniors on a level with their seniors in all affairs and make no difference between them; secondly, you permit the young men to dance and sing; and thirdly, when a dervist throws off his gaberline (in ecstasy), you sometimes direct that it should be given back to him, saying that the dervist has the best right to his own gaberline."

This has never been the practice of our Elders. Is there anything else? said Abu Sa'id. No, he replied. Abu Sa'id said:

"As regards the juniors and seniors, none of them is a junior in my opinion. When a man has once entered on the Path of Sufism, although he may be young, his seniors ought to consider that possibly he will receive in a single day what they have not received in seventy years. None who holds this belief will look upon any person as a junior. Then, as to the young men's dancing in the *sama'*, the souls

of young men are not yet purged of lust: indeed, it may be the prevailing element; and lust takes possession of all the limbs.

"Now, if a young dervish claps his hands, the lust of his hands will be dissipated, and if he tosses his feet, the lust of his feet will be lessened. When by this means the lust fails in their limbs, they can preserve themselves from great sins, but when all lusts are united (which God forbid!), they will sin mortally. It is better that the fire of their lust should be dissipated in the *sama* than in something else. As regards the gaberline which a dervish throws off, its disposal rests with the whole company of dervishes and engages their attention. If they have no other garment at hand, they clothe him again in his own gaberline, and thereby relieve their minds from the burden of thinking about it. That dervish has not taken back his own gaberline, but the company of dervishes have given him *their* gaberline and have thus freed their minds from thought of him. Therefore, he is protected by the spiritual concentration (*himma*) of the whole company. This gaberline is not the same one which he threw away."

Bu 'Abdullah Baku said:

"Had I never seen the Shaikh, I should never have seen a real Sufi."

This interesting passage represents Abu Sa'id as having departed in certain respects from the ancient Sufistic tradition. His innovations, by destroying the influence and authority of the more experienced dervishes, would naturally tend to relax discipline. Early Sufi writers, e.g. Sarraj, Qushayri, and Hujwiri, do not agree with him in thinking that the practice of *sama* is beneficial to the young; on the contrary, they urge the necessity of taking care lest novices should be demoralised by it. According to the same writers, the doctrines of

Sufism are contained in, and derived from, the *Koran* and the Traditions, of which the true meaning has been mystically revealed to the Sufis alone.

This theory concedes all that Moslems claim as to the unique authority of the *Koran* and reduces the difference between Moslem and Sufi to a question of interpretation. Abu Sa'id, however, found the source of his doctrine in a larger revelation than the Word which was given to the Prophet. The author of the *Asrar* says:

"My grandfather, Shaikh 'I-Islam Abu Sa'id relates that one day, whilst Abu Sa'id was preaching in Nishapur, a learned theologian who was present thought to himself that such doctrine is not to be found in the seven sevenths (i.e. the whole) of the *Koran*. Abu Sa'id immediately turned towards him and said, "Doctor, thy thought is not hidden from me. The doctrine that I preach is contained in the eighth seventh of the *Koran*." "What is that?" the theologian inquired. Abu Sa'id answered:

"The seven sevenths are, *O Apostle, deliver the message that hath been sent down to thee* (Kor. 5, 51) and the eighth seventh is, *He revealed unto His servant that which He revealed* (Kor. 53, 10). Ye imagine that the Word of God is of fixed quantity and extent. Nay, the infinite Word of God that was sent down to Muhammed is the whole seven sevenths of the *Koran*; but that which He causes to come into the hearts of His servants does not admit of being numbered and limited, nor does it ever cease. Every moment there comes a messenger from Him to the hearts of His servants, as the Prophet declared, saying, "Beware of the clairvoyance (*firasa*) of the true believer, for verily he sees by the light of God."

Then Abu Sa'id quoted the verse:

Thou art my soul's joy, known by vision, not
by hearsay.
Of what use is hearsay to one who hath vision?

In a Tradition (he went on) it is stated that the Guarded Tablet (*lawh-i mahfuz*) is so broad that a fleet Arab horse would not be able to cross it in four years, and the writing thereon is finer than a hair. Of all the writing which covers it only a single line has been communicated to God's creatures. That little keeps them in perplexity until the Resurrection. As for the rest, no one knows anything about it.

Here Abu Sa'id sets aside the partial, finite, and temporal revelation on which Islam is built, and appeals to the universal, infinite, and everlasting revelation which the Sufis find in their hearts. As a rule, even the boldest Mohammedan mystics shrink from uttering such a challenge. So long as the inner light is regarded only as an interpreter of the written revelation, the supremacy of the latter is normally maintained, though in fact almost any doctrine can be foisted upon it: this is a very different thing from claiming that the inner light transcends the Prophetic Law and possesses full authority to make laws for itself. Abu Sa'id does not say that the partial and universal revelations are in conflict with each other; he does not repudiate the *Koran*, but he denies that it is the final and absolute standard of divine truth. He often quotes *Koranic* verses in support of his theosophical views. Only when the Book fails him need he confound his critics by alleging a secret communication which he has received from the Author.

The fore-going anecdote prepares us for mysticism of an advanced and antinomian type. Not that Abu Sa'id acted in logical accordance

with his beliefs. With one exception, which will be noted presently, he omitted no religious observance that a good Moslem is required to perform. But while he thus shielded himself under the law, he showed in word and deed how little he valued any external ceremony or traditional dogma.

There was at Qa'in a venerable Imam, whose name was Khwaja Muhammad Qa'ini. When Abu Sa'id arrived at Qa'in, Khwaja Muhammad spent most of his time in waiting upon him, and he used to attend all the parties to which Abu Sa'id was invited. On one of these occasions, during the *sama'* which followed the feast, Abu Sa'id and all the company had fallen into transports of ecstasy. The muezzin gave the call to noon-day prayers, but Abu Sa'id remained in the same rapture and the dervishes continued to dance and shout. "Prayers! Prayers!" cried the Imam Muhammad Qa'ini. We *are* at prayers, said Abu Sa'id, whereupon the Imam left them in order to take part in the prayer-service. When Abu Sa'id came out of his trance, he said:

"Between its rising and setting the sun does not shine upon a more venerable and learned man than this"—meaning Muhammad Qa'ini—"but his knowledge of Sufism is not so much as the tip of a hair."

Although it would be wrong to use this story as evidence of Abu Sa'id's habitual practice, we may at least affirm that in his eyes the essence of prayer was to the formal act, but the 'passing away from self' which is completely attained in ecstasy. He said:

"Endeavour to have a mystical experience (*warid*), not a devotional exercise (*wird*)."

One day he said to a dervish, who in order to show the utmost respect stood before him in the attitude of prayer:

"This is a very respectful posture, but thy not-being would be still better."

He never made the pilgrimage to Mecca, which every Moslem is bound to make at least once. Many Sufis who would have gladly dispensed with this semi-pagan rite allegorised it and attached a mystical significance to each of the various ceremonies; but they saved their orthodoxy at the expense of their principles. Abu Sa'id had no such reputation to keep up. His refusal to perform the Hajj is not so surprising as the contemptuous language in which he refers to one of the five main pillars of Islam. Abu Sa'id was asked:

"Who has been thy Pir? for every Pir has had a Pir to instruct him; and how is it that thy neck is too big for thy shirt-collar, while other Pirs have emaciated themselves by austerities? And why hast thou not performed the Pilgrimage, as they have done?"

He replied:

"Who has been my Pir? This (doctrine that I teach) is part of what my Lord hath taught me (Kor. 12, 37). How is it that my neck is too big for my shirt-collar? I marvel how there is room for my neck in the seven heavens and earths after all that God hath bestowed upon me. Why have I not performed the Pilgrimage? It is no great matter that thou shouldst tread under thy feet a thousand miles of ground in order to visit a stone house. The true man of God sits where he is, and the *Bayt al-Ma'mur* comes several times in a day and night to visit him and perform the circumambulation above his head. Look and see!"

All who were present looked and saw it. The mystic's pilgrimage takes place within himself.

"If God sets the way to Mecca before any one, that person has been cast out of the Way to the Truth."

Not content with encouraging his disciples to neglect the Hajj, Abu Sa'id used to send those who thought of performing it to visit the tomb of Abu 'l-Fadl Hasan at Sarakhs, bidding them circumambulate it seven times and consider that their purpose was accomplished. One sees what a menace to Mohammedan institutions the cult of the saints had already become.

The saint lost in contemplation of God knows no religion, and it is often his fate to be classed with the free-thinkers (*zanadiqa*), who, from the Moslem point of view, are wholly irreligious, though some of them acknowledge the moral law. Abu Sa'id said:

"Whoever saw me in my first state became a *siddiq*, and whoever saw me in my last state became a *zindiq*," meaning that those who accused him of being a free-thinker thereby made themselves guilty of the very thing which they imputed to him".

I will translate the biographer's commentary on this saying. His first state was self-mortification and asceticism, and since most men look at the surface and regard the outward form, they saw the austerity of his life and how painfully he advanced on the Way to God, and their sincere belief (*sidq*) in this Way was increased and they attained to the degree of the Sincere (*siddiqan*). His last state was contemplation, a state in which the fruit of self-mortification is gathered and the complete unveiling (*kashf*) comes to pass; accordingly, eminent mystics have said that states of contemplation are the heritage of acts of self-mortification (*al-mushadat mawarithu 'l-mujahadat*). Those who saw him in this state, which is necessarily one of enjoyment and happiness, and were ignorant of his former state denied that which was true (*haqq*); and whoever

denies the Truth (*Haqq*) is a free-thinker (*zindiq*). There are many analogies to this in the sensible world. For example, when a man seeks to win the favour of a king and to become his companion and intimate friend, before attaining to that rank he must suffer all sorts of tribulation and patiently endure injuries and insults from high and low, and submit with cheerfulness to maltreatment and abuse, giving fair words in return for foul; and when he has been honoured with the king's approval and has been admitted to his presence, he must serve him assiduously and hazard his life in order that the king may place confidence in him.

But after he has gained the king's confidence and intimacy, all this hard and perilous service belongs to the past. Now all is grace and bounty and favour; everywhere he meets with new pleasure and delights; and he has no duty but to wait upon the king always, from whose palace he cannot be absent a single moment by day or night, in order that he may be at hand whenever the king desires to tell him a secret or to honour him with a place by his side.

Asceticism and positive religion are thus relegated to the lower planes of the mystical life. The Sufi needs them and must hold fast to them while he is serving his spiritual apprenticeship and also during the middle stage which is marked by longer or shorter intervals of illumination; but in his 'last state,' when the unveiling is completed, he has no further use for ascetic practices and religious forms, for he lives in permanent communion with God Himself.

This leads directly to anti-nomianism, though in theory the saint is above the law rather than against it. One who sees the reality

within cannot judge by appearances. Being told that a disciple of his was lying blind-drunk on a certain road, Abu Sa'id said, "Thank God the' he has fallen on that way, not off the Way." Some one asked him. He replied.

"Are the men of God in the mosque? They are in the tavern too,"

His pantheistic vision blotted out the Mohammedan afterworld with its whole system of rewards and punishments.

"Whoever knows God without mediation worships Him without recompense."

There is no Hell but selfhood, no Paradise but selflessness:

"Hell is where thou art and Paradise where thou art not."

He quoted the Tradition:

"My people shall be split into more than seventy sects, of which a single one shall be saved, while the others shall be in the Fire,"

and added,

"that is to say, in the fire of their own selves."

As I have already remarked, Abu Sa'id speaks with two voices: now as a theosophist, now as a Moslem. Hence, the same terms bear their ordinary religious meaning in one passage and are explained mystically in another, while the purest pantheism runs side by side with popular theology. To our minds it seems absurd to suppose that he believed in both; yet probably he did, at least so far as to have no difficulty in accepting the Mohammedan scheme when it suited him. For example, he preaches the doctrine of the intercession of saints, in which (though the *Koran* does not support it) Paradise, Hell, the Day of Judgment, etc., are what the *Koran* says they are. A few of his sayings on

this subject may be quoted here, especially as it is closely connected with his miracles and legend which will be discussed in the following pages.

The man who is being carried off to Hell will see light from afar. He will ask what it is and will be told that it is the light of such and such a Pir. He will say, "In our world I used to love him. The wind will bear his words to the ears of that Pir, who will plead for him in the divine presence, and God will release the sinner on account of the intercession of that holy man. Whoever has seen me and has done good work for my family and disciples will be under the shadow of my intercession hereafter. I have prayed God to forgive my neighbours on the left, on the right, in front, and behind, and He has forgiven them for my sake." Then he said:

"My neighbours are Balkh and Merv and Nishapur and Herat. I am not speaking of those who live here (Mayhana). I need not say word on behalf of those around me. If anyone has mounted an ass and passed by the end of this street, or has passed my house or will pass it, or if the light of my candle falls on him, the least thing that God will do with him is that He will have mercy upon him."

Sufism is at once the religious philosophy and the popular religion of Islam. The great Mohammedan mystics are also saints. Their lives belong to the Legend and contain, besides their lofty and abstruse speculations, an account of the miracles which they wrought. They are the object of endless worship and adoration, their tombs are holy shrines whither men and women come as pilgrims to beseech their all powerful aid, their relics bring a blessing that only the rich can buy. Whist still living, they are canonised by the people; not posthumously by the Church. Their title to saintship depends on a peculiarly intimate relation to God, which

is attested by fits of ecstasy and, above all, by thaumaturgic gifts (*karamat* = *grazie*). Belief in such gifts is almost universal, but there is disagreement as to the importance which should be attached to them.

The higher doctrine, that they are of small value in comparison with the attainment of spiritual perfection, was ignored by the mass of Moslems, who would have considered a saint without miracles to be no saint at all. Miracles there must be; if the holy man failed to supply them, they were invented for him. It is vain to inquire how far the miracles of Abu Sa'id may have been the work of popular imagination, but the following extracts show that the question is not an irrelevant one, even if we take for granted the reality of these occult and mysterious powers.

It is related by Ustad 'Abdu 'l-Rahman, who was Abu Sa'id's principal *Koran-reader* (*muqri*), that when Abu Sa'id was living in Nishapur a man came to him and saluted him and said:

"I am a stranger here. On my arrival I found the whole city full of thy fame. They tell me thou art a man who has the gift of miracles and does not hide it. Now show me one". Abu Sa'id replied: "When I was at Amul with Abu 'l-Abbas Qassab, someone came to him on the same errand and demanded of him the same thing which you have just demanded of me. He answered, 'What do you see that is not miraculous? A butcher's son (*pisar-iqassabi*), whose father taught him his own trade, has a vision, is enraptured, is brought to Baghdad and falls in with Shaikh Shibli; from Baghdad to Mecca, from Mecca to Medina, from Medina to Jerusalem, where Khadir appears to him, and God puts it in Khadir's heart to accept him as a disciple; then he is brought back here and multitudes turn towards him, coming forth from taverns and renouncing

wickedness and taking vows of penitence and sacrificing wealth. Filled with burning love they come from the ends of the world to seek God from me. What miracle is greater than this? The man replied that he wished to see a miracle at the present moment. 'Is it not a miracle, 'said Abu 'l-Abbas, that a goat-killer's son is sitting in the seat of the mighty and that he does not sink into the earth and that this wall does not fall upon him and that this house does not tumble over his head? Without goods and gear he possesses saintship, and without work of means of surprise he receives his daily bread and feeds many people. Is not all this a gift of miracles?' Good sir (Abu Sa'id continued), your experience with me is the same as that man's with Abu'l-Abbas Qassab." "O Shaikh!" said he, "I ask thee for miracles and thou tellest of Shaikh Abu'l-Abbas". Abu Sa'id said, "Whosoever belongs entirely to the Giver (*Karim*), all his acts are gifts (*karamat*)".

Then he smiled and said in verse:

Every wind that comes to me from the region
of Bukhara,
Breathes the perfume of roses and musk and
the scent of jasmine?
Every man and woman on whom that wind is
blowing,
Thinks it is surely blowing from Khoten.

Nay, nay! From Khoten bloweth no such
delicious gale:

That wind is coming from the presence of the
Beloved.
Each night I gaze towards Yemen, that thou
mayst rise;
For thou art Suhayl (Canopus), and Suhayl
rises from Yemen.
Adored One ! I endeavour to hide thy name
from all,

In order that thy name may not come into
folk's mouths:

But whether I will or no, whenever I speak to
anyone.

Thy name is the first word that comes to my
lips.

When God makes a man pure and
separates him from his selfhood, all that he
feels becomes a wondrous gift (*karamat*). God
bless Mohammed and the whole of his Family.

In another passage the extra-ordinary feats
performed by saints are reduced to their proper
insignificance. They said to him, "So-and-so
walks on the water". He replied, "It is easy
enough: frogs and waterfowl do it," They said,
"So-and-so flies in the air". "So to birds and
insects", he replied. They said, "So-and-so goes
from one town to another in a moment of time".
"Satan", he rejoined, "goes in one moment from
the East to the West. Things like these have no
great value"; and he proceeded to give the
definition of the true saint which has been
quoted already—a man who lives in friendly
intercourse with his fellow-creatures, yet is
never forgetful of God.

Abu Sa'id looked with disfavour on the
composition of marvellous tales concerning
himself. One day, he summoned his famulus,
Khwaja 'Abdu'l-Karim, and inquired what he
has been doing. 'Abdu 'l-Karim answered that
he had been writing some anecdotes of his
master for a certain dervish who wanted them.
The Shaikh said:

"O Abdu'l-Karim! do not be a writer of
anecdotes: be such a man that anecdotes will
be told of thee".

The biographer observes that Abu' Sa'id's
fear lest a legend of his miracles should be
published and widely circulated accords with
the practice of the most eminent Sufis, who
have always concealed their mystical

experiences. Abu Sa'id placed the hidden and unrecognised saint above the saint manifest and known to the people: the former is he whom God loves, the latter he who loves God

Such protests may have retarded, although they did not check, the constantly increasing glorification of popular saints by themselves and their devotees. At any rate the ancient Lives of Abu Sa'id are modest and subdued if we compare them with some famous legends of the same kind.

As I have mentioned, his recorded miracles are mostly instances of *firasa*, a term equivalent to clairvoyance. Being an effect of the light which God sets in the purified heart, *firasa* is reckoned among the 'gifts' (*karamat*) of the saint and is accepted as evidence of holiness. There were two friends, a tailor and a weaver, who obstinately asserted that Abu Sa'id was an impostor. One day, they said:

"This man pretends to have the gift of miracles. Let us go to him, and if he knows what trade each of us follows, we shall then know that his claim is true".

They disguised themselves and went to the Shaikh. As soon as his eye fell on them, he said:

On the *falak* are two craftsmen,
One a tailor, one a weaver...
Then he said, pointing to the tailor:
This one fashions robes for princes.
And pointing to the weaver:
This one weaves black woollens only.

Both were confounded with confusion and fell at the Saiykh's feet and repented of their disbelief.

Muslims attribute to *firasa*, and therefore to a divine source, all the phenomena of telepathy, thought-reading, and second sight. In the course of this essay I have had occasion to

translate several testimonies that Abu Sa'id was richly endowed with these 'gifts' and that he made his reputation as a saint by exhibiting them in public. That he really possessed them or at least, persuaded a great number of people to think so, is beyond dispute—otherwise, traditions attesting them would not have occupied so much of his legend; but when we come to examine particular cases, we find that the evidence is weak from a scientific point of view as well as on common grounds of probability. Such considerations, I need hardly say, not only have no influence upon the Moslem's belief in occult phenomena but do not even enter his mind. Many stories illustrating Abu Sa'id's powers of *firasa* occur in the preceding pages, and it would be useless to give further specimens. The following extracts commemorate some miracles of a different class.

In Nishapur, there lived a woman of noble family, whose name was Ishi Nili. She was a great ascetic, and on account of her piety the people of Nishapur used to seek blessings from her. It was forty years since she had gone to the warm baths or set foot outside of her house. When Abu Sa'id came to Nishapur and the report of his miracles spread through the city, she sent a nurse, who always waited upon her, to hear him preach. "Remember what he says," said she, "and tell me when you come back."

The nurse, on her return,* could recollect nothing of Abu Sa'id's discourse, but repeated to her mistress some bacchanalian verses she had heard him recite. Ishi cried:

"Go and wash your mouth! Do ascetics and divines speak such words as these?"

Now, Ishi was in the habit of making eye-salves which she gave to the people. That night she

saw a frightful thing in her sleep and started up. Both her eyes were aching. She treated them with eye-salves, but was no better; she betook herself to all the physicians, but found no cure: she moaned in pain twenty days and nights. Then one night, she slept and dreamed that if she wished her eyes to be better, she must satisfy the Shaikh of Mayhana and win his exalted favour.

Next day, she put in a purse a thousand dirhems, which she had received as alms, and bade the nurse take it to Abu Said and present it to him as soon as he should have finished his sermon. When the nurse laid it before him, he was using a tooth-pick—for it was his rule that at the end of the sermon a disciple brought some bread and a toothpick, which he would use after eating the bread. He said to her, as she was about to depart:

"Come, nurse, take this tooth-pick and give it to thy lady. Tell her that she must stir some water with it and then wash her eyes with the water, in order that her outward eye may be cured. And tell her to put out of her heart all suspicious and unfriendly feelings towards the Sufis, in order that her inward eye too may be cured."

Ishi carefully followed his directions. She dipped the tooth-pick in water and washed her eyes and was cured immediately. Next day, she brought to the Shaikh all her jewellery and ornaments and dresses, and said:

"O Shaikh! I have repented and have put every hostile feeling out of my heart." "May it bring thee blessing!"

said he, and bade them conduct her to the mother of Bu Tahir, that she might robe her in the gaberline (*khirqā*). Ishi went in obedience to his command and donned the gaberline and busied herself with serving the women of this

fraternity (the Sufis). She gave up her house and goods, and rose to great eminence in this Path, and became a leader of the Sufis.

During the time when Abu Sa'id was at Nishapur, disciples came to him of all sorts, well and ill-bred. One of his converts was a rough peasant with iron-soled mountain-shoes, which made a disagreeable noise whenever he entered the monastery; he was always knocking them against the wall and annoying the Sufis by his rudeness and violence. One day, the Shaikh called him and said:

"You must go to a certain valley (which he named—it lies between the hills of Nishapur and Tus, and a stream descending from it falls into the Nishapur river). After going some distance you will see a big rock. You must perform an ablution on the bank of the stream and a prayer of two genuflexions on the rock and wait for a friend of mine, who will come to you. Give him my greeting and there is something I wish you to tell him, for he is a very dear friend of mine: he has been with me seven years."

The dervish set off with the utmost eagerness, and all the way he was thinking that he was going to see one of the saints or one of the Forty Men who are the pivot of the world and upon whom depends the order and harmony of human affairs. He was sure that the holy man's blessed look would fall on him and make his fortune both in this world and in the next. When he came to the place indicated by the Shaikh, he did what the Shaikh had ordered; then he waited a while. Suddenly, there was a dreadful clap and the mountain quaked. He looked and saw a black dragon, the largest he had ever seen: its body filled the whole space between two mountains. At the sight of it his spirit fled; he was unable to move and fell senseless to the earth. The dragon advanced

slowly towards the rock, on which it laid its head reverently. After a little while, the dervish recovered himself somewhat, and observing that the dragon had come to a halt and was motionless, he said, though in his terror he scarcely knew what he said, 'The Shaikh greets thee'. The dragon with many signs of reverence began to rub its face in the dust, whilst tears rolled from its eyes.

This, and the fact that it attempted nothing against him, persuaded the dervish that he had been sent to meet the dragon; he therefore delivered the Shaikh's message, which it received with great humility, rubbing its face in the dust and weeping so much that the rock where its head lay became wet. Having heard all, it went away. As soon as it was out of sight, the dervish came to himself and once more fell in a swoon. A long time passed before he revived. At last, he rose and slowly descended to the foot of the hill. Then he sat down, picked up a stone, and beat the iron off his clogs. On returning to the monastery, he entered so quietly that none was aware of his coming, and spoke the salaam in such a low voice that he was barely heard.

When the elders saw his behaviour, they desired to know who was the Pir to whom he had been sent; they wondered who in half a day had wrought in his pupil a change that can generally be produced only by means of long and severe discipline. When the dervish told the story, everyone was amazed. The elder Sufis questioned the Shaikh, who replied:

"Yes, for seven years he has been my friend, and we have found spiritual joy in each other's society."

After that day none ever saw the dervish behave rudely or heard him speak loudly. He was

entirely reformed by a single attention which the Shaikh bestowed on him.

When Shaikh Abu Sa'id was at Nishapur, holding splendid feasts and musical entertainments and continually regaling the dervishes with luxurious viands, such as fat fowls and *lawzina* and sweet-meats, an arrogant ascetic came to him and said:

"O Shaikh! I have come in order to challenge you to a forty days' fast (*chihila*)."

The poor man was ignorant of the Shaikh's novitiate and of his forty years' austerities: he fancied that the Shaikh had always lived in this same manner. He thought to himself:

"I will chasten him with hunger and put him to shame in the eyes of the people, and then I shall be the object of their regard!"

and spread his prayer-rug. His adversary did the like, and they both sat down side by side.

While the ascetic, in accordance with the practice of those who keep a fast of forty days, was eating a certain amount of food, the Shaikh ate nothing; and though he never once broke his fast, every morning he was stronger and fatter and his complexion grew more and more ruddy. All the time, by his orders and under his eyes, the dervishes feasted luxuriously and indulged in the *sama*, and he himself danced with them. His state was not changed for the worse in any respect. The ascetic, on the other hand, was daily becoming feebler and thinner and paler, and the sight of the delicious viands which were served to the Sufis in his presence worked more and more upon him. At length, he grew so weak that he could scarcely rise to perform the obligatory prayers. He repented of his presumption and confessed his ignorance. When the forty days were finished, the Shaikh said:

"I have complied with your request: now you must do as I say."

The ascetic acknowledged this and said:

"It is for the Shaikh to command."

The Shaikh said:

"We have sat forty days and eaten nothing and gone to the privy: now let us sit forty days and eat and never go to the privy."

His adversary had no choice but to accept the challenge, but he thought to himself that it was impossible for any human being to do such a thing.

In the end, of course, the Shaikh proves to be an overman, and the ascetic becomes one of his disciples. It is related that an eminent Shaikh who lived in Abu sa'id's time went on a war-like expedition to Rum (Asia Minor), accompanied by a number of Sufis. Whilst he was marching in that country, he saw Iblis. "O accursed one!" he cried, "what art thou doing here?—For thou cast not cherish any design again us." Iblis replied that he had come thither involuntarily. "I was passing by Mayhana," said he, "and entered the town. Shaikh Abu Sa'id came out of the mosque. I met him on the way to his house and he gave a sneeze which cost me here."

A tomb and sepulchre (*turbati u mashhadi*) was the only memorial of Abu Sa'id in his native town that the Ghuzz hordes did not utterly destroy. Concerning his relics, that is to say, garments and other articles which were venerated on account of some circumstance that gave them a peculiar sanctity or simply because they once had belonged to him, we find valuable details in three passages of the *Asrar*.

One day, whilst Shaikh Abu Sa'id was preaching at Nishapur, he grew warm in his

discourse and being overcome with ecstasy exclaimed:

"There is naught within this vest (*jubba*) except Allah!"

Simultaneously, he raised his fore-finger (*angushi-i musabbiha*), which lay on his breast underneath the *jubba*, and his blessed finger passed through the *jubba* and became visible to all. Among the Shaikhs and Imams present on that occasion were Abu Muhammad Juwayni, Abu 'I-Qasim Qushayri, Isma'il Sabuni, and others whom it would be tedious to enumerate. None of them, on hearing these words, protested or silently objected. All were beside themselves, and following the Shaikh's example they flung away their gaberdines (*khirqah*).

When the Shaikh descended from the pulpit, his *jubba* and their gaberdines were torn to pieces (and distributed). The Shaikhs were unanimously of opinion that the piece of silk (*kazhpara*) which bore the mark of his blessed finger should be torn off from the breast of the *jubba* and set apart, in order that in the future all who came or went might pay a visit to it. Accordingly, it was set apart just as it was, with the cotton and lining, and remained in the possession of Shaikh Abu'I-Fath and his family. Those who came from all parts of the world as pilgrims to Mayhana, after having visited his holy shrine used to visit that piece of silk and the other memorials of the Shaikh and used to see the mark of his finger, until the Ghuzz invasion, when the blessing and other precious blessings of his were lost.

Bu Nasr Shirwani, a rich merchant of Nishapur, was converted by Abu Sa'id. He gave the whole of his wealth to the Sufis and showed the utmost devotion to the Shaikh. When the latter left Nishapur to return to Mayhana, he

bestowed on Bu Nasr a green woollen mantle (*labacha*) of his own, saying:

"Go to thy country and set up my banner there."

Accordingly, Bu Nasr went back to Shirwan, became the director and chief of the Sufis in that region, and built a convent, which exists today and is known by his name. The Shaikh's mantle is still preserved in the convent, where Bu Nasr deposited it. Every Friday at prayer-time the famulus hangs it from a high place in the building, and when the people come out of the Friday mosque they go to the convent and do not return home until they have paid a visit to the Shaikh's mantle. No citizen neglects this observance. If at any time famine, pestilence, or other calamity befall the country, they place the mantle on their heads and carry it afield, and the whole population go forth and reverently invoke its intercession. Then God, the glorious and exalted, in His perfect bounty and in honour of the Shaikh removes the calamity from them and brings their desires to pass. The inhabitants of that country say that the mantle is a proved antidote (*tiryak-i mujarrab*) and they make immense offerings to the followers of the Shaikh. At the present time, through the blessings of the Shaikh's spirit (*himma*) and the people's excellent belief in the Sufis, this province can show more than four hundred well-known monasteries, where dervishes obtain refreshment.

When the fame of Abu Sa'id reached Mecca, the Shaikhs of the Holy City wishing to know what kind of man he was, sent Bu 'Amr Bashkhwan, who was a great ascetic and had resided in Mecca for thirty years, to Mayhana in order that he might bring back a trust-worthy report of Abu Sa'id's character and mystical endowments. Bu 'Amr journeyed to

Mayhana and had a long conversation with Abu Sa'id in private. After three days, when he was about to return to Mecca, Abu Sa'id said to him:

"You must go to Bashkhwan: you are my deputy in that district. Ere long the fruit of your renown will be heard in the fourth heaven."

Bu 'Amr obeyed and set out for Bashkhwan. As he was taking leave, Abu Sa'id gave him three tooth-picks which he had cut with his own blessed hand, and said, Do not sell one of these for ten dinars nor for twenty, and if thirty dinars are offered'—(here he stopped short and Bu 'Amr went on his way).

On arriving at Bashkhwan, he lodged in the room which is now (part of) his convent, and the people honoured him as a saint. Every Thursday he began a complete recitation of the *Koran*, in which he was joined by his disciples and the men of Bashkhwan and all the notables of the neighbouring hamlets; and when the recitation was finished, he would call for a jug of water and dip in it one of the tooth-picks which he had receive from Shaikh Abu Sa'id. The water was then distributed amongst the sick, and it healed them by means of the blessed influence of both Shaikhs. The headman of Bashkhwan, who was always suffering from colic, begged Bu 'Amr to send him some of the holy water. No sooner had he drunk it than the pain ceased. Next morning, he came to Bu 'Amr and said:

"I hear that you have three of these tooth-picks. Will you sell me one, for I am very often in pain?"

Bu 'Amr asked him how much he would give. He offered ten dinars. 'It is worth more' said Bu 'Amr. 'Twenty dinars.' 'It is worth more'. 'Thirty dinars', 'No, it is worth more'.

The headman said nothing and would not bid any higher. Bu 'Amr said, 'My master, Shaikh Abu Sa'id, stopped at the same amount.' He gave him one of the tooth-picks in exchange for thirty dinars, and with that money he founded the convent which now exists. The headman kept the tooth-pick as long as he lived. On his death-bed he desired that it should be broken and that the pieces should be placed in his mouth and buried with him. As regards the two remaining toothpicks, in accordance with Bu' Amr's injunctions they were placed in his shroud and interred in his blessed tomb.

I have set before my readers a picture of Abu Sa'id as he appears in the oldest and most authentic documents available. These do not always show him as he was, but it would be absurd to reproach his biographers with their credulity and entire lack of critical judgement: they write as worshippers, and their work is based upon traditions and legends which breathe the very spirit of unquestioning faith. Only an alloy can be extracted from such materials, however, carefully they are analysed. The passages in which Abu Sa'id describe his early life, conversion, and novitiate are perhaps, less open to suspicion than the numerous anecdotes concerning his miracles. Here, pious invention plays a large part and is not limited by any sense of natural law.

Even the sceptics converted by Abu Sa'id feel sure that miracles occur, and only doubt his ability to perform them. The mystical saying attributed to him have a power and freedom beyond speculative theosophy and suggest that he owed his fame, in the first instance, to an enthusiastic personality and to the possession of 'psychic' gifts which he knew how to exhibit impressively. He was a great teacher and preacher of Sufism. If the matter of his doctrine

is seldom original, his genius gathered up and pushed the old elements in to something new. In the historical development he stands out as a leading exponent of the pantheistic, poetical, anti-scholastic, and anti-nomian ideas which had been already broached by his predecessor, Bayazid of Bistam, and Abu 'l-Hasan Kharraqani.

It may be said of Abu Sa'id that he, perhaps more than any one else, gave these ideas the distinctive form in which they are presented to us by the later religious philosophy of Persia. Their peculiarly *Persian* character is just what we should expect, seeing that Bayazid, Abu 'l-Hasan, and Abu Sa'id himself were born and passed their lives in Khurasan, the cradle of Persian nationalism.

Abu Sa'id also left his mark on another side of Sufism, its organisation as a monastic system. Although he founded no Order, the convent over which he presided supplied a model in outline of the fraternities that were established during the 12th century; and in the ten rules which he, as abbot, drew the first Mohammedan example of a *regula ad monachos*.

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EB

Abu Yazid (998/9–984)

Abu Yazid, (Bayazid) Tayfur B, 'Isa B. Surushan al-Bistami was one of the most celebrated Islamic mystics. With the exception of short periods, during which he was obliged to live far from his home-town owing to the hostility of orthodox theologians, he spent his life in Bistam in the province of Kunis. There he died in 261/ 874 or 264/877–8.

The Ilkanid Uidjaytu Muhammad Khudaband is reputed to have had a dome erected over his grave in the year 713/1313. He wrote nothing but some five hundred of his sayings have been handed down. In part they are extremely daring and imply a state of mind in which the mystic has an experience of himself as of one merged with the deity and turned into God ('*ayn al-djam*'). They were collected and handed down by his circle and people who visited him, in the first place by his disciple and attendant Abu Musa (I) 'Isa b. Adam, son of his elder brother Adam.

From him the celebrated sufi of Baghdad al-Djunayd, received sayings of this nature in Persian and translated them into Arabic (Nur, 108, 109, 122). The chief traditions from Abu Musa is his son Musa B. 'Isa, known as 'Ammi', from whom the tradition was handed down by 'the lesser Tayfur' b. 'Isa, whose place in the family genealogy is not quite clear, and by other traditionalists. Among the visitors who recorded sayings of Abu Yazid must be named in the first place Abu Musa (II) al-Dabili, of Dabil i Armenia (Nur, 55) and Abu Ishak Ibrahim al-Harawi, known as Istanba (Satanba), a pupil of Ibrahim b. Adham (*Hilya*, 8, 43–4) and the celebrated Sufi Ahmad b. Khidroya who visited him on the pilgrimage. Abu Yazid was a friend of Dhy'l-Num al-Misri, Djunayd wrote

a commentary on his utterances, portions of which are preserved in al-Luma of al-Sarradj.

The most circumstantial sources on Abu Yazid's life and sayings is the *Kitab al-Nur fi Kalimat abi Yazid Tayfur*, by Abu'l-Fadl Muh. b. 'Ali b. Ahmad b. al-Husayn b. Sahj al-Sahlagi al-Bistami, born 389/998–9, died 476/984. Amongst al-Sahlagi's authorities the most important are: Abu 'Abd Allah Muh. b. 'Abd Allah al-Shirazi Ibn Baboya, the celebrated biographer of al-Halladj, died 442/1050, whom al-Sahlagi met in the year 419 or 416 (Nur, 138) and Shaikh al-Masha'ikh Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Dastani (Hudjwiri, *Kashf al-Mahdjub*, ch. xii). The al-Kasd ila Allah of the pseudo-Djunayd contains a legendary embellishment of Abu Yazid's 'Journey to Heaven'.

Abu Yazid's teacher in Sufism was a mystic who was ignorant of Arabic, by name Abu 'Ali al-Sindi, whom he had to teach the Kur'an verses necessary for prayer, but who in return introduced him to the Unio Mystica. It is not impossible that Indian influences may have affected Abu Yazid through him. Abu Yazid was, in contrast for instance with the later Sufis Abu Ishak al-Kazaruni and Abu Sa'id b. Abi 'l-Khayr, a wholly introvert Sufi. He did not exerecise, as they did, a social activity (*khidmat al-fukara*'), yet, was ready to save humanity, by vicarious suffering, from hell. He even finds words to criticize the infernal punishment meted out to the banned, who are, after all, but a handful of dust.

The "innumerable" sense is extremely highly developed in him, together with a sense of horror and awe before the Deity, in whose presence he always felt himself an unbeliever, just about to lay aside the girdle of the magians

(zunnar). His passionate aspiration is aimed at absolutely freeing himself through systematic work upon himself ("I was the smith of my own self": haddad nafui, of all obstacles separating him from God (hudjub), with the object of 'attaining to Him'.

He describes this process in extremely interesting autobiographical sayings with partly grandiose image. The 'world' (dunya), 'flight from the world' (zuhd), "worship of God" ('ibadat), miracles (karamat), dhikr, even the mystic stages (makamat) are for him no more than so many barriers holding him from God. When he has finally shed his 'I' in fana' "as snakes their skin" and reached the desired stage, his changed self-consciousness is expressed in those famous hybrid utterances (shatahat) which so scandalised and shocked his contemporaries:

"Subhani! Ma a'zama sha'ni"—"Glory be to me! How great is My majesty!"; "Thy obedience to me is greater than my obedience to Thee"; "I am the throne and the footstool"; "I am the Well-preserved Tablet"; "I saw the Ka'ba walking round me"; and so on.

In meditation, he made flights into the super-sensitive world; these earned him the censure that he claimed to have experienced a mi'radj in the same way as the Prophet. He was in the course of them decorated by God with His Singleness (*wahdaniyya*) and clothed with His 'I-ness' (*ananiyya*), but shrank from showing himself in that state to men; or flew with the wings of everlastingness (*daymumiyya*) through the air of 'no-quality' (*la-kayfiyya*) to the ground of eternity (*azaliyya*) and saw the tree of 'one-ness' (*ahadiyya*), to realise that 'all that was illusion' or that it "was himself who was all that, etc. In such utterances he appears to have reached the ultimate problem of all mysticism. A later legend makes him

solve with ease onundrums put to him in a Christian monastery, thus effecting the wholesale conversion of the monastery to Islam.

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Abu'l Hasan al-Nuri (d. 907)

Ahmad b. Abu'l-Hasan al-Nuri (A.D. 907) was an honoured Sufi of Baghdad who took his mystical training under the spiritual direction of Shaikh Abu'l-Hasan Sari al-Saqati. He was

an acknowledged spiritualist and was well known for his austerity and intuitive knowledge.

Nuri, like the early Muslim ascetics, was seriously devoted to the attainment of immediate experience of Truth (al-Haqq). He regarded gnosis as a very high stage because at this station the follower of the Path enjoys communion with God. This is achieved through the love of God. In ecstasy the lover of God because in love the seeker's will is merged in the Will of God. (*ma'rifa*). The gnostic is he who speaks about the knowledge of God when he ceases to exist in himself. Nuri says:

"The two rarest things in our time are a learned man who practises what he knows and a gnostic who speaks from the reality of his state."

Rational knowledge can never disclose the secrets of Godhead because reason is a veil between the knower and the known. Thus, Truth (*al-Haqq*) remains unknown to the philosopher. It is only the soul's contemplation (*mushahada*) of God which reveals Divine mysteries and the true knowledge of God is experienced. According to Nuri:

"When God created reason He said to it: 'Who am I?' and it was silent. Then he shed upon it the light of His unicity (*wahadniyya*) and it said: 'Thou art God'; the real proximity to God (*qurb*) is enjoyed by the seeker at the stage of Pure Love."

Here, the secret communion between the Lover and the Beloved takes place and the heart of the lover sees the Vision of the Beloved. Nuri says:

"Love is the rending of the veil and the revelation of what is hidden from the eyes of men. I looked one day at the Light and I did not cease looking at it until I became the Light"

Having been lost in such a state of love and having become one with the Vision of God, the lover contemplates the glory of his Lord in all things because the existence of anything for him means the existence of his Beloved. In a famous saying Nuri says:

"Those who regard things as determined by God turn to God in everything".

Further

"Union with God is separation from all else and separation from all else in union with Him".

Amr b. Uthman al-Makki (A.D.909), an eminent theologian, was a pupil of Junayd. He was considered as a great authority on the mystical problems like '*mahabba*' or love, '*mushahada*' or the soul's contemplation on God and '*ma'rifa*' or the knowledge of God.

Makki regards the spiritual state of inward experience of the Real as absolutely personal. The mystic cannot disclose it because he communicates with God and feels kinship with Him. He says:

"Ecstasy does not admit of explanation, because it is a secret between God and the true believers".

As the seeker journey on the upward path, he reaches another high station where his soul contemplates and experience Divine Presence or Divine Existence in all things. The hearts of the gnostics contemplate God unceasingly and with assurance and they see Him in everything and all things that exist in Him. He is ever present to their contemplation and they are absent (in spirit) while present (in the body) and present while absent, for they dwell apart with God, whether they are absent or present and they contemplate Him openly and in secret and at the last as at the first.

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Adham Ibrahim (d. 777)

Ibrahim b. Adham, whom Junaid of Baghdad called the key to Sufism, advocated asceticism which, according to him, involved otherworldliness, celibacy and poverty. For him a true saint is one who covets nothing of this world, nothing of the next and devotes himself exclusively to God.

In the same strain he told a questioner who had asked him about his occupation that he had left the world to the seekers of the world and the hereafter to the seekers of the hereafter and had chosen for himself the remembrance of God in this world and the beatific vision in the next.

He advocated celibacy and poverty as the pre-requisites of true asceticism. According to him, he who adopts poverty cannot think of marriage, for it becomes impossible for him to fulfil the needs of his wife. When a Sufi marries, he enters, so to say, a boat, but when he gets a child, his boat sinks and his asceticism disappears.

A certain man was bewailing of his poverty Ibrahim b. Adham remarked that he had paid nothing for this poverty of his. The man was surprised and asked: Is poverty a thing to be bought? Ibrahim said: Yes, I chose it of my

own free-will and bought it at the price of worldly sovereignty and I am ready to exchange one instant of it with a hundred worlds.

In Ibrahim b. Adham we meet with the practice of courting blame (*malamah*) for the purpose of self-discipline. Once he was asked if he was ever happy in his life by attaining his heart’s desire. He replied: Yes, twice. He related two different events when people not knowing him mocked and jested at his cost.

He referred to the principle of *tawakkul* (trust in God), but in his case it was a moral principle as enunciated in the *Qur‘an*, which does not exclude earning one’s livelihood by one’s own efforts.

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Ahmed, Bidjan

See under Bidjan Ahmed

al-‘Adawiyyah Rabi‘ah (717–801)

Rabi‘ah al-‘Adawiyyah of Basrah was a famous woman mystic, well known for her advocacy of disinterested love for God. She was born into a poor home, stolen as a child and sold into slavery. But her devotion to a life of piety and prayer enabled her to win her freedom. She decided to adopt a life of celibacy in spite of many offers of marriage by renowned mystics of her time.

Once her companion suggested to her in the spring season to come out to the house to behold the works and beauties of God. She replied: Come you inside that you may behold their Maker. Contemplation of the Maker has turned me away from the contemplation of what He has made.

Rabi'ah's main contribution to mysticism was her doctrine of disinterested love of God which served both as a motive and a goal for her. With most of her contemporary mystics the guiding motive for asceticism and otherworldliness was the fear of hell or the reward of paradise. Rabi'ah, on the other hand, tried to emphasise that a man who claims to attain union with God should be oblivious of both. 'Attar relates that once some mystics came to Rabi'ah. She asked:

"Why do you worship God? One said: There are seven stages in hell and everybody has to pass through them; therefore, in fear and dread of them I worship."

Another replied:

"The eight stages of paradise are places of great delight and a worshipper is promised complete rest there."

Rabi'ah replied:

"He is a bad servant who worships God for fear of punishment or desire of reward. They asked her: Why do you worship if you have no desire for paradise?"

She replied:

"I prefer the Neighbour to the neighbour's house (i.e., paradise)".

She added that God is worthy of worship even if there is no motive of fear or reward. It is related that one day, Rabi'ah was running with fire in one hand and water in the other.

People asked her the meaning of her action. She replied: I am going to light fire in paradise and to pour water on hell so that both veils may completely disappear from the pilgrims and their purpose may be sure and the servants of God may see Him without any object of hope or motive of fear. In the following verses, she distinguishes the two kinds of love, selfish and disinterested.

"In two ways have I loved Thee: selfishly,
And with a love that worthy is of Thee.
In selfish love my joy in Thee I find,
While to all else and others, I am blind.
But in that love which seeks Thee worthily,
The veil is raised that I may look on Thee.
Yet, is the praise in that or this not mine,
In this and that the praise is wholly Thine".

The object of this disinterested love, according to Rabi'ah, was union with God. She says: My hope is for union with Thee, for that is the goal of my desire.

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al-Suhrawardi, Abu 'l-Nadjib (1097-?)

Al-Suhrawardi, Abu 'l-Nadjib 'Abd al-Kahir b. 'Abd Allāh al-Bakri, Diya' al-Din, a Sunni mystic who flourished in the 6th/12th century. Born about 490/1097 in Suhraward, west of Sultaniyya, in the Djibal region, Abu 'l-Nadjib, genealogically linked with Abu Bakr, died in 563/1168 at Baghdad. Abu 'l-Nadjib moved to Baghdad as a young man, probably

in 507/1113, where he studied *hadith*, Shafi'i law, Arabic grammar and belles-letters. A paternal uncle of Abu 'l-Nadjib, 'Umar b. Muhammad (d. 532/1137-8), head of a sufi convent in Baghdad, invested him with the Sufi *khirka*.

Probably before his arrival in Baghdad, Abu 'l-Nadjib already studied *hadith* in Isfahan. At about 25, in Baghdad, he abandoned his studies at the Nizamiyya, a Saldjuk institution, in order to lead a solitary life of asceticism. He returned to Isfahan to join the illustrious Sufi Ahmad al-Ghazali (d. 520/1126). When he went back to Baghdad he became a disciple of Hammad al-Dabbas (d. 525/1130-1) who, albeit considered an illiterate, stands out as a teacher of 'Abd al-Kadir al-Jilani. Abu 'l-Nadjib is said to have earned a living for a number of years as water-carrier.

He began to preach Sufism, and he founded a convent on the western bank of the Tigris. In 545/1150-1 Abu 'l-Nadjib was appointed to teach *fikh* in the Nizamiyya. However, in 547/1152-3 he was dismissed from office, as a result of the power struggle between the caliph and the Saldjuk sultan. Both before and after his appointment at the Nizamiyya, Abu 'l-Nadjib taught *fikh* and *hadith* in his own *madrassa*, situated next to his *ribat*, and he continued teaching Sufism.

In 557/1161-2, he left Baghdad for Jerusalem, but he could not travel beyond Damascus because Nur al-Din Zangi and Baldwin had resumed their hostilities. After being received with honour in Damascus, Abu 'l-Nadjib returned to Baghdad. Some years later he died and was buried in his *madrassa*, there. His students were numerous and included, in *hadith*, the historian Ibn 'Asakir and the traditionalist al-Sam'ani. His disciple 'Ammar

al-Bidlisi (d. between 590/1194 and 604/1207) occupies an important place in the history of Sufism as a teacher of Nadjm al-Din al-Kubra. Abu 'l-Nadjib had his most far-reaching influence, however, through his disciple and nephew, Abu Hafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardi, the famous author of the '*Awarif al-ma'arif*'.

Abu 'l-Nadjib was not a productive author. He wrote the *Gharib al-masabih*, a commentary on a popular *hadith* collection, but his fame as a writer rests on his composition of the *Adab al-muridin*. However, the *Adab* became widely known only with the spread of the Suhrawardiyya order founded by his nephew 'Umar after Abu 'l-Nadjib's death. In the *Adab* Sufism is viewed from the perspective of rules of conduct (*adab*). The book treats of, *inter alia*, common practices which did not conform to the strict etiquette required by Sufi theory. By applying the traditional concept of *rukhsa* ('dispensation', pl. *rukhas*) in a novel way, Abu 'l-Nadjib responds to the phenomenon of an affiliation of lay members to Sufism.

Whilst Abu 'l-Nadjib also draws on various works of al-Sulami, al-Sarradj and al-Kushayri, he betrays the closest dependence on Ibn Khafif al-Shirazi whose *Kitab al-Iktisad* he quotes throughout the *Adab*. However, he never identifies him when he excerpts from the *Iktisad*. The reason for this lies in the fact that Abu 'l-Nadjib inverts Ibn Khafif's fundamentally negative view of *rukhas*: the very dispensations whose adoption by the 'truthful novice' Ibn Khafif interpreted as a failure to fulfill the requirements of *sidk* ('truthfulness'), are introduced in the *Adab* and vindicated by Abu 'l-Nadjib. It may be argued that the *rukhas* incorporated an element of instability into the Rule and that this heralded a decline from the 'high ground' of the Sufi spirituality of Abu 'l-Nadjib's predecessors.

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F. SOBIEROJ

Alauddin Sabr Kalyari, Hazrat Syedna Makhdoom Ahmed Ali (596 A.H.–?)

On the 13th of *Rabi-ul-Awwal* the death anniversary of one of the greatest mystics of Islam, Hazrat Makhdoom Khwaja Syed Ahmed Ali Alauddin Sabr Kalyari, Sultan-ul-Aulia is observed. He was born on the 19th of Zilqud 596 at Multan. He was the direct descendent of Hazrat Imam Hassan Ibn Ali. His father's name was Syed Abdullah bin Shah Abdul Rahim, who was a resident of Herat and his mother's name was Hazrat Bibi Hajjra bint Shaikh Jamaluddin Suleman, who was the sister of Hazrat Baba Fariduddin Masood Ganj Shakar of Pakpattan. Two months before the birth of Hazrat Sabir Pak his mother dreamt that the Holy Prophet instructed her to name the boy Ahmed.

After a month she again dreamt that Hazrat Ali instructed her to add the name 'Ali' to the boy's name. Finally when Hazrat Sabir Pak completed his assignment at the *Langar Khana* where he distributed food under instructions of Hazrat Baba Farid, he named him Sabir.

At the age of seven, Hazrat Alauddin, accompanied by his mother and under the protection of Hazrat Moulvi Mohammad Abul Qasim Gargani, a great saint, left Herat on the long journey to Pakpattan to see his maternal uncle, Hazrat Baba Farid. On reaching Pakpattan when Baba Farid saw this loving nephew it left a deep impression on him. Hazrat Alauddin was entrusted to the tender and loving care of Hazrat Baba Farid by his mother who left for her home town, Herat. Hazrat Baba Farid taught Hazrat Alauddin the Holy *Quran*, *Hadis*, *Fiqh*, Theology, Mysticism and allied subjects and in accordance with his established

practice gave Hazrat Alauddin a glimpse into his perception of the Truth:

- (a) In both the worlds Thou alone art the object that I cherish; I die for Thee and I live for Thee.
- (b) Spiritual perfection lies in discipline of the soul and the perfection of the inner life.

Apart from the coaching by Hazrat Baba Farid, Hazrat Alauddin was given the charge and assignment of distributing food at the *langar khana* and was assisted in this work by Bhandari Mohammad Abul Qasim. Hazrat Baba Farid specially instructed Hazrat Alauddin merely only to distribute the food. Strictly following the instructions of Hazrat Baba Farid, Hazrat Alauddin merely distributed the food and never touched a morsel.

During this period Hazrat Alauddin continuously and constantly said the prayer of *Doa-e-Noor* and always uttered the words "*Majood-un-Ilillah*", meaning there is no one present except God. Hazrat Alauddin also contemplated and meditated on the verse of the Holy *Quran* in *Surah Ar-Rahman* 55/26, reading

"everyone therein passes away—but there ever remains the presence of thy Lord, Master of glory and honour".

Hazrat Alauddin performed his duty at the *langar khana* for a period of twelve years and by praying and at the same time not eating food became very thin. By this exemplary act of obedience to Hazrat Baba Farid, Hazrat Alauddin actually passed the test of the various stages through which a Mystic has to pass, namely:

- (1) *Tawakal* (trust in god),

- (2) *Zikr* (prayers),
- (3) *Tauhid* (Divine unity),
- (4) *Abid* (true devotee),
- (5) *Zuhd* (renunciation or detachment),
- (6) *Samt* (silence),
- (7) *Raza* (contentment),
- (8) *Shukr* (thankfulness),
- (9) *Yakin* (firm faith),
- (10) *Sabr* (patience),
- (11) *Ikhlas* (sincerity),
- (12) *Sidq* (truthfulness),
- (13) *Istiqlal* (perseverance).

When the mother of Hazrat Alauddin came to Pakpattan to see him she was shocked to see him in the poor state of health and enquired from her brother why he had neglected in looking after him. Hazrat Baba Farid immediately called for Hazrat Alauddin and asked him the cause of his poor health on which he replied that he had been only ordered to distribute the food and not to eat the food. After this episode, Hazrat Baba Farid bestowed the title of "*Sabir-Khattam Alarawah-Sultan-ul-Aulia*" on Hazrat Alauddin and ever since then Hazrat Alauddin is lovingly and devotedly called '*Sabir Pak*'.

During this period Sabir Pak continuously lived in a state of *Istrag* (Restlessness) and *Jazh* (ecstasy). The mother of Hazrat Alauddin requested her brother, Hazrat Baba Farid, to marry his daughter Bibi Masooma Hajjra, to her son, to which he agreed only to make her sister happy. But knowing that Sabir Pak was in a mystical state of *Jazb* and marriage would not be a reasonable proposal under the circumstances. After the marriage the daughter of Hazrat Baba Farid died.

Hazrat Baba Farid gave Sabir Pak "*Khilafat Nama*" and stated therein the words "Marhaba Farzand Ali Ahmed Alauddin Sabir Batn Alwali Batn alwali Batn Alwari". It was during this period that Sabir Pak saw the Holy Prophet in his dream who called him by the name 'Haza-Wali-Allah'. Sabir Pak was ordered by Baba Farid to proceed with his *Khilafat Nama* to Hansi to get an endorsement from Hazrat Shaikh Jamaluddin. According to the established Mystical procedure, Sabir Pak on reaching Hansi called on Hazrat Shaikh Jamaluddin told Sabir Pak to wait till the morning and on hearing these words Sabir Pak immediately in a state of *Istrag* managed to lighten his finger miraculously and on seeing the light coming on Shaikh Jamaluddin asked Sabir Pak to return to Pakpattan without endorsing the *Khilafat Nama*. Shaikh Jamaluddin was also a disciple of Baba Farid.

On returning to Pakpattan Sabir Pak related the episode to Baba Farid and was now instructed to proceed to Kalyar in Sharanpur district, as in the *Wilayat Nama* or *Samad-e-Khidmat* he had been assigned the spiritual duty in this territory, as *Hakam-e-Wakt* and by virtue of this Sanad Kutubiat of Kalyar had been granted. The instructions given by Baba Farid to Sabir Pak were to

- (1) preach Islam,
- (2) suppress tryanny, cruelty and evil practices which were being let loose by the Hindu ruler, Raja Karam Pal;
- (3) to ensure that peace and faith and religious practice prevail in Kalyar.

On reaching Kalyar Sabir Pak encountered opposition not only from the Hindu ruler but from the Muslim Kazi who claimed that he was the actual custodian of law and order and was also assisted in this campaign of hatred and

jealousy by the Imam of the Jamia Mosque and others. During this period Sabir Pak attended the Jamia Mosque to offer prayers and was asked by the Imam to stand in the last row. Sabir Pak took the stand that all men are equal before the eyes of God irrespective of status or position and in the house of God there should be no distinction, pride or arrogance. The Imam continued to be stubborn and on this Sabir Pak left the mosque which miraculously tumbled down. Sabir Pak then wrote to Baba Farid about the sad affairs at Kalyar'.

In the meantime, Sabir Pak spent his time in deep meditation, contemplation, prayers, recitation of the Holy *Qur'an* and most of the times was found standing under a 'golra' tree in a state of *Jazb*. His only item of food was the leaves of the 'Golra' tree which he also offered to his guests. He had only one disciple by the name of Hazrat Khwaza Hafiz Shamsuddin Turk Panipatti who looked after his daily needs and requirements which were only two, namely prayers and food.

Another attendant was Hazrat, Alimullah Abdul, who was the disciple of Hazrat Jamaluddin of Hansi and was the founder of the and his only assignment was to act as a courtier, taking message and instructions between Sabir Pak and Hazrat Baba Sahib. During this period on account of the arrogant behaviour of the people of Kalyar earthquakes and other mysterious episodes started to happen.

Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia and Hazrat Amir Khusro usually visited Kalyar to see Sabir Pak. Hazrat Sabir Pak was the founder of the Sabri branch of the Chistia Silsila. And some of the important followers of his system were:

- (1) Hazrat Shaikh Jalaluddin Kalyari,
- (2) Khwaja Abd Abdul Haq Gangohi,

- (3) Shaikh Jalaluddin Hhaneseri,
- (4) Shaikh Ahmed Sarhindi Mujaddid Alf-Sani,
- (5) Hazra Moulana Hafiz Haji Imdadullah Mohajir Makki.

Hazrat Sabir Pak died at the age of 98 on the 13th of Rabi-ul-Awwal 690 A.H. and lies buried in a beautiful marble mausoleum at Piran-e-Kalyar. Hazrat Sabir Pak has left for humanity a great lesson of *Taslim-o-Raza* by exemplifying these words through his own dedicated life.

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Ali Shah, Syedna Hazrat Hafiz Hai Warris (1822–1905)

Syedna Hafiz Haji Warris Ali Shah Rehah Rehatullah Aleh-Sultan-ul-Tarakeen, Sartaj-ul-Wasleen, Siraj-ul-Walakeen. Qutub-ul-Arifteen. Arif-Billah, Fani-Fillah, Baqi-Billah. Ayat Man Ayat Billah, Imam-ul-Wilayat was born on the 1st of Ramzanul-Mubarak, 1238 A.H. (1822 A.D.) at Deva-Sharif. He came from a family of Hussaini Syed known for their devotion, piety and learning. Haji Sahib was born in the 25th generation of Hazrat Imam Hussain at Deva which is 30 miles from Lucknow, six miles from Bara Banki, the District Headquarters. He was a direct descendant of Hazrat Imam Moosa Kazim Razi Allah ho Tala Anho. His father Hakim Hafiz Qari Syed Qurban Ali Shah was a land-owner and was a

man of great learning and had finished his religious education in Baghdad Sharif.

The name 'Warris' which is one of the Ninety-nine names of God indicates that everything else hath perished. He alone will survive. According to Sufi customs one of the Divine names of Allah was kept. At the age of two Haji Sahib lost his father and then at the age of three he lost his mother. He was now looked after by his grandmother and was lovingly called Mithan Mian. When Haji Sahib reached the age of seven he lost his grandmother and his brother-in-law Hazrat Haji Syed Khadim Ali Sah Qadri Chishti, took him in his custody by taking him to Lucknow. Haji Sahib was admitted in the wellknown Farangi Mahal Religious Institute. At the age of seven Haji Sahib became a Hafiz-ul-Quran. Hazrat Khadim Ali Shah Saib imparted all types and forms of Religious and Spiritual knowledge and Devotional exercises to Haji Sahib. He usually visited the shrine of Hazrat Shah Meena Chisti who was the Kalifa of Shah Quam-ud-din who was the Khalifa of Khwaja Nasiruddin Chirag Chisti. Haji Sahib seemed to learn by intuition. Hazrat Syed Khadim Ali Shah died in 1837 A.D. and after the *Soyem* ceremony Haji Sahib was made the *Khalifa* of his brother-in-law after performance of the *Dastarbandi* at the age of fourteen.

Haji Sahib performed his first Hajj at the age of fourteen and in total he performed seven Hajj's—three times he performed the Hajj journey by foot.

It was during his first visit to Ajmere-Sharif where he went to pay homage at the Altar of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti that he discarded wearing shoes.

It was during his first Hajj that he started wearing *Ahram* which he never discarded. The

Ahram was usually of dark-green or yellow colour.

It was during his first visit to Baghdad Sharif where he had gone to pay homage at the Sacred Altar of Ghouz-ul-Azam Syed Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Ghylani that he was presented with a yellow *Ahram* by the Naqib-ul-Ashraf. The Naqib-ul-Ashraf told Haji Sahib that prior to his coming to Baghdad Sharif Ghouz-ul-Azam had instructed him in his dream the following words:

“One pious boy of my family by the name of Warris would be coming. Present him with a yellow *Ahram*.”

Haji Sahib was the first Muslim saint in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent to visit foreign countries for the propagation of Islam. He was well versed in different languages like Arabic, Persian and Pushto. He had travelled for twelve long years to different foreign countries like Arabia, Syria, Palestine, Persia, Turkey, Russia and Germany. While on pilgrimage Haji Sahib got the opportunity of going inside the Kaba-Sharif where he began to hum a tune uttering the words:

“Ishq Men Tereh Koh-e Gham Sar Pe Liya Jo Ho So Ho.”

The keeper of the Holy Kaaba asked Ali Sahib to stop humming and said:

“You Seem To Forget That This Is The House Of God”.

Sahib replied politely:

“Can You Tell Me Where God Is Not Present?”

In Turkey Haji Sahib met Sultan Abdul Hamid, the first who became his disciple. In Germany Haji Sahib met Prince Bismarck who also became his disciple. It is said that during

Haji Sahib's travels to Russia, Princess Anastasia, the only living member of the Tsars family, became his disciple. Unfortunately no details of the travels of Haji Sahib are available. Haji Sahib returned to Deva-Sharif in 1857 A.D. where some people saw him before the Mutiny. He spent about fifty years of the greater part of his life in travelling.

In 1899 A.D., Haji Sahib Qibla finally settled down at Deva-Sharif. Haji Sahib spent most of his time in devotion, solitude, prayers, contemplation and meditation. He had a dislike for controversy and usually spoke in few words. Haji Sahib's exterior corresponded to his interior. He had very handsome features with a broad forehead and penetrating eyes. He never sat on a chair or sofa or used bedstead. He slept on the floor throughout his life without a pillow. He always impressed upon his disciples and visitors that the Paths of Life and Love are based on three spiritual and temporal fundamental principles, namely:

1. Love and attachment with God, The Holy Prophet of God. Panjatan-E-Pak and Love for one's fellow-beings e.g. *Ishk-e-Haq*, *Ishk-e-Rasool*, *Ishq Panjtan-e-Pak* and *Khidmat-e-Khalq*.
2. *Tawakkul* i.e. complete dependence upon God.
3. *Taslim Wa Raza* i.e. resignation to the Divine will. Haji Sahib always said “Love Is My Creed” and “Love Is My Religion”

Once, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of Aligarh came to see Haji Sahib and spent considerable time. Hajji Sahib told him:

“I am not at all opposed to English elements, but love, faith and sincerity are the great essentials”.

Once in 1888 A.D. (1306 A.H.), Haji Sahib called for Qazi Baksh Ali Sahib Warsi and asked him to bring his pen and some papers. and instructed him to write down as follows: "My Journey is Love and Who Ever Proclaims To Be My Successor is A Liar. In Love There Is No Successor. With Me Whoever It May Be, Whether Shoemaker or Sweeper, Whoever Loves Me Is Mine. Haji Sahib further Stated:

"If Anybody Wants A Copy of My Instructions Give It To Him."

In This Way The Problem of Succession of Gaddi Nashini Was Buried For All Times To Come. The Idea of Family Succession Was Thrown To The Winds.

In 1915 A.D., Justice Syed Sharfuddin got the orders of Haji Sahib Qibla registered in the Court of the District Judge and obtained a certified copy for future purposes of reference. I may, however, state another very interesting episode in the life of Haji Sahib regarding the meeting of a Spanish noble man of the name of Count Galaraza who had come from Spain to Deva-Sharif to meet Haji Sahib and obtained his spiritual blessings and guidance. After the meeting Haji Sahib bade farewell to the Count in the following words:

"You Have Come And Are United With Me. Blessed Be Your Coming. You And I Shall Be There Together".

Before closing I would quote from the sayings of Haji Saib as follows:

1. Divine love cannot be acquired. It is a gift of God.
2. There is no method in love.
3. Distance does not count in love. If you love me, I am with you even if

you are at a distance of thousands of miles.

4. Love is akin to faith.
5. Love of God turns disbelief into faith.
6. The universe is governed according to the sentiments of the lovers of God.
7. Do not carry your want before God even if you are starving, for He knows everything.
8. Real worldliness is forgetfulness of God.
9. A true *faqir* is never in want.
10. Remain always the same.
11. Trust in God. If you rely upon Him truly, you need not worry about your daily wants.
12. Faith should be free from doubt.
13. Not a breath should pass without the remembrance of God.
14. It is no use going to the Kaaba for those who cannot see God here.
15. The same God is to be found in the mosque, the church and the pagoda.
16. God does not live on the empyrean. He exists everywhere.
One who cannot see God in this world is blind.
17. If your love is true, you can see God, for you cannot love without seeing.

Haji Sahib had two categories of disciples:

1. The Derwishes to whom the yellow *Ahram* was allowed to be worn, known as the *Khirka Posh*.
2. The worldly group.

On Haji Sahib's death a dispute arose about his succession in Lucknow, which

resulted in a Law Suit and simultaneously the creation of a Trust. The words uttered which were recorded of Haji Sahib Qibla orders reading as "MY CREED IS LOVE AND LOVER HAS NO SUCCESSOR" was the basis of the winning point in the case filed by his relatives.

While on the subject I feel that I should write a small para about my humble devotion and attachment for Haji Sahib. When my late father, Ghulam Mohammad, Ex-Governor-General of Pakistan, had his first posting after his passing the Audit and Accounts Services in Lucknow in 1921, I was born on the 8th of June, 1922. When I was six weeks old, I was taken by my father and mother to Deva-Sharif where I was placed in humility by them for acceptance at the Sacred Altar of Haji Sahib Qibla. I was literally given as a gift to Haji Sahib Qibla by my parents so that his blessings, protection and guidance were to be a part and parcel of my life; and they have truly been so. I can never forget this noble act that my father and mother did for me. May their souls rest in peace. I was first named Ghulam Warris and later my name was changed. I was placed at the Sacred Altar through late Hazrat Ibrahim Baig Shaeda, a devoted disciple of Haji Sahib. Shaeda Mian died in 1945 and up to this time he corresponded with me. His letters contain words of Wisdom and Knowledge.

Haji Sahib Qibla became ill on the 18th of Moharram and his condition worsened by the 30th of Moharram and on the 1st of Safar-ul-Mubarak he expired at 4:30 A.M. on 7th of April 1905. Truly *Hajji* Sahib was one of the greatest Qalandars of the nineteenth century who acted and preached the Gospel of Love to each and all irrespective of class, colour, creed or belief.

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EB

Attar, Farid Al-Din Muhammad B. Ibrahim (1119–1190)

Farid Al-Din Muhammad B. Ibrahim Attar was a Persian mystical poet. The dates of his birth and death cannot be fixed with any certainty. According to Dawlatshah, he was born in 513/1119 and the general belief is that he was killed by the *Mongols-i-Nushapur* in the year 627/1230. This would mean that he lived to the age of 114, which is improbable and besides, Nishapur was conquered by the Mongols as early as 617/1220. According to a

ta'rikh verse in some manuscripts (e.g. Ibrahim Ef. 579), in other sources (Sa'id Nafisi, Djastaudju, 607) and according to the inscription on the tomb erected by Mir 'Ali Shir, he died as early as 586/1190, that is to say, three years after writing *Matik al-Tayr* (Sa'id Nafisi 129).

Sa'id Nafisi adheres to 627 as the date of his death, but he bases this assumption on the spurious book *Miftah al-Futuh* and on the statement of Djami that 'Attar had given the *Asrar-nama* to Djalal al-Din Rumi who had emigrated from Balkh with his father in 618/1221. This emigration, however, probably took place as early as 616/1219. Nothing definite concerning the dates of his life can be got from 'Attar's own works. The one which seems to contain most biographical information, *Mazhar al-'Adja'ib*, is a forgery, which unfortunately misled Mirza Muhammad Kazwini as well as the author of this article.

Attar was a pharmacist and doctor, and whilst not actually a Sufi, he admired the holy men and was edified by the tales told about them, from his youth onward.—When attempting to compile a list of 'Attar's works, one meets with a peculiar difficulty: the works attributed to him fall into three groups which differ so considerably in content and style that it is difficult to ascribe all three to the same person. The main works of the first group are *Mantik al-Tayr*, *Ilahi-nama* and *Musibat-nama*; those of the second group are *Ushtunama* and *Djawhar al-Dhat*; and those of the third *Mazhar al-'Adja'ib* and *Lisan al-Ghayb*. There is, in addition, a fourth group of works which can—on the basis of internal evidence—be proved not to be by 'Attar.

With the exception of *Asrar-nama*, the epics of the first group consist of a clear, well-

constructed main story, which is interspersed with numerous—generally short—subsidiary tales. These tales reflect a wealth of religious and profane life. Told with masterly skill, these subsidiary tales are richly varied in subject and they are the main charm of the works of this group.

In the second group the number of tales is much reduced, and the interest is withdrawn from the external world and all that occurs in it. As a limited number of ideas are pursued with intensity and great emotion and with many repetitions. The recurring themes are: complete fana, even through physical death monistic pantheism (there is nothing other than God, and all things are of one substance), the knowledge of one's self as everything, as God as identical with all prophets.

People are repeatedly recognised as God by others and addressed as such. The presentation is broad and ill-ordered and full of tiresome repetitions. Frequently one does not know who is speaking or who is being addressed. Anaphora is used excessively: on occasions a hundred consecutive lines begin with the same words. Sa'id Nafisi considers the works of this group as spurious and attributes them to the writer of the third group, a man from Tun who lived in Tus for a long time, who was undoubtedly a Shi'ite and must have lived in the 9th/15th century. He considers the change of style, which had been accepted both by Muhammad Kazwini and by the author of this article, to be impossible.

One might object that a change of style and a limitation of the field of interest are not out of the question in a poet; that the beginnings of the use of anaphora can be found in the works of the first group and also that some of the themes frequent in the second group are

traceable in the first. I therefore, do not regard it as utterly impossible that the works of the second group should be genuine, though it is rather doubtful. In the time of Djami—that is to say in the 9th century—at least, these works were considered genuine, because Djami's remark in the *Nafahat al-Uns* that the light of Halladj had manifested itself after 150 years in 'Attar, can be based only on the works of the second group, in which Halladj plays an extensive part.

The epics of the third group, on the other hand, have been conclusively proved to be spurious. In the *Mazhar al-'Adja'ib* the poet asks the reader to read Hafiz (died 791 A.H.) and Kasim-i Anwar (died 837 A.H.) and prophesies the appearance of Djalal al-Din Rumi. I find such a difference in style and content between the works of the second and those of the third group, that—unlike Sa'id Nafis—I should not ascribe them to the same poet. With regard to the probable chronology of the works (on the basis of self-quotation).

The conclusions drawn in that article from the statements in the *Mazhar al-'Adja'ih* (whose author has the audacity to claim all 'Attar's genuine and famous works as his own) as also in my own article *Attar* in *IA*, are now superseded. Individual works: First group:

1. *Diwan*: apart from love poems, this contains the exposition of the same religious thoughts as govern the epics. Printed in Tehran, but not in a critical edition.
2. *Mukhtar-nama*: a collection of quatrains arranged according to themes, with an elucidatory prose introduction describing the origin of the work—which originally formed part of the *Diwan*—and the

destruction of the two works *Djawahir - nama* and *Sharh al Kalh*.

3. *Mantik al-Tayr* (Makamat al-Tuyur) grandiose poetic elaboration of the *Rislat al-Tayr* of Muhammad or Ahmad Ghazzal. The birds, led by the hoopoe, set out to seek Shimurgh, whom they had elected as their king. All but 30 perish on the path on which they have to traverse seven dangerous valleys (*Haft wadi*: this part appears as an independent work in some manuscripts). The surviving 30 eventually recognise themselves as being the deity (simurgh = Simurgh) and then merge in the last *fana* in the divine Simurgh.
4. *Musibat-nama*: a sufi disciple (salik) in his helplessness and despair, is advised by a pir to visit successively all mythical and cosmic beings: angel, throne, writing tablet, stilus, heaven and hell, sun, moon, the four elements, mountain, sea, the three realms of nature, Iblis, the spirits, the prophets, senses, phantasy, mind heart and soul (the self). In the sea of the soul, in his own self, he eventually finds the godhead. The tale may have been inspired by the hadith *al-shafa'a*. Printed in Tehran, 1298 A.H.
5. *Ilahi-nama*: a king asks his six sons what, of all things in the works they wished in turn for the daughter of the fairy king. the art of witchcraft, the magic cup of Djam, the water of life, Solomon's ring, and the elixir. The royal father tries to draw them away from their worldly desires and to inspire them with higher aims.
6. *Asrar-nama*: it has no framework-story, and repeatedly mentions the gnostic motif of the entanglement of the pre-existing soul in the base material world. 'Attar is

supposed to have given a copy of this book to the young Dahlia al-Din Rumi.

7. *Khusraw-nama*: a romantic novel of love and adventure, concerning Khusraw, the son of the emperor of Rum, and Gul, the daughter of the king of Khuzistan, with many adventures, befalling above all the faithful Gul, who is besieged by a succession of suitors.
8. *I'and-nama*: a small moral treatise which enjoyed great popularity; it has been printed in Turkey alone at least eight times (1251, 1252, 1253, 1257, 1260, 1267, 1291). Concerning further editions see Sa'id Nafisi 109–10 and the above mentioned catalogues. It has been translated into several languages (compare Geiger-Kuhn, *Grundriss der Iranschen Philologie*, ii, 603 and Sa'id Nafisi 108–10.) As early as 1809, it was published in London by J. H. Hindley then by de Saey together with a French translation: *Pandnamch on Livre des Conseils*, Paris, 1819. For the Swedish translation, completed in 964/1557, was by Emri, who died in 988/1580, and it was repeatedly printed in Turkey together with the Persian text (1229, 1266, 1280, 1282). Turkish commentaries: Shem'i (died 1009/1600–1), Sa'adat-nama; Shu'uri (died 1105/1693–4 autography of 1083 A.H. Istanbul, *Darulmesnevi* 185; 'Abdi Pasha (died 1113/1701–2), Mufid; Bursali Isma'il Hakki (died 1137/1724–5), in great detail, printed Istanbul, 1250; Mehmed Murad (died 1264/1849) Mahadar, Istanbul, 1252, 1260.
9. *Tadhkirat al-Awliya*: an extensive prose work which contains the biographies and sayings of Muslim mystics. It ends with a

biography of Halladj, who plays such an extensive part in the works of the second group. Other biographies—over 20 in number have been added in some manuscripts. In these, as also in his epics, 'Attar has treated his sources freely, and has often altered them in the light of his own religious ideas. For the numerous Turkish studies and translations, see the article Attar in IA; in addition Sa'id Nafisi 110–112. The text of the edition by R.A. Nicholson, *he Tadhkiratu 'l-awliya of Shaikh Faridu'd-din 'Attar*, London-Leiden, 1905–1907, *Persian Historical Texts* 3 and 5, is not always trust-worthy. Other editios in Sa'id Nafisi 112 and in the above mentioned eatalogues.

10. *Bulbul-nama*: the birds complain to Solomon about the nightingale which, they say, disturbs them with her song to the rose. The nightingale is called upon to defend herself. Eventually Solomon orders that she be left in peace. Sa'id Nafisi (106–7) regards this book as spurious. Printed in Tehran, 1312.
11. *Mi'radj-nama*: could well be an excerpt from the na't of any mathnawi. In the only manuscripts which I have seen, it overs a mere two pages.
12. *Djumdjuma-nama*: a rather short-story which night come from any of 'Attar's epics. Jesus resurrects a skull in the desert; the dead man, who had been a great king, tells Jesus about the torments of the grave and of hell; he them embraces the true faith and these for a second time. For Turkish editions of this little work, see IA: Attar.

The works of the second group (described above):

13. *Ushtur (Shutur)-nama*: the central figure of the first part of this work is a Turkish puppet player, who appears as a symbol of the deity. He has seven curtains to his stage and has seven assistants. He breaks the figures which he himself had created and tears the curtain. He sends his assassins to all directions and himself withdraws in order to guard his secret. A wise man asks him for the reason for his actions. By way of reply he is sent in front of seven curtains. There he beholds a strange, fantastic series of events, the meaning of which is to be understood symbolically. He is always sent on by a Pir without any clear information, and on his arrival at the 7th curtain he is asked to fetch from a grave some writing written on silk in green letters. On this God has revealed matters concerning Himself the way towards Him, the creation, and the prophet Muhammad. There is repeated mention of decapitation as a means of reaching God, and Halladj is repeatedly pointed to as the great example. The fruitless wandering from one curtain to another of emblematic of the cosmic journey of the silk in the *Musibat-Nama*. The second part deals almost exclusively with Halladj. On the scaffold he has talks with Sjunayd, Shaikh-i Kabir (Ibn-al-Khafif), Bayazid and Shibli, and in these, as God he develops a monistic pantheistic theology. In spite of its length, the *Ushtar-nama* is an important and interesting work which deserves closer study. Metre: Ramal
14. *Djawhar (Djawahir) al-Dhat*: this epos was written after the *Ushtar-nama*, because the latter (as well as the *Musibat-nama*) is quoted in it. In this work too, Halladj is continuously presented as a model of the fana and of becoming God. Among other stories, it contains the one of 'Ali whispering the divine secrets into a cistern. These secrets are then betrayed by a reed which had grown in the cistern and had been cut into a flute. The connexion with the 18 introductory lines of the *Mathawai*, by Djalal al-Din Rumi, is obvious. My assumption is that it is this story (which goes back to Nidasdnkey-ears via nizami) which has inspired Djalal al-Din; Sa'id Nafisi, who considers the work a later forgery, assumes the reverse to be the case (p. 114) H. Ritter, *Das Prooemium de Mathnawi-i-Mawlai* in ZDMG 93, 16, 196). The epic also contains the story of the youth who went in a sea voyage with his father, recognised himself as God and jumped into the sea in order that he lost himself completely in the divine nature. The youth is also recognised as God by a fellow-passenger. The motif of the recognising God by another man also appears in other works of this group. This work was printed in Tehran in 1315/1355.
15. *Halyadj-nama*: a poor imitation of the second part of the *Ushtar-Nama*. Metre; Hazadj. hazadj. Lithographed, Tehran, 1253.
16. *Mansur-nama*: a short tale in the metre Ramal, beginning; Bud Mansur ay 'adjab Shmila half, it is a short description of the martyrdom of Halladj.
17. *Bisar-nama*: a short Mathnawi, the centre of which consists of self-defecation (man khudaumman hudayan man khuda) and fana by decapitation. It contains verse from other mathnavis of this group. Its content is connected with the second part of the *Ushtar-nama*, Lithographed, Teherr 1319 and several times in Lucknow.

The works of the third group (undoubtedly by another hand):

18. *Mazhar al-'Asjib* (the 'place where miracles appear') is an honorary name for 'All, to whose glorification this work is dedicated. He is the diviner man, the bearer of divine secrets, the Shah of all begins prophets and angles. Legends about 'All play a large part. The author claims all the works of 'Attar as his own, and gives great biographical detail, including the meeting with Nadjma al-Din Kubra, Lithrghaph, Tehran, 1323, Sa'id Nafisi 126 ff.
19. *Lisan al-Ghayab*: again a shi'ite work by the same poet, who explicitly renounces Abu Bakr and 'Uthman, Sa'id Nafisi 123–3. These two works have no literary value.

Work of the fourth group (demonstrate spurious on the basis of internal evidence):

20. *Khayyat-nama*: for contents see E. Berthels, Faridaddin 'Attar's *Khayyat-Nama*, in *Ball de l'Ac. des Scde L'URASS, classe des Humanities* 1929, 201–214. Hadjdj Khalia attributes the work to a certain *Khayyat-i Kashani*, Berthels considers it genuine.
21. *Waslat-nama*: the poet is a man called Buhlul. Sa'id Nafisi 131–132.
22. *Kanz al-Asrar* (—*Kanz al-Bahr* = *tardjamat al-Adadit*): compiled 699/1299–1300 philologica, X 157; Sa'id Nafisi 120.
23. *Miftak al-Futuh*: compiled 688/1289–90 according to order manuscripts 587/by a man from Zandjan, Philologica X, 157; Sa'id Nafisi 127–128.
24. *Wasiyyat-nama*: compiled 850–1446–7. Philologia, X 158. Perhaps = *Waslat-Nama*?
25. *Kanz al-haka'ik*: contains a panegyric to a prince by name of Niku Gahzi. Concerning

the possibly corrupt name of this prince see Sa'id Nafisi 121, Ritter, *Philologica* X, 158 Concerning four sother superious works, compare *ibid.*, 154.

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Attar, Fariduddin (13th Century)

"To abandon something because others have misused it may be the height of folly; the Sufic truth cannot be encompassed in rules and regulations, in formulas and in rituals—but yet it is partially present in all these things".

These words are attributed to Farridudin the Chemist, a great illuminate and author and an organiser of the Sufis. He died over a century before the birth of Chaucer, in whose works references to Attar's Sufism are to be found. More than a hundred years after his death the foundation of the Order of the Garter showed such striking parallels with his initiatory Order that this can hardly be a coincidence.

Fariduddin was born near Omar Khayyam's beloved Nishapur and his father bequeathed him a pharmacy, which is one reason given for his surname and Sufi style

Attar—the Chemist. Of his life a great many stories are told—some of them involving miracles, other containing his teachings. He wrote a hundred and fourteen works for the Sufis, the most important of which is undoubtedly the *Parliament of the Birds*, a forerunner of *Pilgrim's Progress*. Still a classic of Sufism and Persian literature alike, the *Parliament* describes the Sufi experiences and is itself based in plan on earlier Sufic quest themes. It unfolds meanings which become perceptible with the Sufic awakening of the mind.

The story of Attar's conversion, which the Sufis use to illustrate the need for balance between material and metaphysical things, is given by Daulat-Shah, in the classic *Memoirs of the Poets*. It is not accepted as literal reporting, but allegorical. Attar was in his shop one day, among his numerous and varied merchandise, when a wandering Sufi appeared at the door, gazing in with his eyes filled with tears. Fariduddin at once told the man to be gone. "It is not difficult for me", replied the traveller, "I have nothing to carry; nothing but this cloak. But you, you with your costly drugs? You would do well to consider your own arrangements for going on your way."

This impact so profoundly impressed Attar that he renounced his shop and his work and withdrew into a Sufi settlement for a period of religious retreat under the aegis of the master Sheikh Ruknuddin. While a great deal is made of his aesthetic practices, he himself maintained the importance of the body, even saying:

"The body is not different from the soul, for it is a part of it; and both are a part of the Whole".

His teachings are not only embodied in his poetical works, but also in the traditional

rituals which are believed by Sufis to be a part of them. Reference to this will be made later; it is the sphere where Sufic poetry, teaching and 'work' (*amal*) coincide.

Attar was one of the Sufis most deeply versed in the biographies of the earlier historical Sufis and his only prose work, *Memoris of the Friends* (or *Recital of the Saints*), is devoted to a collection of these lives. It was on his wanderings to Mecca and elsewhere after he quit the Sufi circle of Ruknuddin that he decided to make the collection.

In his old age Attar was visited by the young Jalaluddin Rumi and he presented him with one of his books. Rumi made more public the initiatory aspects of the Sufic lore which Attar pursued. Later, he was to refer to him as his own soul:

"Attar traversed the seven cities of love and we have reached only a single street".

Attar died, as he had lived, teaching. His last action was deliberately calculated to make a man think for himself. When the barbarians under Jenghiz Khan invaded Persia in 1220, Attar was seized, by now a man of one hundred and ten years of age. One Mongol said:

"Do not kill this old man; I will give a thousand pieces of silver as a ransom for him".

Attar told his captor to hold out, for he would get a better price from someone else. A little later another man offered only a quantity of straw for him. Attar said:

"Sell me for the straw for that is all that I am worth" and he was slain by the infuriated Mongol.

Attar's romantic and quest writings have been shown by Garcin de Trassy to resemble the *Roman e la Rose* and belong, of course, to

the direct Sufic stream of romance teaching which antedates its appearance in Europe. A romance piece which gave rise to later material on a similar Sufic theme was written by Majriti the Cordoban.

It is probable that the romance material reached Western Europe through Spain and southern France, rather than through Syria, where the Sufic compositions of this genre were well established. Western scholars who believe that the Grail legend entered Europe through the Crusaders base this assumption only on the Syrian sources. Syria and Andalusia, however, were strongly linked. The transformation of 'Q' into 'G' (*Qarael Muqaddas* [Holy Recital] for *Garawl Muqaddas*) is Hispano-Moorish, not Syrian. De Tassy notes that the *Roman de la Rose* has analogies with two Sufic streams of literature—that of the *Birds and the Flowers* and above all with the *Parliament of the Birds* of Attar.

The exact version which stimulated the versions of the *Roman* known in Europe is not, of course, available; and it is more than possible that the origin was a verbal one, passed on through Sufi teaching in the wide-spread Sufic circles of Spain.

The *Rose O Bakawali* romance in India contains much that throws light upon the Sufic usage of this most dynamic imagery. And the *Parliament* itself, apart from the fragmentary indications in Chaucer and elsewhere, was translated into French and published in Liege in 1653. It was also translated into Latin in 1678.

In the Order of Khidhr (who is St. George and also Khidr, the patron saint of the Sufis, the hidden guide, sometimes thought to be Elias), which exists to this day, passages from the *Matiq ut-Tair* (*Parliament of the Birds*) of

Attar are quoted. This is a part of the ceremonial of initiation:

The sea was asked why it was dressed in blue, the colour of mourning and why it became agitated as if fire made it boil. It answered that the blue robe spoke of the sadness of separation from the Beloved, "that it was the fire of Love which made it boil." Yellow, continues the recital, is the colour of gold—the alchemy of the Perfected Man, who is refined until he is in a sense gold. The robe of initiation consists of the Sufi blue mantle, with a hood and a yellow band. Together, these two colours when mixed make green the colour of initiation and nature, truth and immortality. The *Mantiq* was written about one hundred and seventy years before the foundation of the mysterious Order of the Garter, which was originally known as the Order of St. George.

The Sufi order which Attar is credited with having created and probably developed and which certainly carries the tradition of his concentrating, carries out exercises designed to produce and maintain the harmony of the participant with the whole of creation and it closely resembles the other Orders of Sufism, the *tarikas*. The stages of development of a Sufi while they may take a different sequence in different individuals, are portrayed in the *Parliament of the Birds*.

The birds, who represent humanity, are called together by the hoopoe, the Sufi, who proposes that they should start on a quest to find their mysterious King. He is called Simurgh and he lives in the Mountains of Kaf. Each bird, after at first being excited by the prospect of having a King, begins to make excuses as to why he should not himself take part in the journey toward the hidden King. The hoopoe, after hearing the plea of each,

replies with a tale which illustrates the uselessness of preferring what one has or might have to what one should have. The poem is full of the Sufi imagery and has to be studied in detail in order to be properly understood. The Ring of Solomon, the nature of Khidr the hidden guide, anecdotes of the ancient sages, fill its pages.

Eventually the hoopoe tells the birds that in the quest they have to traverse seven valleys. First of all is the Valley of the Quest, where all kinds of perils threaten and where the pilgrim must renounce desires. Then comes the Valley of Love, the limitless area in which the Seeker is completely consumed by a thirst for the Beloved. Love is followed by the Valley of Intuitive Knowledge in which the heart receives directly the illumination of Truth and an experience of God. In the Valley of Detachment the traveller becomes liberated from desires and dependence.

In the inter-change in which the hoopoe deals with the nightingale, Attar exposes the uselessness of ecstasies, mystics who follow romance for its own sake, who intoxicate themselves with hearings, who indulge ecstatic experience and are out of touch with human life.

The passionate nightingale came forward, beside himself with fever. In each one of his thousand varying chirrupings he gave vent to a different mystery of meaning. He spoke so eloquently of mysteries that all the other birds fell silent. He said:

"I know the secrets of love. Throughout the night I give my love call. I myself teach the secrets; and it is my song which is the lament of the mystic flute and which the lute wails. It is I who set the Rose in motion and move the hearts of lovers. Continuously I teach new

mysteries, each moment new notes of sadness, like the waves of the sea. Whoever hears me loses his wits in rapture, contrary to his normal way. When I am long bereft of my love the Rose, I lament unceasingly....And when the Rose returns to the world in Summer, I open my heart to joy".

My secrets are not known to all—but the Rose knows them. I think of nothing but the Rose; I wish nothing but the ruby Rose.

"To reach the Simurgh, that is beyond me—the love of the Rose is enough for the nightingale. It is for me that she flowers...can the nightingale live but one night without the Beloved?"

The hoopoe cried:

"O laggard, busy with the mere shape of things! Leave off the pleasures of seductive form! The love of the face of the Rose has merely driven thorns into your heart. It is your master. However beautiful the Rose, the beauty vanishes in a few days. Love for something so perishable can only cause revulsion in the Perfected Man. If the Rose's smile awakens your desire, it is only to hold you ceaselessly in sorrow. It is she who laughs at you each Spring and she does not cry—leave the Rose and the redness."

Commenting upon this passage, one teacher remarks that Attar refers not only to the ecstatic who does not take his mysticism further than rapture. He also means the ecstatic's parallel, the person who feels frequent and incomplete love and who, although deeply affected by it, is not regenerated and altered by it to such an extent that his very being undergoes a change:

"This is the fire of love which purifies, which is different whenever it occurs, which sears the marrow and makes incandescent the kernel. The ore separates from the matrix and the

Perfect Man emerges, altered in such a way that every aspect of his life is ennobled. He is not changed in the sense of being different; but he is completed and this makes him considered powerful of men. Every fiber has been purified, raised to a higher state, vibrates to a higher tune, gives out a more direct, more penetrating note, attracts the affinity in man and woman, is loved more and hated more; partakes of a destiny, a portion, infinitely assured and recognised, indifferent to the things which affected him while he pursued the mere shadow of which this is the substance, however sublime that former experience may have been."

This teacher (Adil Alimi) warns that these sentiments will not appeal to all. They will be "disbelieved by the materialist; attacked by the theologian; ignored by the romantic, avoided by the shallow; rejected by the ecstatic; be welcomed but misunderstood by the theoretician and imitation Sufi." But, he continues, we must remember *qadam ba qadam* (step by step):

"Before you can drink the fifth cup, you must have drunk the first four, each of them delicious."

He realizes that things, whether they be old or new, have no importance. Things that have been learned are of no value. The traveller is experiencing everything afresh. He understands the difference between traditionalism, for instance and the reality of which it is a reflection.

The fifty valley is the Valley of Unification. Now, the Seeker understands that what seemed to him to be different things and ideas are, in actuality, only one.

In the Valley of astonishment, the traveller finds bewilderment and also love. He no longer understands knowledge in the same way as

formerly. Something, which is called love, replaces it.

The seventh and last valley is that of Death. This is where the Seeker understands the mystery, the paradox, of how an individual "drop can be merged with an ocean and still remain meaningful. He has found his 'place.'"

Fariduddin Attar's pen-name is Attar, the Chemist or Perfumer. While most historians assume that he adopted this descriptive word because his father had a pharmacy, the Sufi tradition is that 'Attar' conceals an initiatory meaning. If we take the standard method of recording by the Abjad System, known to almost every person literate in Arabic and Persian, the letters can be substituted for the following figures:

A (yn)	=	70
Ta	=	9
Th	=	9
Alif	=	1
Ra	=	200

The letters must be arranged in accordance with conventional Semitic orthography, as above. The *Hisab el-Jamal* (standard rearrangement of letters and numbers) is the simplest form of the use of the Abjad, used in very many poetic names. This rearrangement requires the totalling of the values of the letters (70 + 9 + 9 + 1 + 200), giving a total of 289. In order to provide a fresh 'hidden' three-letter root, we have (again by standard procedure) to respice the total, in order of hundreds, tens and units, thus:

$$289 = 200, 80, 9.$$

These three figures are recorded:

$$200 = R; 80 = F; 9 = T.$$

Now we look up in a dictionary the words which correspond with any arrangement of these

three letters. In Arabic dictionaries, words are always lifted in accordance with their basic (usually three-letter) roots, so this makes the task easy.

The three letters may be grouped only in the following ways: Raft, Rtf, Frt, Ftr and Tfr.

The only trilateral root which is concerned with religion, interior or initiatory meanings is the Ftr root.

'Attar' is an encipherment of the concept of Ftr, which is the message about his teaching that Fariduddin Attar is transmitting.

Attar was one of the greatest Sufi teachers. Before we look at the implications of the Ftr root in Arabic, we can recapitulate his ideas. Sufism is a form of thinking clothed by Attar and his followers (including Rumi, his disciple) in a religious format. It is concerned with growth and the theme of the organic evolution of mankind. Its accomplishment is associated with the dawn after the dark, the breaking of bread after a fast and intensive physical and mental action, unpremeditated because a response to intuitive impulses. Does the root *Ftr* contain

- (1) religious associations;
- (2) connections between Christianity and Islam—because the Sufis claim to be Moslems but also esoteric Christians;
- (3) the idea of speed or unpremeditated action;
- (4) humility; dervishism;
- (5) a strong impact (of ideas or movement, as applied in dervish schools for training Sufis);
- (6) 'the grape'—Sufi poetic analogy for interior experience;

- (7) something which forces its way out of the bosom of nature?

Every one of these ideas is contained in the Arabic words derived from the Ftr root, forming a mosaic of the Sufi existence. We may now examine the root and its use:

FaTar = to cleave, to split a thing; to find out; to begin; to create a thing (God)

FuTR = a mushroom (that which forces its way upward by cleaving)

FaTaRa = to breakfast, to break a fast

TaFaTTaR = to split or crack

'IYD eFiTR = the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast

FiTRAT = natural disposition; religious feeling; the religion of Islam (submission to the divine will)

FaTIR = unleavened bread; unpremeditated or precipitate action; haste

FaTIRA = a small, flat cake, such as is used as a sacrament

FATiR = the Creator

FuTaiyRi = a worthless man, empty, blunt

FuTAR = a blunt thing, like a blunt sword

Attar is traditionally associated with having passed down the special Sufi exercise called 'Halt!'—The Exercise of the Pause of Time. This takes place when the teacher, at a special time, calls for a complete freezing of movement by the students. During this 'pause of time' he projects his *baraka* upon the people. Suddenly, suspending all physical action is considered to leave the consciousness open to the receipt of special mental developments whose power is drained by muscular movement.

FTR, strangely enough, is in the Sufi word list, developed into Qmm. This, again encoded

by the same Abjad notation, produces the word Qiff—the Divine Pause. This ‘Pause’ is the name given to the ‘Halt!’ exercise, which is only carried out by a teaching master.

That the FTR root means, in a secondary sense, the mushroom, gives rise to an interesting speculation. Largely due to the initiative of R. Gordon Wasson, it has been determined that in ancient times there was (and still is in surprisingly many places) a wide-spread ecstatic cult based upon the eating of hallucinogenic mushrooms.

Is the FTR root connected with a mushroom cult? It is, in one sense, but not the sense which one would immediately assume. Ftr is a mushroom, but not a hallucinogenic one. We have two sources for asserting this. In the first place, the Arabic word for a hallucinogenic fungus is from the root Ghrb. Words derived from the Ghrb root indicate a knowledge of the strange influence of hallucinogenic fungi, while the Ftr words do not:

GHaRaBa	= to go away, depart, have an eye tumour
GHaRaB	= to forsake one's country, to live abroad
GHuRBan	= the setting of a star; to be absent or remote
GHaRub	= to be obscure, something not well understood, to become a stranger
GHaRaB	= to go West
A-GHRaB	= to do or say strange or immoderate things; to laugh immoderately; to run swiftly; to go far into the country.

ISTa-GHRaB = to find a thing strange, extra-ordinary; also, to laugh to excess

GHaRB = edge of a sword; tears; etc.

ESH el GHuRAB = toadstool (literally, “Bread of the crow, of the intricate, of the darkness, of the strangeness”)

The second interesting evidence which indicates that the Sufis used the Ftr root to mean the interior experience and not one which was induced by chemical means is contained in a passage from the works of the aptly named Mast Qalandar (literally, ‘intoxicated dervish’), who undoubtedly comments upon a belief that hallucinogenic mushrooms might provide a mystical experience, but claims that this is incorrect. First we, can look at a literal rendering of the text:

“The Creator from the spreading of fervour and the essence of religious feeling thus ordered the ‘juice of the grape’ for the breakfasting of the Lovers (the Sufis) and in the sacramental bread of the half understanders he left a symbol. And this too learn and know, that the Sufi illuminate is far from the crack and fissure of deception which is distortion and went near to that other (initiatory) ecstatic feeling: and was far from mushrooming and mushrooms of madness was far. And the breakfasting was of the breakfast of truths on the Way of uncrackedness. Finally, after the spreading (vine) and grape came and after that its juice made wine and supping (after abstinence), the Complete Man was made fashioned strangely by the blunt scimitar. But this bread is not from what they say, neither from beneath the tree. Truly the Truth of Creation is discovered and ecstasy may be solely known in this hiddenness of the bread of the hungry and thirsty. His drink is after his food. The Creator displays as the Opener.”

This remarkable passage has been considered to be the ravings of a madman. Sheikh Mauji of the Azamia Sufis interprets it in a page from his *Durud* (Recitals):

"There is a certain sensation which is true fervour and which is associated with love. This stems from ancient origins and is necessary to mankind. Signs of it remain in circles other than those of the Sufis, but now only in symbolic form—as they have the *Cross* but we have Jesus. The Seeker must remember that there are similitudes of feeling which are illusory and which are like madness, but not the madness which the Sufi means when he talks of madness, as the author has used to describe himself (Mast Qalandar). It is from this source, the origin of what we call a wine, from a grape, from a vine, the product of splitting and spreading, that comes the true illumination. After a period of abstinence from wine or bread, the detachment from attachment, this force which is not a food in any sense of being a known physical thing...."

The original passage, which is in more or less literary Persian, gives us the explanation of what it is that the "mad dervish" is trying to do. It harps upon a single word-root: and that root is Ftr. No translation could possibly recreate this poetic fact because in translation

the root cannot be maintained. In English, since the derivation of 'split,' 'cake,' 'religious experience' and so on are from different stems, we cannot maintain the almost eerie sense of carrying on one single sound. This is an example:

"Ya baradar, *Fatir ast tafattari fitrat wa dhati fitrat....*"

In the whole passage of one hundred and eleven words, the word derived from the three-letter root Ftr occurs no less than twenty-three times! And many of these usages of the words, though not incorrect, are so unusual (because there is so often a conventional word more apt in such a context) that there is absolutely no doubt that a message is being conveyed to the effect that chemical hallucinogens derived from fungi provide an undeniable but counterfeit experience.

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EB

B

Baba Sahib, Hazrat (1175–1265)

On the 5th of Maharram falls the death anniversary of one of the greatest Muslim mystics and saints of the 12th century of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent, namely, Sheikh-al-Alam, Kutub al-Aktab, Khwaja-i-Khwajagan Hafiz Haji Sheikh Farid-ud-Din Masod, lovingly and popularly remembered as Baba Farid Ganj Shakar in view of the pious, simple and humble life than the great saint, scholar and *Mujahid* had led.

Hazrat Syed Hafiz Shah Sheikh Farid Ganjshakr Baba Sahib masood al-Alameen, Qutub-e-Alam, Sultan-al-Mashaik was born in 1175 A.D./571 A.H. His descendents had migrated from Bukhara and Ghazni due to the onslaught and atrocities of Sultan Farukh Shah the King of Kabul and is genealogically connected to Hazrat Umar Farooq.

The ancestors of Hazrat Baba Sahib had migrated from Kabul to Lahore in 1157 A.D. under his grandfather Hazrat Kazi Shuab, who was a tribal chief and a very pious man. After some time they moved to Kasur. Eventually, Hazrat Kazi Shuab settled permanently at Sahiwal. He had three sons and one of them, by the name of Hazrat Jamaluddin Sulaman married Qalsum Bibi, the daughter of Sheikh

Wajihudin Khojendi. In 1175 A.D. (571 A.H.) a boy was born who was named Masood. This boy was destined to rise to great spiritual heights.

It is historically recorded that due to certain circumstances the name of Farid-ud-Din was bestowed on the saintly boy by the great Hazrat Farid-ud-Din Attar. Hazrat Baba Sahib lost his father when he was very small and his mother, who was a very intelligent and pious woman, gave him the basic elementary religious knowledge and later on sent him to a *Maktab*.

At the age of 18 Baba Sahib left for Multan, which was the centre of religious learning, knowledge and spiritual practical training where great mystics and ulemas resided and gave discourses on *Tafsir*, *Hadis* and *Fiqh*, etc. Baba Sahib lived in a mosque adjacent to a *Maktab* owned by Maulana Minajuddin Tirmidi under whose guidance he placed himself to acquire higher knowledge. Baba Sahib now became a Hafiz. During this period Hazrat Qutubdin Bakheyar Kaki was on visit to Multan and through coincidence Baba Sahib came in contact with him at a time when he was reading a book called *Nafaay* (spiritual benefits). On enquiring what book Baba Sahib was studying, he replied '*Nafaay*'. Hazrat Kutub Sahib blessed Baba Sahib with the remark:

"May God grant you knowledge and understanding through this book with His blessings".

Baba Sahib became a disciple of Hazrat Qutub Sahib, who then left for Delhi.

After completing his higher religious studies Baba Sahib set out on the third phase of his life—'Travels'. Travelling has always been a part of the practical course of the mystic. Baba Sahib travelled to Bukhara, Baghdad, Siwistan, Badakshan, Kirman, Qandahar and Ghazni: and at these places he had an opportunity of meeting great mystics of the time, namely, Shaikh shahabuddin Suharwardy, Khwaja Ajmal, Shirazi, Imam Ao'hadi, Khwaja Agoz Sagzi, Hazrat Wahiduddin Kirmani, Shaikh Saifuddin Khasri and Shaikh Ouhaddidin Kirmani.

Later on, Baba Sahib proceeded to the Hijaz for premiering Haj and on his return visited the holy shrines at Jerusalem. On his return from his travels Baba Sahib spent considerable time with his master, Hazrat Qutub Sahib at Delhi and was given the *Khilafatnama* and ordered to proceed to Jhansi.

After he *Wisahayatnama* was delivered to Baba Sahib along with the holy relics, he became the head of the Chistia Silsila. People thronged around Baba Sahib in great numbers which caused disturbance in his prayers and after some time he left for a place called Ajodhan which in old times was the capital of the Chankia Dynasty.

It was now known as Unhil-Pattan or Unhil-Wada. After the arrival of Hazrat Baba Sahib, the place came to be called Pattan Baba Farid; and through a command of Emperor Akbar, it was given a permanent name—Pakpattan. Baba Sahib after settling down married the daughter of Sultan Ghaizuddin

Bablan named Hazbara. It is also reorded that he married twice after this. Baba Sahib had five sons and three daughters.

His whole life was based on *Imam, Ikhlaq* and *Ahsas* i.e., faith, good conduct and feelings for others. He used to fast for most of the year constantly and spent his time in prayers and devotion. He round led a very rigid and disciplined life. Baba was very fond of *Sama* (Qawali).

Baba Sahib apart from being a mystic and saint was a great Mujahid and scholar also. He had converted a large number Of Hindu tribes who lived around Pakpattan. The *Guru Granth* which is the religious book of the Sikhs and which was compiled by Guru Arjun in 1604 contains about 112 shlokas written by Baba Sahib. On the at 4th Moharam Baba Sahib became ill and when he was asked if any medical facility was required, he gave the answer that no mortal had any remedy for his ailment. On the 5th of Moharram, 664A.H. (1265A.D.) Hazrat Baba Sahib left this mortal world to meet his Creator. His mortal remains lie buried in a beautiful mausoleum of Pakpattan Sharif, 28 miles from Sahiqal and every year during his death anniversary the annual *Urs* is held. Some of th sayings of Hazrat Baba Sahib are:

- (1) The aim of acquiring knowledge of the religious laws is to act upon them and not to harass people.
- (2) Take care even of that man who is afraid of you.
- (3) There is no substitute for religion.
- (4) If you aspire to attain the exalted position of saintly people, do not associate with the lords, rich and royal personages.

- (5) Do not forget death at any place.
- (6) Life of poverty (*Faqr*) and resignation (*Tawwakal*) is the basis of all true lives.

Hazrat Baba Sahib bestowed the *Khilafatnama* on Hazrat Khwaja Nizamuddin Mehboob-e-Elahi, a pious saint of the Chisti Order. He was a *jamali saint* and one Sub-Order is named after him, called Nizami-Chisti. The other Sub-Order is called the Sabri Chisti, named after Hazrat Syed Ahmed Ali Alauddin Sabir of Piran-e-Kalyar Sharif, a great Jalali saint.

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EB

Badr al-Din B. Kadi Samawna (1358-)

Badr al-Din B. Kadi Samawna, eminent Ottoman jurist, Sufi and rebel. Badr al-Din Mahmud b. Kadi Samawna was born in 760 AH/3 December, 1358 in Samawna. He was the eldest son of the judge Ghazi Isra'il, who was one of the oldest fighters for the faith of his time, and traced his ancestry back to the Saldjuks. His mother was Greek, and took the name Melek after her conversion to Islam. Badr al-Din spent his youth in Adrianople (which had been conquered in spring 1361).

He was taught the basises of Islamic religion and law by his father and, later on, by the jurists Husuf and Shahidi. His subsequent studies took him to Brusa, in the company of his friend Musa Celebi, better known as Kadizade-i Rumi, a brilliant mathematician and astronomer. Up to 1381, he studied logic and astronomy in Konya under a certain Fayd Allâh. After that, Badr al-Din went to Jerusalem, where he worked under the otherwise not particularly well known Ibn al-'Askalani (not the famous Ibn Hadiyah al-'Askalani), then he went to Cairo, attracted by the teachings of such famous scholars as Mubarakshah al-Mantiki, the physician Haddji Pasha, the philosopher and lawyer 'Ali b. Muhammad al-Sayyid al-Sharif al-Djurdjani, and a certain 'Abd al-Latif.

In about 1383, Badr al-Din went on the pilgrimage to Mecca. After his return to Cairo, the Mamluk sultan Barkuk appointed him as tutor to his son Faradj, who was to succeed him. By some fateful chance, Badr al-Din met the Sufi Shaikh Husayn Akhlati at the Mamluk court, and under his overpowering influence he (a former opponent of the Sufis) himself accepted Sufism.

After some years of monastic life in Cairo Badr al-Din travelled to Tabriz in 1402–3—possibly attracted by the fame of the Safawiyya in Ardabil—and there he came to the notice of Timur Lang, who had just returned from Antolia and attempted to take Badr al-Din with him to Central Asia. This he avoided by fleeing. He became Shaikh of his monastery and successor to Husayn Akhlati (who had died in the meantime), but as a result of differences with his brethren he decided to leave Cairo and undertake a missionary journey to Asia Minor and Rumelia.

He succeeded in gaining the sympathy of the princes of Konya and Germiyan, and also in attracting Hamid b. Musa al-Kaysari, a member of the Safawid order and later teacher of Hadjdji Bayram Wali. Following the success of his Sufi convictions, Badr al-Din gradually developed into an open heretic; he propagated the idea of common ownership, and developed in a consistent and daring way the ideas of the hectic Muhyi al-Din b. al-'Arabi. The crowds of impoverished people whom he attracted in Asia Minor must have been considerable. Christians, too, came over to him, and it is said that he was in touch with the Genoese ruler of Chios.

Finally Badr al-Din landed again in Adrianople, where he retired for seven years to lead a life of solitude and study. Around 1410, and against his will, he was made military judge by the claimant to the Sultanate, Musa, but after the victory of Sultan Mehmed I near Camurlu (1413), he was dismissed from his post and banished to Iznik under rather humiliating circumstances. There he wrote and taught, and Ak Shams al-Din—who later became famous as Shaikh of the Bayramiyya—is said to have been one of his pupils for a short time. It was

probably there, too, that he became connected (in ways which are not yet clear) with the communist underground movement of a certain Burkludje Mustafa, and a certain Torlak Hu Kemal, which led to the extensive rebellion in 1416, as whose ideological head Badr al-Din appears. Whilst on the one hand the biography of Badr al-Din (which was written by his grandson Khalil) asserts his complete innocence in all these events, the official Ottoman historians, on the other hand, accuse him of active participation—even of leadership in the rebellion.

At the time when Burkludje Mustafa and Torlak Hu Kemal started their attack in western Asia Minor (where, to begin with, they had considerable success), Badr al-Din left Iznik and reached Rumelia with the secret help of the discontented prince of Sinope. After the rebellion of Burkludje Mustafa and Torlak Hu Kemal had been most cruelly suppressed, the revolt in Rumelia also collapsed and Badr al-Din was caught by troops of the Sultan and dragged to Serres in Macedonia, where Sultan Mehmed I was fighting the 'false Mustafa' (Duzme Mustafa).

After a somewhat questionable trial, Badr al-Din was publicly hanged as a traitor in Serres on 18 Dec. 1416. The role played by Badr al-Din in this rising is still by no means clear. It is certain, however, that his ideology was in sympathy with it, and that his ideas did have an enduring influence. There is documentary evidence that there were followers of the Badr al-Din movement in Rumelia even under Suleyman the Magnificent.

After the death of their hero, many of them turned to the now politically active Safawiyya, whilst others merged into sundry sects, especially the Bektashiyya. The most famous

of Badr al-Din's descendants— besides his three sons Ahmad, Isma'il and Mustafa— was his grandson Khalil (the son of Isma'il) who was Badr al-Din's biographer. As a writer, Badr al-Din was extremely prolific. He wrote close on 50 extensive works, most of them on matters of law. His most important Sufi works are the *Waridat* and the *Nur al-Kulab*.

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H.J. KISSLING

Baqli Ruzbihan (1049/50–1209)

The conventional story of the Ruzbihan Baqli has been preserved in a number of biographical reports. Here I would like simply to present a summary, nothing in every case the source of our information and indicating where the Shaikh's own writings bear out or conflict with the data of later writers, since these divergences will be explored later on. It will be helpful to the reader to digest this account before going on to the raptures and the inner

landscapes of *The Unveiling of Secrets*, which are analysed.

Ruzbihan's life took place in Persia during the period that Marshal Hodgson calls the 'earlier middle period' of Islamic history. The 'Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad declines precipitously after the middle of the fourth/tenth century. New waves of nomadic confederations were drawn from the steppes of Central Asia to the cultured cities of Iran and Iraq. The Seljuk Turks became Muslims and quickly were drawn to support the Sunni caliphate and to make alliances with religious scholars and Sufis.

They established domination over Iran, controlling the area where Ruzbihan would be born as early as 441/1049–50. Shiraz, where Ruzbihan is buried, became the capital of the Salghurids, one of several semi-independent dynasties of Atabegs— nominal regents for Seljuk princes who seized effective power for themselves, at first as vassals for the Seljuks, then for the Khwarazmshahs and finally for the Mongols.

The Salghurids remained independent for over 120 years, from 543/1148 to 668/1270, when the Mongols finally took direct control over Fars. Political turmoil and the contest for power made it a turbulent time, though there were also period of years of tranquility.

Nearly all our biographers agree that Ruzbihan Baqli was born in 522/1128 in the Persian town of pasa (Arabicised as Fasa). The lone dissenter regarding the date is Massignon, who suggests 530/1135–6. According to Ruzbihan's own testimony, which is reported in full in the next chapter, he was born in a family of Daylamite stock and his childhood was spent among people who lacked any sense of religion. He recalls having spiritual

experiences at the ages of three, seven and fifteen, but only the last of these does he characterise as a true 'unveiling' (*kashf*). That event would have taken place in 537/1142–3. In one biography, his first unwilling is said rather to have taken place at age twenty-five, therefore in 547/1152–3 although that could easily have been a scribble error for fifteen.

In any case, he abandoned his vegetable store, cashbox and supplies and wandered for a year and a half (or, in a later account, six and a half years) in the desert. Then around 538–9/1143–4 (or, following Massignon, in 548–9/1153–4), Ruzbihan joined the Sufis, serving them, learning their discipline and studying and memorizing the *Qur'an*. Where he stayed or how long we do not know, but he reports having an initial vision on the roof of a Sufi hospice (*ibat*).

Massignon, following later reports, believes that Ruzbihan was associated with the *ribal* of the Banu Salbih family in Shiraz, where he would have had access to a rich library containing the writings of Hallaj. Ruzbihan then returned to Pasa and became a disciple of Shaikh Jamal al-Din Abi al-Wafa Ibn Khalil al-Fasa'i, a figure about whom we know nothing aside from Ruzbihan's report. Nonetheless, this Jamal al-Din is the only contemporary (aside from his own son Ahmad) that Ruzbihan names in his autobiography.

The next two decades are hard to pin down with any confidence. Ruzbihan reportedly travelled to Syria, Iraq, Kirman and Arabia. He is said to have made the pilgrimage to Mecca twice. Later, biographers attempted to fill in the gap regarding Ruzbihan's teachers and masters. They suggest that Ruzbihan was for a time a disciple of a Kurdish Sufi master named

Jagir Kurdi (d.590/1194), who lived near Samarra in Iraq.

Ruzbihan's grandsons furnished him with a complete initatic genealogy, stating that his primary teacher in Sufism was Siraj al-Din Mahmud ibn Khalifa (d.562/1166–7) of the Salbih family in Shiraz, who represented the Kazaruni lineage of Persian Sufism. Since Ruzbihan himself never mentions this teacher or the teaching lineage, we will return to this question later on.

Other Sufi teachers, he is said to have associated with include a certain Qiwan al-Din Suhrawardi, otherwise unknown. In terms of the basic religious sciences, Ruzbihan is believed to have studied with the leading scholars of Shiraz, including Fakhr al-Din ibn Maryam and Arshad al-Din Nayrizi (d. 604/1208), a commentator on the great collection of prophetic *hadith*, the *Masabih*.

In a fragment of one of his legal treatises, Ruzbihan himself has recorded a *hadith* report from one Abu al-Safa' al-Wasiti on a legal point concerning ritual prayer. His biographer Shams al-Din magnified this encounter, placing it in the context of his pilgrimage made from Pasa to the holy places of Arabia with a group of disciples.

During a three-day stop in Wasit, he maintains, Ruzbihan received a Sufi cloak of initiation from Abu al-Safa' and intended to make a retreat under his direction, but was told by the Shaikh that he did not need this kind of dispelling to become perfect. Another account has it that Ruzbihan studied *hadith* with the famous Sufi master Abu Najib al-Suhrawardi in Alexandria, but it has been convincingly argued that this was a different person named Ruzbihan Misri. As we shall see, Ruzbihan's

biographies consistently linked his name with those of other famous Sufis whom he had never met, as part of their hagiographical portrait.

The most interesting account of Ruzbihan by a near contemporary is that of the great Andalusian master Ibn Arabi, who found this story still current when he visited Mecca sometime after 1201.

The story is told of Shaikh Ruzbihan that he was afflicted with the love of a woman singer; he fell ecstatically in love with her and he cried much in his state of ecstasy before God, confounding the pilgrims at the Ka'ba during the time he resided there. He circumambulated on the roof terraces of the sanctuary, but his state was sincere. When he was afflicted by the love of this singer, no one knew of it, but his relationship with God was transferred to her. He realized that the people would imagine that his ecstasy was for God in its origin.

So he went to the Sufis and took off his cloak, throwing it before them. He told his story to the people, saying:

"I do not want to lie about my spiritual state."

He then became like a servant to the singer. The woman was told of his state and his ecstasy over her and she learned that he was one of the great saints of God. The woman became ashamed and repented before God for the profession she had followed, by the blessing of his sincerity. She became like a servant to him. God removed that relationship with her from his heart and he returned to the Sufis and put on his cloak. He was not seen to have lied to God about his state.

Although this story does not occur in the hagiographies of Ruzbihan, it has striking

sympathies with the Ruzbihan we see in the autobiographical, *The Unveiling of Secrets*, weeping in ecstasy at the beauty of God. Corbin has suggested that this incident may have served as the model for the charming dialogue at the beginning of *The Jasmine of the Lovers*, where a female interlocutor demands that Ruzbihan explain how God may be described in terms of passionate love (*ishq*).

Ruzbihan returned at last to Shiraz, when he caused a sensation where he first preached in public. In the oldest version, the story goes like this:

When the Shaikh came from pasa to Shiraz, the first day that he preached in the Atiq mosque, in the midst of his sermon, He said, "When I entered the mosque, in the corner of the herb sellers a woman was advising her daughter, saying, 'My dear, your mother advises you to cover your face and don't show everyone your beauty from the window. This should not be, for by reason of your loveliness and beauty, someone may fall into temptation. Don't you hear my words and accept my advice?'"

When Ruzbihan heard these words, he wanted to tell that woman:

"Although you advise her and forbid her, let her show herself! She should not listen to these words of yours or accept this advice, for she is beautiful and beauty has no rest until love becomes joined to it.

When the shaikh said this, one of the travellers on the path of God was present. The arrow of these words hit the target of his heart, he cried out and gave up his spirit. The cry went up in the town that Shaikh Ruzbihan is cutting souls to bits with the sword of his words. The people of the town turned toward him and became his disciples. Later accounts add to Ruzbihan's advice to the mother the comment that

"Love and beauty made a pact in pre-eternity never to be separate from one another."

After some time he founded his own hospice in 560/1165, according to an inscription quoted by his biographers and there he remained occupied in super-erogatory prayers and writing about the Sufi path. He married several wives, who bore him two sons and three daughters.

Despite the numerous writings that Ruzbihan composed in Arabic and Persian, the lack of dates and external references makes it difficult to extract from them anything like a chronology of his life and activities. It may be observed that the majority of Ruzbihan's writings were in Arabic and unlike Jalal al-Din Rumi, Ruzbihan left little in the way of Persian poetry.

Massignon has suggested that Ruzbihan was forced by hostile critics to leave Shiraz for a period of exile in Pasa; although he cites no evidence for persecution, he presumably is thinking of several passages in Ruzbihan's autobiography where critics of Sufism are castigated. All that Ruzbihan tells us about this period is that he purchased an orchard in Pasa, but he could not enjoy it in the depression that he suffered on the death of a favourite wife. Then, Ruzbihan returned to Shiraz, completing in 570/1174 the *Commentary on Ecstatic Sayings*, which had been begun in Pasa.

Massignon maintains that Ruzbihan was invited to return by the newly installed Atabeg of Fars, Takla, in 570/1175.

Of the remaining years of Ruzbihan we have only a few hints. The colophon to his treatise on spiritual states, *The Spirits Font*, states that it was completed in 579/1184 when Ruzbihan was fifty-two, but this dating conflicts

with his age as known from other sources. It may be remarked in passing that this treatise, which has yet to be analysed in detail, contains much that is helpful in understanding the experiences described in *The Unveiling of Secrets*. From my analysis of *The Unveiling of Secrets*, it may be suggested that Ruzbihan began writing it in 577/1181-2 at the age of fifty-five and then completed it in 585/1189.

The general portrait of Ruzbihan in his biographies shows him guiding disciples, praying and meditating in his *ribat* and continuing to preach in the principal mosque of Shiraz until his death. He has some followers in other regions, such as 'Imad al-Din Muhammad ibn Ra'is, who became a disciple when Ruzbihan preached in Kirman; the two exchanged letters in flowery Persian in 583/1188. Ruzbihan also sent *The Treatise on Holiness* with a merchant named Abu al-Faraj for the benefit of some Sufis in Central Asia.

In 606/1209, Ruzbihan died in Shiraz. Two chronograms have been composed for this date: "the master of guidance and pure gnostic (*pir-i haḍi 'arif-i pak*)" "the light of paradise" (*mur-i firdaws*)." Personal descriptions of Ruzbihan are vivid though occasionally contradictory. A writer of the seventh/thirteenth century said:

"I met him and he was a master of mystical experience and absorption, continually in ecstasy, so that one's fear of him never left. He was constantly weeping and his hours were restless, crying out, never easing his lament for an hour. Passing every night in tears and lament; he feared God."

Ruzbihan's great-grandson Shams al-Din transmitted this description:

"His face was always so beautiful that anyone who saw him was freshened and quickened in spirit and would see the trace of sainthood on

his fore-head, which was the reflection of his blessed interior made external."

Another great-great-grandson, Sharaf al-Din, gave this thumb-nail sketch:

"The master has a fine appearance, but awe-inspiring, and most of the time he was cheerful; for him, hope was preponderant over fear."

The Ruzbihaniyya Order and the Legacy of Ruzbihan: The tomb of Ruzbihan lies in the *ribat* that he constructed as a hospice and residence, in the section of hiraz then known as the New Garden. A new section was added to it by his great-great-grandson 'Izz al-Din Mas'ud in the early eighth/fourteenth century and a number of Ruzbihan's relatives and followers were buried there. At that time, it was a major place of pilgrimage in Shiraz, as noticed by writers such as the traveller Ibn Battuta (in 725/1325) and the geographer Hamd Allah Mustawfi (736/1336).

The popularity of Ruzbihan's shrine waned, however and his order evidently disappeared. When the Aq-Qoyunlu crown prince Sultan Khalil held an immense parade in Fars in 881/1476, the successors of the early Sufi masters Ibn Khalif and Abu Ishaq Kazaruni played a prominent role, but no follower of Ruzbihan was noticed in the detailed account of this event by the philosopher and courtier Davani.

By the nineteenth century the shrine (in a part of town now called Darb-i Shikh or Bala Kaft) had fallen into disrepair and local people pillaged the stone for other purposes and quartered cattle there. As noted above, it was I have now who rediscovered the tomb of Ruzbihan in Shiraz in 1928 and personally dug up the tombstone of the shaikh. It remained in a ruined state until Corbin and Mu'in conducted

an excavation of the tomb and petitioned the archeological department of the Iranian government to undertake a full restoration in 1958, comparable to what has been done in Shiraz at the tombs of the poets Sa'di and Hafiz.

A restoration with new tile-work and inscriptions was completed in 1972. It is possible that the earlier neglect of Ruzbihan's tomb was the result of anti-Sufi feeling during the Safavid period; we know for instance that Shah Isma'il in 909/1503 massacred 4000 followers of the Kazaruni sufi order in Fars and desecrated many Sufi tombs in the region.

Along with the tomb, Ruzbihan was memorialised by biographical writings that are best characterised as hagiographies, narrative portraits constructed around a model of holiness or sainthood. The most important of these hagiographies are two extensive monographic biographies in Persian, devoted exclusively to Ruzbihan, his life and writings and his descendants. Both writings were written by family members nearly a century after his death.

Shaaf al-Din Ibrahim wrote the first of these hagiographies under the title *Tuhfat ahl al-'irfan ji dhikr sayyid al-aqtab Ruzbihan* 9The Gift in the People of Gnosis, in Memory of the Chief Axis of the World Ruzbihan) in 700/1300, while his brothers Shams al-Din 'Abd al-Latif compiled *Ruh al-jinan fi sirat al-shaikh Ruzbihan* (The Spirit of the Gardens, on the Life of the Master Ruzbihan) five years later in 705/1305. Of secondary importance is *Shadd al-izar fi hatta l-awzar an zawwar al-mazar* (Girding One's Loins to Lighten the Burden from Pilgrims to Shrines), a hagiography in Arabic intended for the use of pilgrims to the tombs of the saints of Shiraz. Written late in the eighth/fourteenth century by Mu'in al-Din abu al-Qasim Junayd (d. 791/1389), it was

organised into even sections giving guided walking tours of the tombs of Shiraz, so that one might encompass them all in a week.

This was then translated into Persian by the author's son Isa ibn Junayd under the title *Multamas al-ahibba khalis min al-riya* (The Request of Friends Free of Hypocrisy), but it is generally known under the title *Hazratt mazar* (A Thousand Tombs). This lengthy compendium devotes a few pages to Ruzbihan and his descendants and it puts them into the context of a highly formalised cult of the saints. Later biographical works devoted to Sufis and poets draw entirely upon these early sources for their information about Ruzbihan.

Ruzbihan's own descendants constituted in effect a Sufi path (*tariqa*) or 'order,' meaning a teaching lineage based on a spiritual method or practice, combined with the social and institutional supports that were gradually making Sufism a highly visible phenomenon during the sixth/twelfth and seventh/thirteenth centuries. The construction of initiatic genealogist was a device meant to ensure continuous transmission of esoteric teaching from the Prophet Muhammad through an unbroken chain of masters and disciples.

Ruzbihan's biographers furnished him with such a genealogy; although Corbin regards this as 'established with certainty,' we will have reason to question the value of this genealogy for Ruzbihan's own concept of sainthood. Likewise, the descendants of Ruzbihan were physical embodiments of the Ruzbihaniyya for several generations. This family Sufi order seems to have ended in the fourth generation after Ruzbihan, with his great-great grandson Sadr al-Din ibn Sharaf al-Din Ibrahim Ruzbihan III.

Massignon discovered a document written by the late scholar and polymath Sayyid Murtada Zabidi (d.1205/1791) in which a much longer extension of the Ruzbihaniyya order is described, reaching up to the author's own day. This is the chain of transmission:

1. Ruzbihan Baqli
2. Sadr al-Din Ruzbihan II (grandson of Ruzbihan) (d. 685/1286)
3. 'Abd al-Wadud Khaluwi Farid al-Din
4. 'Abd al-Qadir Tawusi
5. Ghiyath al-Din Kazaruni
6. Nur al-Din Abu al-Futuh Ahmad Tawusi. (d. 871/1466-7)
7. Ahmad ibn Muhammad Nahrawali (d. 949/1542-3)
8. Qutb al-Din Muhammad Nahrawali (d. 990/1582)
9. Ahmad Baba Sudani of Timbuctu (d. 1032/1624)
10. 'Abd al-Qadir Ghassani Fasi (d. 1032/1624)
11. 'Abd al-Qadir Fihri Fasi (d. 1091/1680)
12. Muhammad Saghir (d. 1134/1721-2)
13. Muhammad ibn 'Ayyub Tilimsani
14. Murtada Zabidi (d. 1205/1791)

The geographical spread of this transmission is remarkably extensive; nos. 6, 7 and 8 lived in India and Arabia and the remainder up to Zabidi are from North Africa (Timbuctu, Fez, Tlemcen). Not too much weight should be placed on this chain as evidence of a functioning Sufi order, however. The first few steps seem shaky, as Sadr al-Din Ruzbihan II is made to transmit from his grandfather, who died when he was at most three years old.

It may be, too, that this represents no more than the transmission of a single *dhikr* chant rather than full-fledged Sufi teaching. Zabidi was known to be something of a collector of such affiliations in all the religious sciences and he boasted of having studied with over 300 teachers of all sorts.

Those figures from this lineage for whom biographies are available are known primarily as members of a particular *hadith* transmission who also participated in Sufi lineages, but the Ruzbihaniyya was evidentially not visible enough to receive mention in their biographies alongside functional institutional orders like the Suhrawardiyya and the Naqshbandiyya. Still, it is possible that some aspect of his teaching was kept alive in this fashion, although Godlas has found indications of mistakes in identification in this lineage.

What is perhaps, of greater significance is the likelihood that Ruzbihan's Sufism served as a source for the great Persian poet of Shiraz Hafiz (d. 791/1389). Corbin has traced out the contours of a relationship between Ruzbihan and Hafiz, beginning with the anonymous commentary on Ruzbihan's *The Jasmine of the Lovers* that uses a number of verses by Hafiz to explain the subtleties of Ruzbihan's doctrine of love. More explicitly the Turkish commentator Sudi (d. 1591) has quoted an unidentified biography of Hafiz that describes him as a member of a branch of the Ruzbihaniyya order. The sequence is Ruzbihan Baqli, Fakhr al-Din Ahmad ibn Ruzbihan, Abd al-Salam, Muhamud (or Muhammad) 'Attar 'Pir-i Gul-ang' ('the rose-coloured master'), Hafiz. Corbin argues that it is precisely the adoration of beauty and the religion of love that forms the common thread between Ruzbihan and Hafiz.

In Ruzbihan's mystical theology, theophanies of beauty require embodiment in forms and symbols that are intelligible to those initiated into the esthetic vision and this is arguably one of the primary lines of interpretation of the ambiguous verses of Hafiz. Corbin also finds a link between the shaikh and the poet in the concept of self-blame (*malama*), a form of early Sufi piety that required perfect obedience to the law in private and outrageous behaviour designed to incur censure in public. Although some have expressed caution about accepting the connection between Ruzbihan and Hafiz, it remains an intriguing juxtaposition of these two outstanding writers from Shiraz.

The writings of Ruzbihan had a particularly wide circulation among a select group of readers in Iran, India, Central Asia, Ottoman Turkey and Africa. Without pretending to be exhaustive, we can list a number of these readers simply to give an idea of the circulation of his writings (see also the manuscripts of Ruzbihan's works listed in Appendix A). All these later figures testified to the difficulty of Ruzbihan's style, which at times is admittedly convoluted and obscure.

Jami of Herat (d. 898/1492) remarked that "he has sayings that have poured forth from him in the state of overpowering and ecstasy, which not everyone can understand." The Mughal prince Dara Shikoh (d. 1069/1659) found his style 'fatiguing.' Nonetheless, Ruzbihan's reputation was widely known, particularly in South Asia.

In eighth/fourteenth-century India, Sufis of the Chishti order knew Ruzbihan as an advocate of listening to music. His *Qur'an* commentary, *The Brides of Explanation*, was imitated by

Ashraf Jahangir Simnani (d. 829/1425) a member of the Chishti order who also commented on Ruzbihan's *The Jasmine of the Lovers*. Another Sufi of Shiraz, Shah Da'i (d. 870/1465–6), composed several poems in praise of Ruzbihan. In pre-Safavid Iran the philosopher Jalal al-Din Davani (d. 908/1502–3) quoted with approval *the Jasmine of the Lovers*, calling Ruzbihan "the emperor of the people of love and gnosis." An Anatolian Naqshbandi Sufi named 'Abd Allah Ilahi Simabi (d. 892/1487), who had visited Jami in Herat, wrote a commentary on Ruzbihan's *The Treatise on Holiness*.

Another Naqshbandi, Khwajagi Ahmad Kashani (d. 949/1542), was interested in Ruzbihan's visions of God in the form of a beautiful Turk. The Chishti scholar Shaikh 'Aziz Allah (d. 975/1567–68), who used to attend musical sessions at the tomb of Nizam al-Din Awliya' in Delhi, taught his students *The Brides of Explanation* along with other Sufi classics. Ruzbihan's metaphysical views are quoted in a work on political philosophy written 984/1576, dedicated to Raja 'Ali Khan Faruqi, ruler of the small Deccan kingdom of Khandesh. Ruzbihan's *Qur'an* commentary inspired a commentary on the 'light verse' of the *Qur'an* written by the Indian Qadiri Sufi scholar 'Abd al-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawi (d. 1052/1642).

In 1047/1637–8, the Mughal prince Dara Shikoh commissioned a Persian translation of Ruzbihan's *Qur'an* commentary from Badr al-Din Sirhindi, a biographer of the Naqshbandi master Ahmad Sirhindi and at least a fourth of the whole commentary was completed. Dara himself also wrote a summary and extension of Ruzbihan's *Commentary on Ecstatic Sayings*. Writhing the last century, the great Chishti

master of the Punjab, Khwaja Ghulam Farid, lectured to his disciples on difficult passages from Ruzbihan's *Qur'an* commentary.

The impact of Ruzbihan on North and West Africa remains to be elucidated, but Alan Godlas has found materials indicating that major excerpts from Ruzbihan's *Qur'an* commentary are quoted in Sufi writings from those regions, up through the nineteenth century. It is also worth noting as evidence of Ruzbihan's importance in Iran the recent work of Dr. Javad Nurbakhsh, head of the Ni'matullahi Sufi order, who has edited a number of important works by Ruzbihan and continues to cite them in this own writings on Sufism.

Unveiling and Clothing: The Fundamental Metaphor of Mystical Experience: Throughout the writings of Ruzbihan and particularly in *The Unveiling of Secrets*, the metaphor of unveiling and clothing runs as a continuous theme. Unveiling, as mentioned above, is a kind of transcendental perception of the divine nature, which by its name still retains the sense of someone ripping off a veil. In a society where veils are associated with the veiling of women, the action of unveiling has the connotation of breaking the barrier of seclusion, of sudden admittance to intimacy. Likewise, clothing has many associations of a ceremonial and ritual kind, some of which relate to the investiture ceremonies of the caliphal court and the parallel use of initiatic robes in Sufism.

For Ruzbihan, these social connotations are also symbolic of the dynamics of the divine human relationship. Knowledge of God is a process of unveiling in which the veils of created nature are successively ripped away until, in theory at least, the divine Essence stands revealed. Yet, divine manifestation takes place through visual theophanies of the

Attributes and Actions and when God bestows these qualities on a human being, this manifestation bestows on humanity a clothing with divinity (*illibas*). These two movements of unveiling and clothing create a paradox, however, because any form of manifestation, no matter how exalted, places a barrier between God and humanity; every manifestation is inevitably a veil.

From Ruzbihan's other writings, particularly the *Commentary on Ecstatic Sayings*, it is clear that veiling is not merely an obstacle to vision, but is a symbolism revealing creation as a theophany. Returning to the term 'clothing with divinity' (*illibas*), we find that Ruzbihan links it to two Prophetic sayings that refer to 'form' (*surat*) as the link between God and humanity. First is the well-known saying (recalling Genesis 1:27), "God created Adam in his own form."

This asserts that the qualities of God have been made part of human nature at the time of creation (*khalq*). The other *hadith* relates a visionary experience of Muhammad, which he recalls saying, 'I saw my Lord in the most beautiful of forms.' Connecting the vision of God's form to the moment of creation the goal of the Sufi's meditation, in order to follow the injunction of another *hadith*, 'take on the qualities of God.' 'Clothing with divinity' thus means theophany both as the divine mode of creation and as the revelation of beauty of visionary form to the gnostic.

The phenomenology of veiling and unveiling is so important a subject that Ruzbihan has elsewhere devoted an entire treatise to it, the *Commentary on Veils and Coverings*. That text takes the form of a commentary on the Prophetic saying on the 70,000 veils (*hujub*, *astar*) that separate God

from creation. Here I would like to examine this pervasive symbolism in *The Unveiling of Secrets*, contrasting unveiling as transcendence with 'clothing with divinity' as manifestation. When seen together, these two terms help explain Ruzbihan's visionary encounters with God as an endless game of hide and seek. A typical example of the dialectic between veiling and clothing with divinity is the following passage:

"The wonders of unity appeared to me, but the effects of the world of Actions remained with me. I said, 'My God, let me reach you with the quality of isolating unity.' Then the world of creation appeared to me as the moon of fourteen days, when it rises like a full moon from the mountain peak, or like the sparks of smokeless flame. God made me enter that world. I shed the skin of external accidents, but I could not get completely rid of them, for that station is the station of sanctity, transcendence and annihilation. He explained to me there the realities of reality and my conscience was burned. It was said to me, 'This is the world of unicity,' and what I read in my book was, 'There is nothing like him' (*Quran* 42:11).

Here, Ruzbihan begins with a revelation that is still linked to the manifestation of divine Attributes, so that he asks God to let him approach through the isolation (*tajrid*) of unity (*tawhid*), that is, through unity stripped bare of any multiple aspect. God shows him a vision of creation trans-figured into the world of unicity (*wahdaniyya*) and Ruzbihan attempts to transcend his limitations by shedding his creaturely qualities as a snake sheds its skin. His effort fails, however and when God explains reality to him he is consumed. This all constitutes a visionary commentary on a famous *Qur'anic* text on God's incomparable transcendent nature. In this example, the actual

metaphor of unveiling is barely alluded to in the image of a snake shedding its skin, reinforced by the image of burning away impurities. Still, the problem of transcending created qualities is ambiguously juxtaposed with the manifestation of divine qualities.

Ruzbihan reflects more generally on the problem of representing the divine transcendence in an extended vision that also comments on a *Qur'anic* text on God's uniqueness:

"I saw him after midnight as though he appeared in a thousand kinds of beauty, among which I saw a glory of lofty likeness, "and he has the loftiest likeness [in the heavens and the earth,] and he is the mighty, the commanding" (*Qur'an* 30:27).

"It was as though it were like the glory of the red rose and this is a likeness. But God forbid that he have a likeness- 'There is no likeness unto him" (*Qur'an* 42:11).

Yet I cannot describe except by an expression and this description is from the perspective of my weakness and incapacity and my lack of comprehension of the qualities of eternity. In the river bed of pre-eternity there are deserts and wastelands in which dwell the snakes of wrath. If one of them opened its mouth, none of creation or temporality would escape. Beware of one who describes the pre-eternal dominator, for in the oceans of his unicity all spirits and consciences are drowned and they vanish in the sublimities of his greatness and might.

Ruzbihan struggles to conceptualise his overwhelming vision of the divine beauty in the theophany of the red rose. Although there are scriptural supports for conceiving God through a likeness, they are opposed to another trend that powerfully insists on the incomparability of the divine nature. Ruzbihan

confesses that this is the fundamental problem of the inadequacy of symbolism, but to convey this he ironically resorts to more dramatic symbols of divine wrath (snakes, oceans) to indicate how likenesses are consumed in infinity.

The oscillation between divine manifestation and concealment is vividly conveyed in a dramatic passage from the diary that recounts in nuanced detail the experiences of the Sufi's questing soul, portrayed as a bird in flight, as it ascends but is thwarted by its own limitations.

"I saw God from one of the windows of the angelic realm in a form that would have melted all creation from sweetness and pleasure. He spoke to me and was kind to me repeatedly. I remained thus until the time of the call to prayer. The doors of the hidden opened and my bird flew away in the form of thought and temporality, seeking the beauty of the merciful, who is exalted and sanctified. But it was not able to traverse existence, because it reached the crossing point of temporality by knowledge, not by witnessing and beyond that it saw nothing but blindness and imagination. It did not perceive anything of the lights of sanctity and it suffered, returned and hesitated for a long time. God manifested in the form of beauty and he put me in his vision with perfect longing for his nearness and union. Then he hid and I was idle. He manifested in the form of majesty and made me bewildered and passionate with his countenance. Then he abandoned me and hid and the sweetness of witnessing him remained in my heart. The scents of the breezes of holiness dried up in the station of intimacy and the light of awe filled my heart, as though God were next to me in the form of greatness, suddenly. My thoughts and heart were confused and my spirit flew and my intellect fled and my secrets cooled off and my ecstatic moment was joyful. He displayed to me the light of his glory".

What is striking about this account is the sense of movement and encounter, a back and forth between the soul and God that is never resolved. The ascent of the soul is blocked, God manifests and hides, but there is no finality; this alternation between manifesting and hiding occurs in dozens of passages. The problem is insoluble through knowledge, for that leads only to blindness and unknowing; for Ruzbihan, only mystical modes of experience such as witnessing serve as a medium for encountering God.

At times, Ruzbihan was frustrated with the limitations of vision and demanded that God take him beyond to the divine Essence.

"I saw God in the form of majesty and beauty, force and greatness; I saw by intimations of clothing with divinity and I said, "My God, my friend and my lord, how long will you make me see the chosen vision within the limits of clothing with divinity. Show me pure eternity and subsistence!" And he said, "Moses and Jesus perish in this station." And God revealed himself in an atom of the light of his eternal essence and my spirit nearly vanished. Because of that I feared death and the end of my life in that interval, in my condition at that hour".

Even a hint of the revelation of the Essence is almost enough to destroy the visionary. Yet, he must continue to ask for vision and more than vision, like a beggar.

"God unveiled to me the veils of greatness and I saw beyond the veils a majesty, force, power and might and oceans and lights, which are impossible to show to creation. I was at the door of greatness like a bewildered beggar. He spoke to me from the pavilions of greatness, saying, "Beggar! How did you beg here?"

I felt expansive toward him and said:

"My God, my friend and my lord! From your favour, generosity and munificence".

The tension between absolute transcendence and the necessity of manifestation is never abolished. Ruzbihan insists on both and it is the movement between the two that creates the dynamism of his experience.

In order to express the transcendence of God, Ruzbihan occasionally resorts to conventional theological language, particular the formula 'without [asking] how' (*bi-la kayf*); pietist groups such as the Hanbalis and Ash'aris used this phrase to insist on the literal truth of seemingly anthropomorphic scriptural passages without engaging in intellectual speculation about their modality:

"He transcends change in his singleness and cannot be encompassed by his creation. I was watching God, awaiting the unveiling of Attributes and the lights of the Essence and God manifested his eternal face 'without how' to my heart; it was as though I was looking at him with the external eye and the hidden world shone from the appearance of his glory. Then he appeared and hid, repeatedly."

For Ruzbihan this phrase 'without how' indicates more than an abstract fideist creed; it describes a vision that cannot be described. In another example, we see Ruzbihan rejecting the forms that appear to his eyes, seeking a transcendental vision, but despite this God manifests to him in a human likeness.

"Whenever wonders of the hidden appeared to me as shapes, I rejected them, until I saw God 'without how,' with the quality of majesty and beauty...."

Then I was astonished in the primordially of God and I saw him in the most beautiful of forms. I thought in my heart:

"How did you fall from the world of unity to the station of symbols?"

He came near and took my prayer carpet, saying,

"Stand! What are these thoughts? You doubt me, so I made a likeness of my beauty in your eye, so you would be familiar with me and love me."

"There were lights of majesty and beauty upon him the number of which I could not count. Then I saw him at every moment in the beauty of another [form]".

Although the manifestation of God in form is in tension with his transcendence, both modes are inherent in the divine nature as seen from the human perspective.

When Ruzbihan meditates on divine transcendence, he sometimes appears almost to be trying to convince himself that visions are really not to be relied upon. He asserts standard formulas about how God is above all created things neither similar to creation through anthropomorphism (*tashbih*), nor cut off from it by abstraction (*ta'til*). But suddenly, he is taken off guard by a divine manifestation and God appears to him in a beautiful form.

"God transcends space and time. I said to myself, 'If anything like these existents and temporality existed now as [real] existence, then the like of that would exist forever, above and below, to the right and left before and behind. This is God, who transcends all of that [creation] and [any] incarnation in it. How will one seek God and who will see him, if God does not want to manifest his essence to him? He subsists in his essence in pre-eternity and post-eternity.' I was astonished by seeking and when I saw him in the form of majesty and beauty in my house 'in the most beautiful of forms,' I was ravished, in love and in

longing and my love and affection increased. In my ecstasy and spiritual state my heart did not remember the story of anthropomorphism and abstraction, for in seeing him, the traces of intellects and sciences are erased".

Ruzbihan occasionally uses a rhetorical device of doubling his terms to indicate divine transcendence. In this way, he can apply a defined descriptive term to God, but at the same time he indicates that God is beyond the limitations of the term:

"That is the state of the nearness of nearness, the proximity of proximity, the union of union. That remained until he annihilated everything except for him from my thought and my conscience. I remained in that, in the essence of the essence and the reality of reality."

This rhetorical doubling of terms signifies the transcendence of the limitations of the term while preserving its modality.

Ruzbihan does defend the legitimacy of visions, however. After recounting a vision in which the angels and the prophets weep at hearing Ruzbihan's words and God murmurs his approval, he addresses his reader as follows:

"My son, whoever has suspicions about these unveilings does so with the suspicion of anthropomorphism; he will not attain union nor achieve results, though he scent the fragrances of sanctity and intimacy. These are the experiences of the holy, the intentions of the sublime and the stations of the transcendentals among the perfect ones. The people of religion recognise that they are lordly commands, appearances of the lights of eternity and qualities of the Attributes by means of the Actions".

Visions are not the results of an anthropomorphic theory, but the products of divine favour. Those who reduce unveilings to

the status of abstract doctrine are, in Ruzbihan's view, incapable of experiencing them.

Visionary experience is not, however, just any kind of bizarre internal occurrence. Ruzbihan displays a keen sense of differentiating kinds of internal experience that are to be rejected because their source can be traced to lower psychological faculties. This discrimination still leads him to a positive evaluation of visions and likenesses of God, since knowing God as manifest through these veils is necessary before one can know God as hidden:

"One night, I was confronted with psychic imaginations, trivial imaginations and spiritual imaginations. I tore their veils and saw their graces and I thought about some of their shapes, from the sight of which my heart fled. My breast was constricted by the vision of some of them and I was astonished at my [low] degree, until the beauty of God appeared to me suddenly and there was such loveliness and beauty that I cannot describe it".

I said:

"My God! What are these likeness in which I have been veiled before witnessing."

He said:

"This is for one who seeks me in the first unveilings of my majesty, until he knows me through these veils and this is the station of gnosis; one who does know me through them is not [true] knower of me. This is the station of striving of the people of witnessing. Then he made me enter the veils of the hidden and showed me his attributes with most of the clothing of majesty and beauty. Then he hid and I based myself before him, because I found the sweetness of union and the pleasure of longing for beauty".

Once agains, veiling is inseparable from divine manifestation, as transcendence is inseparable from the hidden.

The appearance of God in visionary forms extended even to Ruzbihan's experience of other people and indeed of the whole world. In a characteristic meditation invoking the romance of Joseph and Zlaykha (as told in sura 12 of the *Qur'an*), Ruzbihan is immersed in a theophany of divine beauty.

"Then his beauty appeared to me in different kinds of people, all being kind to me due to my subsistence after annihilation in the qualities of pre-eternity. He wined me with the wine of intimacy and nearness. Then he left and I saw him as the mirror of creation wherever I faced and that was his saying: 'Where- soever you turn, there is the face of God' (2:109).

Then he spoke to me after increasing my longing for him and that was after I had a thought and said to myself:

"I want to see his beauty without interruption." He said, 'Remember the condition of Zulaykha and Joseph, for Zulaykha depicted her form to Joseph in all six directions, so that Joseph did not see in any direction without seeing her form there. This is your condition in the abode of my majesty.' I saw God from every atom, though he transcends incarnation and anthropomorphism. But he is a secret known only to those drowned in the oceans of unity and to the knower of the secret of the actions of eternity in the station of passionate love".

When Ruzbihan warns the reader against interpreting this vision in terms of the heresies of incarnation and anthropomorphism, he indicates that this is instead a vision of divine beauty that inspires love.

Within the overall context of unveiling and clothing with divinity, Ruzbihan interprets mystical experience as exclusively a product of divine grace. No amount of theorising about divine Attributes or operations can bring about vision.

"This is a spiritual state and its secret is not made possible by the articulation of these lordly secrets, the production of the Attribute, the appearance of graces, sufficing mercy, or restful blessing. He arouses affection in his servants who are gnostics and lovers and were it not for his favour, how would they comprehend the lights of the sublimities of his face, from keeping company with the accidents of temporality? If he appeared with the perfection of his power, all of creation would be consumed. Do not be concerned, my friend; the like of these unveilings have descended upon most prophets and the sincere ones, but they have not reported it except by the utterance of 'clothing with divinity.' He transcends anyone conceiving his Essence and Attributes by the attributes of individuals.

The reports about God from prophets and saints are not deceptive, because they are based on genuine unveiling, transmitted again through the forms of prophetic and saintly reports that are theophanic 'clothings with divinity' though these reports are admittedly limited and will not by themselves recreate the unveiling for anyone.

So markedly did unveiling dominate Ruzbihan's inner life that he evidently abandoned at a fairly early stage in his life the specific meditative exercises that the Sufis call 'discipline' (*riyada*) and 'striving' (*mujahida*) and even the *dhikr* chanting or recollection of the names of God. In a highly unusual passage, he recalls having abandoned these practices for over twenty years, suggesting that this abrupt departure from standard Sufi exercises took place when Ruzbihan was thirty-five.

"I recalled the days of discipleship and the requirements of striving that overwhelmed me and their falling away from my heart for a space of twenty years. I remained without discipline or striving and the chants (*adhkar*)

of the masters and their many preceding disciplinary exercises fell away from my heart, as though I did not approve of them in the court of gnosis. For gnosis with me makes use of grace and things besides them [i.e., besides discipline and striving], for that is the gnosis of the common people. But I rejected my thought in that and was concerned whenever a thought occurred to my heart. A visitation of the hidden befell me and God was unveiled to me twice. The first time was in the form of beauty and the second time in the form of greatness. I looked at the beauty and the second time in the form of greatness. I looked at the beauty of his face with the eye of the heart and he said to me, 'How can they reach me by striving and disciplines, if my noble face remains veiled to them? These are the elite among my lovers and the near ones among the gnostics; there is no way to me except through me and by the unveiling of my beauty.'

After the ecstasies, the spiritual states and the visitation, I returned to the creed of unity and the election of his favour through what he wishes, to whom he wishes, as he wishes:

"Grace is in the hands of God, he gives it to whom he wills" (57:29).

And the sweetness of that remained until I slept.

Even as Ruzbihan recalled his unusual departure from Sufi practice, he found this thought to be a distraction from his quest from vision and indeed in the subsequent experience God spoke directly to the problem of grace in relation to effort and discipline. The answer is unambiguous: grace, as experienced through the ensemble of mystical experience, is the only avenue to the fullest experience of God.

Theophanies of Majesty: The manifestations of the divine Attributes are divided into two basic categories, majesty (*jalal*) and

beauty (*jamal*). This standard Islamic division of divine aspects can also be described in terms of wrath (*qahr*) and grace (*lutf*). Though dualistic in appearance, this is a way of polarity. This classification of divine attributes into majesty and beauty is well known among Sufis and was probably developed initially in Sufi circles because of the experimental results of meditating on the divine names. Hujwiri links majesty with the experience of awe (*haybat*) and beauty with the experience of intimacy (*uns*). He states that

“those whose witness in gnosis is the beauty of God continually long for vision (*ru'yat*), while those whose witness is the majesty of God continually reject their own qualities and their hearts are in the state of awe.”

Beginning with the theophanies of majesty, I include under this heading several kinds of unveilings; all the visions having to do with authority, including the initiatic visions revealing the status of Ruzbihan; vision that describes the relationship between saints and prophets as spiritual authorities; and pure theophanies of divine power.

It may seem odd at first glance to devote so much time to visions about the status of Ruzbihan and other saints since they apparently concern human beings rather than the divine Attributes of majesty. After all, the witnessing of the attributes of majesty is supposed to engender an abhorrence of flawed human characteristics. In placing Ruzbihan's initiatic visions under the heading of theophanies of majesty, I suggest that the key to his rhetoric of sainthood rests on experiences that take on the divine qualities of authority. Far from being fanciful products of cosmically inflated egotism, these visions partake of the awe inspiring majesty of God's own authority.

Sufi tradition has incorporated into its earliest dialogical pronouncements the rhetorical feature of the pre-Islamic Arabs' boasting contest (*mufakhara*). Statements regarding one's spiritual authority partook of the ritual form of the boasting contest, even as they served as evidence of one's spiritual state.

This well-established interpretive principle was basic to the understanding of ecstatic utterances in general, as when Hillaj's dictum 'I am the Real (the Truth, God)' was understood as evidence of the annihilation of his ego. For Ruzbihan's visionary mode of experience, there can be no knowledge of the transcendent divine Essence without vision; consequently, there can be no knowledge of God without visionaries. His is a mystical universe; it should not be surprising that mystics play the most crucial role within it. As with Ibn 'Arabi,

Theophanies of Beauty: The manifestations of divine power, wrath, might and greatness would be incomplete without the theophanies of divine beauty and the concomitant qualities of grace, kindness and generosity. God's beauty appears to Ruzbihan above all in visual forms of lush and intense richness, with showers of roses and pearls providing a suitable side effect. God appears, moreover, in beautiful human forms of prophets like Adam and Joseph, as well as more obscure individuals. Given, he predominant anti-anthropomorphic emphasis of Islamic theology, it is at first sight surprising that Ruzbihan can include such visions within the limits of what is acceptable.

Ruzbihan takes us to visionary landscape of endless mountains, deserts and oceans, to meet angels who embody at once feminine beauty and the warlike qualities of Turkish soldiers. The visual manifestation of God in these forms of beauty underlies the continuity between human and divine love.

"The red rose is of the glory of God".

The rose has been a symbol of great importance in the Persian literary tradition for centuries, so much so that the primordial tale of the nightingale's hopeless love for the one has been turned into a cliché, by countless second-rate poets. I have argued elsewhere that the most powerful source for understanding metaphors like the rose or the bird in this tradition lies in the writings of Sufis like Ruzbihan. The experiential directness of the metaphor is still fresh, not yet the hackneyed convention it would later become.

"In the middle of last night, after sitting on the carpet of devotion in search of the manifestation of hidden brides, when my conscience soared in the regions of the angelic realm, I saw the majesty of God in the station of clothing with divinity, in the shape of loveliness, repeatedly. It did not satisfy my heart, until from it came a revelation of the perpetual majesty that consumes the consciousness and thoughts. I saw a face vaster than all of heaven and earth and the throne and the footstool, scattering the lights of glory and it transcended analogue and similitudes. I saw his glory with the colour of the red rose, but it was world upon world, as if he were scattering red roses and I saw no limit to it. My heart remembered the saying of the Prophet, "The red rose is of the glory of God". And that was the extent of my heart's comprehension".

The connection between the divine beauty and the beauty of the rose as an emblem of creation, is unmistakeable. This is couched as a visionary commentary on a Prophetic saying, which in his *Qur'an* commentary Ruzbihan related via the early Sufi al-Wasiti (d. 320/932). The many visions of God surrounded by roses, red or white, underline the celestial significance of the rose. Outpourings of divine grace are

experienced as showers of roses, as we see in this vision of an epiphany in Shiraz.

"I saw myself as if I were on the roof of my *ribat* in Shiraz. I looked up and saw God in our market in the form of majesty and beauty. By God, if the throne saw him in that form, it would melt from the pleasure of his beauty. I entered the oceans of ecstasy, spiritual states and gladdening visitations weighed with longing, love and passion. Then I saw myself sitting on the patio of the *rib* and God came in that form with even more of his beauty and with him were how many red and white roses! He cast them in front of me and I was in the station of intimacy and happiness and the spirit was in a place such that I melted. When the beauties of his attributes and admirable qualities were unveiled to me, then he hid from me".

As a variation on this theophany of beauty, God sometimes appears showering pearls, or even 'white roses with pearl brocade'. Pearls, like roses, have an ancient history as a symbol of divine qualities, in this case a beauty that is rendered more precious by its inaccessibility in shells under the ocean. Then I saw above me an atmosphere of white light, from which came showers of white pearls. That is from God's beauty and he was scattering them on me. It is beyond expression, nor can intellects comprehend it. Prophets like Adam and Muhammad partake of the divine beauty and are themselves dressed in clothes of white pearl.

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EB

Basri, Hazrat Rabia al-Adwiyya (A.H. 90–185)

Hazrat Bibi Rabia Basri is the greatest woman saint and mystic and is one of the three top ranking alandars in the world. The other two qalandares are Hazrat Lal Sahabia Qalandar of Sehwan and Hazrat Bu-Ali sharfuddin Qalandar of Panipat. Hazrat Bibi Rabia was born in 90 A.H. in a family of small means in Basra and had lived during the period of Hazrat Hassan Basri, another God-fearing and pious mystic and saint of Islam. Bibi Rabia Basri is remembered to this day as one of the greatest saints of the 8th century and is remembered with devotion and affection for her faith, piety and patience. From her childhood Hazrat Bibi Rabia Basri lived a quiet and secluded life.

She had a contemplative temperament. Her father was a very pious man and always objected to his daughter's quiet and sober, nature. As she grew older, she became more beautiful as well as more serene and spent most of her time in prayers, mystical devotional exercises and spiritual meditation.

Ordeal: She lost her father and was taken away by a band of robbers who sold her in the slave market. There was chaos and poverty in Basra and usually children were sold and Bibi Rabia Basri became a victim of this prevailing practice and was sold to a rich trader whom she served devotedly and obediently, while at the same time spent her spare time in prayers. This trader after some time sold her to another trader at a nominal amount.

During the period of her service, she attended to her duties to her master and continued praying devotedly. One day, it happened that while Bibi Rabia Basri was praying to God in the following words, her master overheard it:

"Oh my God I am an orphan, am in trouble and am being kept as a slave and am treated without mercy and human feelings, but in spite of these hardships I remember you, pray to you and look upto you for your acceptance of my prayers, your favour and mercy".

Prayers: This great woman saint of Islam, in spite of facing trials and tribulations continued her prayers and devotion to her God. The trader took pity on Hazrat Rabia Basri and freed her.

After becoming free from slavery and bondage, Bibi Rabia Basri as usual led a quiet and secluded life spending her time in prayers and reading and learning religious sciences. Imam Sufian Suri, Imam Malik Bin Dinar and

Shaikh Abdul Wahid Bin Zaid were her contemporaries: but she exceeded all of them in religious knowledge and prayers.

She had never married in her life and was asked for marriage by Muhammad Bin Sulayman, the Abbasid Amir of Basa, but she declined. It is stated that a number of saints approached her to get married to whom she replied that if someone could give answers to the following questions, she would marry that person:

1. Will I die in faith and what will my Creator say about me on my death?
2. When my body has been placed in the grave after my death, will I be, in a position to answer correctly the questions asked by Munkar and Nakir?
3. On the day of Resurrection in which hand will my record of life e.g., thoughts, intentions, deeds will be handed.
4. On the day of judgement will I be sent to heaven or hell.

“I am constantly involved in solving these mysteries and seek therefore an answer to my above queries.”

When Hazrat Rabia Basri enquired who was the most learned and pious, man, she was told it was Hazrat Hassan Basri. When these questions were put to him, his reply was that the answers can only be given by God Almighty who is in the know of all and everything that was, is and will be. Hazrat Rabia Basri now went on pilgrimage and while standing before the Holy Kaabah, she prayed:

“What am I to do with Kaabah. I am concerned with you as you are within the Kaabah and outside the Kaabah and all pervading.”

The great woman mystic, saint and Qalandar of Islam has conquered her self (*Nafs*) through devotion, meditation, contemplation patience (*Sabr*) and fear of God and trust in God, (*Tawakal*). Hazrat Rabia Basri constantly and all the time was absorbed in the thought of God and had reached the pinnacle of mystic path i.e., *Fina-Fillah*. I quote some of the sayings of this great Muslim woman saint of the world from which one can visualise the depth of her belief, love and devotion for no one in the world except God:

1. The best thing for a servant who desires to be near his Lord, is to possess nothing in this world or the next save Him.
2. I have served my God only for the love of Him and out of desire for.
3. Oh Lord, if I worship Thee from fear of hell, burn me in hell and if I worship Thee from hope or paradise, exclude me thence: but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, then withhold not from me Thine Eternal beauty.
4. My peace is in solitude, but my beloved (God) is always with me. Nothing can take the place of His love and it is test for me amongst the mortal beings.
5. Oh Lord: The Stars are shining and the eyes of man are closed and kings have shut their doors and every lover is alone with his beloved and here am I alone with Thee.
6. What He (God) wills, we should also will.
7. Two ways I love Thee: selfishly and next, as worthy of Thee. This selfish

love that I do naught Save think of
Thee with every thought.

Now Hazrat Rabia Basri because old, sick and more sorrowful having spent all her life in one thought of her, God alone and she lived with only one object of being absorbed in the thought of God alone and the body now was giving way; and when she was asked if she needed medical attendance her reply was for my ailment there is no doctor or medicine, except God's acceptance of my prayers and devotion.

In 185 A.H. at the age of 86 passed away this great woman saint whose acts of devotion will always be remembered by man till the Day of Judgement. May her soul rest in Peace. Hazrat Bibi Rabia Basri always answered questions put to her by quoting *Quranic* verses.

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EB

Al-Bastami, Abu Yazid (d. 820)

Abu Yazid al-Bastami was born in Bastam in western Khurasan and was introduced to mysticism by an Indian convert to Islam, Abu 'Ali al-Sindi, who taught al-Bastami the doctrine of 'extinction in unity' (*al-fana' fi'l-tauhid*). Much more than any other *Sufi* mentioned heretofore, al-Bastami subjected himself to the most rigorous austerities so that, as he himself put it, he might be completely stripped of his human condition and encounter God face-to-face.

Whatever the constructions that have been put upon them by later scholars, al-Bastami's 'extravagances' (*shatahat*) bear on the general mystical themes of ecstasy or union with God and imply a clear pre-supposition of self-deification. Thus, in one of those 'extravagant utterances' reported by a late *Sufi* author al-Bastami says:

"Once [God] lifted me up and placed me before Him and said to me: O, Abu Yazid, my creation desires to see thee. And I said: Adorn me with Thy unity and clothe me in Thine I-ness and raise me up unto Thy oneness, so that when Thy creatures see me they may say: We have seen Thee [i.e., God] and Thou art that. Yet I [Abu Yazid] will not be there."

In another utterance probably his best known, he exclaims:

"Glory be to me, how great is my worth."

But despite the unquestionable pantheistic implications of these utterances, the culmination of the mystical experience remains for him somewhat negative and hollow, since the Soul remains suspended, as it does in some form of Hindu mysticism (e.g., Patanjali) between the I and the Thou, the Self and the Absolute, which have both been annihilated. A statement ascribed to him speaks of the station of non-being (*laisiyah*) which he reached and continued to hover in for ten years until, he says:

"I could pass from the No (*lais*) to the No, through the No."

The Hindu influence on this type of mysticism has been shown by Zaehner to be unmistakable. There is a clear link to Vedantic metaphysics not only in the case of al-Bastami's Indian master, al-Sindi, who taught him some 'ultimate truths,' but also in the very complexion of his thought and its 'nihilistic' implications.

Al-Bastami lived at a time in which the revival and systematisation of Vedantic thought itself was being actively pursued by Shankara (d. 820) and his school. His ecstatic utterances, such as the already quoted 'Glory be to me' (*Subhani*) or 'I am Thou' or 'I am I,' all purport to assert his total self-identification with the divine and have numerous parallels in the *Upanishads* and the *Vedanta*. Perhaps the wildest of all his utterances is the one in which he speaks of his search for God:

"he could not find God and therefore took His place on the Throne. "I plunged into the ocean of *malakut* [the realm of Ideas] and the veils of divinity [*lahut*]," he writes, "until I reached the Throne and lo! it was empty; so I cast myself upon it and said: 'Master, where shall I seek Thee? and the veils were lifted up and I saw that I am I, yea I am I. I turned back into what I sought and it was I and no other, into which I was going."

How a Muslim could make such extravagant claims that placed him almost about God and yet go unscathed in the ninth century is truly surprising. However, a note made by later authors gives us the clue to this problem. When al-Bastami was accused of laxity in the performance of his ritual duties, we are told, he resorted to the expedient which other *Sufis* also employed: affected madness. This device apparently saved his life as well as the life of numerous fellow *Sufis*.

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EB

Bidjan Ahmed (15th Century)

Bidjan Ahmed, son of Salah al-Din 'al-Katib' (and hence known as Yazidji-oghlu Ahmed) and younger brother of the famous Yazidji-oghlu Mehmed, Turkish mystic writer and 'popular educator' who flourished in the middle of the 9th/15th century. The brothers, after studying under Hadjdji Bayram of Ankara, lived a retired life together at Gelibolu, Ahmed practising such austerities and becoming so emaciated that he was called—and calls himself in his books—'Bi-djan', i.e., 'the Lifeless'.

To judge from the date of the Muntaha, Ahmed must have lived until after 870/1465–6. He was buried beside his brother at Gelibolu, where their turbe was a popular resort of pilgrims (also records a tradition that Ahmed lived for some time at Sofia). His works are:

- (1) *Anwar al-'Ashikin* (H. Kh. [Flugel] no. 1411), a Turkish prose translation of his brother's Arabic Magharib al-Zaman (H. Kh. no. 12462), completed in Muhammad, 855/Feb. 1451: this book, a standard mystical work (contents described by Hammer in S.B. Ak. Wien, Phil. Hist. Kl., iii, 1129ff.) has enjoyed great popularity, 12 printed editions being recorded in Fehmi Karatay's Ist. Un. Kut. Turkece Basmalar, 1950.
- (2) *Durr-i Maknun* (H. Kh. no. 4873), a cosmographical work written to display

God's power and also based on the Magharib al-Zaman;

- (3) *'Adja'ib al-Makhlukat* (H. Kh. no. 8070), an abridgement of Kazwini's work (cf. Rieu, CTM, 106) made in 857/1453 (edition: Kazan, 1888). Numerous MSS of these three works exist.
- (4) Muntaha, a 'Summa' of faith and practice, with interpretations of Koranic texts, stories of the prophets, sayings of holy men, etc. (MS in Ist. Un. Lib. [Khalis Ef.], TY 3324), composed at Gelibolu in 870/1465–6 (of 2v).

All his books are written in a simple didactic style and a tone of humble and sincere piety. The still popular Ahmadiyya, sometimes attributed to Ahmed Bidjan, is in fact the work of Ahmed Murshidi.

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V.L. MENAGE

Bishr al-Hafi (767–841/42)

Bishar al-Hafi full name was Abu Nasr Bishr b. al-Harith b. Abd al-Rahman b. 'Ata' b. Hilal b. Mahan b. Abd-Allâh (originally Ba'bur) al-Hafi. He was a Sufi born in Bakird or in Mabarsam, a village near Marw (al-Shahidjan) in 150/767 (or 152/769), and died in Baghdad (some sources say that he died in Marw, but this seems unlikely) in 226/840 or 227/841–42. Little is known about his early age. He is said to have belonged to some young men's association, or a gang of robbers, whilst still in Marw. He has also been described as a

great friend of wine. Another tradition has it that he earned his living by making spindles. We do not know how this fits in, or to which period of his life it belongs.

It is a known fact, however, that like his maternal uncle 'Alī b. Khashram (165/781–258/872) he was a traditionalist. With the exception of 'Abd Allāh b. al-Mubarak (who came from Marw but travelled a great deal), his teachers lived in the Arabic-speaking regions; so Bishr is certain to have continued his *hadith* studies after he left his home, and it may be these very studies that induced him to go away.

He had already made a name for himself when he reached Baghdad from 'Abbadan for the first time, for a Baghdad traditionalist was anxious to meet him. Bishr is also said to have studied under Malik b. Anas (who died in 179/795) and to have gone with him on a pilgrimage to Mecca. For chronological reasons Abu Hanifa cannot possibly have been one of his teachers, as Hudjwiri and Attar assert.

It is also not clear how and when he became a Sufi. There is no mention anywhere of a novitiate, and two completely different events are mentioned as the reasons for his conversion. According to one version a certain Ishak al-Maghazili (who is, unfortunately, otherwise unknown to us) wrote a letter to him in which he asked him how he meant to earn his living if he lost his sight and his hearing and was no longer able to make spindles. According to the other version he picked up a piece of paper in the street (one report of this even says that he was drunk at the time) with the name of God on it; he perfumed it and kept it reverently, with the result that either Bishr himself, or someone else, had a dream promising the exaltation of Bishr's name. In each case, the result mentioned is Bishr's

conversion to a pious way of life. Quite apart from these contradictions, we do not know from this piety took—e.g. whether it include *hadith*—and we have no proof that these events actually were the beginning of his life as a Sufi.

From Bishr's sayings which have survived we merely see that at some point, at the latest in Baghdad, he did turn away from traditionalist studies, he buried his *hadith* writings and concentrated on Sufi devotions. Traditionalist studies, he says, do not equip one for death, they are merely a means to gain worldly pleasure, and they impair piety. He asked his former colleagues to impose a 'poor-rate' on the *hadith*, that is to say, to follow truly 21/2% of the pious verses which they had learnt and which they declaimed with such professorial self-complacency. He refrained from teaching *hadiths* for the very reason that he so greatly wished to teach them, and promised to return to them as soon as he had overcome his longing to teach them:

"Beware of the *haddathana*, for in the *haddathana* there is embedded a particular sweetness".

He admitted the science of *hadith* only in so far as it was pursued 'for the sake of God', and quoted *hadiths* only in conversation, where this would fit into the general framework of a training for a pious way of life. Still, as we do not know whether his earlier traditionalism might not have been practised with this same idea in mind all along, we ought perhaps not to speak of an actual breach with his past.

Bishr's Sufi piety is based upon the acceptance of the laws of Islam and the Sunni Caliphs, but he is also said to have held the family of the Prophet in loving veneration. He was greatly respected not only by 'Ahmad b. Hanbal, but also by Ma'mun (Mu'tazila, Shi'a).

The statement that he took Faith to mean a positive confession, a belief in its truth and man's acting according to it, as Hudjwiri puts it, is, when formulated in this way, hardly true, although it is justifiable with regard to his practice. The decisive factor for Bishr was the deed itself. As an absolute minimum in this respect, he demanded that man should at least not sin, and to accomplish this he advised contemplation of God's greatness—before which he himself trembled, despite his own ascetic life, up to the very point of death.

Before the choice between God or the world, he made his choice unreservedly in favour of God, and he despised all forms of worldly ambition and selfishness. He preached poverty, which was to be borne with patience and charity, and it is said of him that when one day he met a man suffering from cold, and could not help him in any other way, he unclothed himself to show his sympathy and to give an example: he died in a borrowed shirt because he had given his own away to a poor man.

He spoke against the avaricious, the very sight of whom 'hardens the heart'; and he advised a man about to start off on a pilgrimage to Mecca, to give his money instead to an orphan or to a poor man, for the joy caused thereby was worth a hundred times more than a pilgrimage. By saying this he hardly meant that the one pilgrimage to Mecca, which the law prescribes, could be replaced by some social act, as some other Sufis have taught, but must have referred to some additional pilgrimage.

Tawus b. Kaysan already (who died in 105/724) is said to have refrained from going on a pilgrimage because he chose to stay with a sick friend instead. And Bishr called pilgrimages the

holy war of women, but, unlike for instance Dja'far al-Sadik, he put the giving of alms above both pilgrimage and the holy war—because alms could be given in secret, without other people getting to know of it.

The very wish to have one's good deeds known by other people is, for Bishr, an example of worldly mindedness, and in this he sees an element capable of destroying even the good deeds of man. He condemned the wish to be well thought of by one's fellow men to the extent of advising one against mixing with them at all—even if only to give testimony and lead the prayers. Here his teachings come close to the Malamatiyya:

"Do not give anything merely in order to avoid the censure of others!; Hide your good deeds as well as your evil ones; He confesses that he himself still attaches a certain importance to the effect he makes on others, and to his appearance as a pious man, but he wages an unrelenting war against all this 'pretentiousness' (*tasannu*)—in himself as well as in others."

He only recognises those who wear patched cloaks (*murakka'at*) as sharers of his views, when one of them has told him of his resolution to live up to this symbol of dedication to God's service by an active furtherance of religion. He himself refrained, on one occasion, from accepting dates in the dark at the back of a shop, in order not to be different in secret from what he was generally considered to be. His abstemiousness (*wara*) went beyond mere abstention from dubious things by putting a limit to the unrestrained enjoyment of what was permitted: 'what is permitted', he says:

"does not tolerate immoderation (*israf*)".

Of everything he ate a little less than his conscience would have permitted, thereby

creating the 'Tabu-zone' which had already been recommended in the Jewish *Pirke Aboth*, and which was also observed by numerous other Islamic ascetics.

Destitute, he often lived on bread alone, and sometimes he was starving. Where the question of faith in God's providence (*tawakkul*) arose, he distinguished three types of the poor:

- (1) those who neither beg nor accept anything, yet receive everything they ask for of God;
- (2) those who do not beg but accept what they are given;
- (3) those who hold out for as long as they can, but do then beg, describing those who belong to the middle group as people trusting in the providence of God, however, another place, he characterises this confidence as being the resolution not to accept anything from any man; whilst in a third place *tawakkul* appears to be compatible with manual work provided the deed be done under the will of God.

But the explanation of that oracular definition *idtirab bila sukun wa sukan bila idtirab* does not seem to me to be beyond all doubt.

Admittedly, Bishr is said to have begged only from Sari al-Sakati, knowing that this man would rejoice in the loss of any worldly possessions; but some stories suggest that he lived largely on the earnings of his sister Mukhkha, who looked after him and lived by spinning. (Bishr had three sisters who are all said to have lived in Baghdad). The question of begging links up with the one concerning "giving and taking", which played a great part in Sufism, especially later on. In spite of taking

a great interest in the lot of the poor, Bishr did not—unlike Kazaruni for example—function as their spokesman and mediator, but rather withdrew into himself.

He refrains from admonishing princes, he does not even drink of the water for which a prince has dug the channel. As a consolation when the cost of living is high he advises contemplating death. He knows that there is no way of satisfying mankind, and regards his own time (on a well-known pattern) as particularly far removed from the ideal of contentment: 'Even though a cap should fall from heaven on to somebody's head, that man would not want it'; nor, like Muhasibi, does he have much to say in his days in favour of the readers of the Kur'ân: 'Rather a noble robber than a base-minded reader of the Kur'ân. He finds true piety restricted to the very few: 'In these days, there are more dead within than without the walls'. A Sufi is one who stands before his God with a pure (*sufi*) heart, and perfect is only he whom even his enemies no longer fear; but in Bishr's own days not even friends, he says, could trust each other.

The opposition which a pious man has to overcome lies in his inclinations (*shahawat*): only those who have erected an iron wall against these inclinations, says Bishr, can feel the sweetness of the service of God. He advises silence to those who derive pleasure from speaking, speech to those who enjoy being silent. He declines teaching *hadiths*, because he does not wish to give in to a desire to do so; he eats no aubergines in order to fight his craving for them, and no fruit in order not to satisfy the fruit's own longing. He does not, however, advocate the repression of sexual desire, and does not even object to a harem of 4 women—though he himself remained unmarried.

In spite of the fact that Bishr puts the deed before knowledge, he is considered both knowledgeable and intelligent. This does not refer to his theological knowledge, but also to his ability to experience and expound religious feelings and to his pious way of life. A wise man is not one who merely knows good and evil, but he who both the former and refrains from doing the latter. First to know, then to act, then really to know.

Ahmad b. Hanbal is said to have claimed for himself greater theological knowledge, but to have referred to Bishr for knowledge concerning the reality of things, the higher facts (*haka'ik*). Without question, though only a few dicta and some verses in the style of the *zuhdiyyat* have survived, Bishr played his part through his word in expanding the teaching of the mystical shaping of man in Islam. Some sayings of his, however, belong to an earlier tradition which he simply passes on—one of his frequently quoted Sufi teachers is Fudayl b. 'Iyad. The men learnt from him are recognisable from the *isnads* of his dicta.

With regard to the origin of Bishr's cognomen 'the barefooted' (*hafi*), Ibn Khallikan tells the following story: Bishr once asked a cobbler for a new strap for one of his sandals, but the cobbler called this a nuisance, whereupon Bishr threw down both his sandals and henceforth walked barefoot. Much speaks in favour of this report, even if the explanation is not clear in every detail. Did Bishr fly into a rage at the cobbler's answer, and then, being a pious man, did he draw the consequences? Or did he, blaming only himself, soberly come to the decision never to inconvenience a cobbler again? Later referring to Sura LXXI,19:

'And God made the earth your carpet, wearing shoes'.

As a further reminder he also says that at the 'time when the pact was made' they too were barefoot. This probably refers to the pact of obedience which human beings are said to have made with God before their appearance on God's earth (Sura VII.172: *a-lastu bi-rabbikunm*). Such justifications belong to the symbolic association which Sufis later attached to the various parts and colours of their clothes. The statement made by Hudjwiri and repeated by 'Attar that Bishr went barefoot because he was so deeply moved in contemplation of God, is hard to understand—and, together with the explanations given by Hudjwiri and 'Attar, mere theory, Bishr is said to have called himself 'the barefooted' and to have been called to account for this by a girl who said:

"All you have to do is to buy a pair of sandals for two *danik*, but then you would no longer have your beautiful name".

Al-Hafi is also the name of the dervish in Lessing's *Nathan der Weise*. Although Reiske's *Abilfedae Annales Moslemici*, where our Sufi appears on page 193, *vulgo Beschri ol Hafi dictus*, had already appeared by the time Lessing's play was written, it can hardly be regarded as its source. Lessing is more likely to have sought Reiske's advice personally, or to have derived the name from d'Herbelot.

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F. METER

D

Dhu al-Nun Misri (706–859)

Dhu al Nun Misri is regarded by most biographers as a renewed mystic. He was the first to give expression publicly to his mystic experiences. Like other early mystics, he practised asceticism of extreme type, regarded the temptations of self as the greatest veil and looked upon seclusion as indispensable for the promotion of sincerity in a Sufi. According to him, there are two different paths for the mystic to follow. The first path, lesser in degree, is to avoid sin, to leave the world and to control passion; the second path, higher in degree, is to leave all besides God and to empty the heart of everything.

Dhu al-Nun interprets *tawakkul* (trust in God) as opposed to reliance on intermediate causes and the use of planning. It demands solitude and complete break with the world and its people and total and full reliance on God. Repentance, according to him, is essential for everybody; the common people repent of their sins, while the elect repent of their heedlessness. Repentance is of two kinds: repentance of return (*inabah*) and repentance of shame (*istihya*). The former is repentance through fear of divine punishment, the latter is repentance through shame of divine clemency.

Dhu al-Nun distinguishes knowledge from certitude (*yaqin*). Knowledge is the result of sensory perception, i.e. what we receive through bodily organs, while certitude is the result of what we see through intuition. In another context he says that knowledge is of three kinds: first, knowledge of the unity of God and this is common to all believers; second, knowledge gained by proof and demonstration and this belongs to the wise, the eloquent and the learned; the third, knowledge of the attributes of Unity and this belongs to the saints, those who contemplate the face of God within their hearts, so that God reveals Himself to them in a way in which He is not revealed to anyone else in the world.

It is this knowledge which is called gnosis (*ma'rifah*), the idea of which, it is claimed, was first introduced into Sufism by Dhu al-Nun. The core of gnosis, according to him, is God's providential communication of the spiritual light to one's heart. The gnostics see with direct knowledge, without sight, without information received, without observation, without description, without veiling and without veils. They are not in themselves; but in so far as they exist at all, they exist in God. Their movements are caused by God and their sight is the sight of God which has entered into their eyes.

Thus, with Dhu al-Nun the highest achievement of the mystic is to get super-intellectual knowledge known as gnosis which involves complete unconsciousness on the part of man. In one of his statements quoted by Attar, he says,

"the more a man knows God, the more is he lost in Him."

It appears that he had in his mind the mystic state which his contemporary, Bayazid of Bistam, designated as *fana*.

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EB

al-Djunayd, Abu'l-Kasim b. Muhammad b. (d. 910)

Abu 'l-Kasim b. Muhammad b. al-Djunayd al-Khazzaz al-Kawariri al-Niha-wandi al-Djunayd was the celebrated Sufi, nephew and disciple of Sari al-Sakati, a native of Baghdad,

studied law under Abu Thawr, and associated with Harith al-Muhasibi, with whom indeed he is said to have discussed during walks all kinds of questions relating to mysticism, Muhasibi giving his replies *extempore* and later writing them up in the form of books.

He died in 298/910. With Muhasibi he is to be accounted the greatest orthodox exponent of the 'Sober' type of Sufism, and the titles which later writers bestowed on him—*sayyid al-ta'ifa* (Lord of the Sect), *ta'us al-fukara'* (Peacock of the Dervishes), *shaikh al-mashayikh* (Director of the Directors)—indicate in what esteem he was held.

The *Fihrist* mentions his *Rasa'il*, which have in large measure survived, in a unique but fragmentary MS (Brockelmann, SI, 354–5). These consist of letters to private persons (examples are quoted by Sarradj *Kitab al-luma'*, 239–43) and short tractates on mystical themes: some of the latter are cast in the form of commentaries on Kur'anic passages. His style is involved to the point of obscurity, and his influence on Halladj is manifest.

He mentions in one of his letters that a former communication of his had been opened and read in the course of transit: doubtless by some zealot desirous of finding cause for impugning his orthodoxy; and to this ever-present danger must in part be attributed the deliberate preciousness which marks the writings of all the mystics of Djunayd's period. Djunayd reiterates the theme, first clearly reasoned by him, that since all things have their origin in God they must finally return, after their dispersion (*tafrik*), to live again in Him (*djam*); and this the mystic achieves in the state of passing-away (*fana*).

Of the mystic union he writes 'For at that time thou wilt be addressed, thyself addressing;

questioned concerning thy tidings, thyself questioning; with abundant flow of benefits, and interchange of attestations; with constant; increase of faith, and uninterrupted favours'. Of his own mystical experience he says:

"This that I say comes from the continuance of calamity and the consequence of misery, from a heart that is stirred from its foundations, and is tormented with its ceaseless conflagrations, by itself within itself, admitting no perception, no speech, no sense, no feeling, no repose, no effort, no familiar image; but constant in the calamity of its ceaseless torment, unimaginable, indescribable, unlimited, unbearable in its fierce onslaughts".

Eschewing those extravagances of language which on the lips of such inebriates as Abu Yazid al-Bistami and Halladj alarmed and alienated the orthodox, Djunayd by his clear perception and absolute self-control laid the foundations on which the later systems of Sufism were built.

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G

Al-Gaylani, Ghous-ul-Azam Hazrat Syed Abdul Qadir (1077–1166)

It was during the 5th century of the Hijri (11th century A.D.) when Islamic values stood at a very low ebb and the simplicity of Islamic teachings had been replaced by lust for power, wealth and social evils—when the *Seljuks* ruled over a part of Iran and Baghdad was under the sway of the *Abbasides* that on the first day of the holy month of Ramzan-ul-Mubarak in 470 A.H. (1077 A.D.) in the village of Naif in the district of Jilan in Persia south of the Caspian Sea was born a boy—a gift of God to mankind in the shape of a sacred soul—Hazrat Qutub Ul-Aqtab. Syed-Us-Sadat, Qutub-Ul-Wajood. Rais-Ul-Mahboobeen, Kutub-E-Rabbai, Ghaus Ul-Samdani, Mahboob-I-Sobhani. Meeran-Mohy-Uddin, Sheikh-Ul-Islam, Sheikh-Al-Syed Mohy-Uddin Abu Mohammad Abdul Qadir Al-Gaylani Al-Hassan Wal Hussani. His epithets are Musahid-Allah, Amr-Allah, Fdl-Allah, Aman-Allah, Nur-Alla, Kutb-Allah, Saif-Allah, Firman-Alla, Burhan-Allah, Ayat-Allah and Ghaus-Allah.

It had been publicly declared by eminent saints like Hazrat Abu Bakr bin Hawara, Hazrat Ahmed Abdullah bin Ahmed, Hazrat Hammad

Al-Dabbas that a saint will be born in Ajam who, because of his high divine and spiritual status would declare by pronouncing the words “My Foot Is On The Neck Of All Walis” and all the Walis of the world will testify of the statement. It is rather strange inspite of the Muslims having had the Holy *Quran* as a guide for instructions in all matters and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet for practical guidance, the exemplary acts of the *Khulfa-E-Rashedeen* and the inspirational acts of the *Ahl-E-Bait* the Muslims were involved in all un-Islamic acts and could to claim not be good Muslims.

In this period of political, social and economic chaos, upheaval and lack of faith especially when sects with new doctrines such as the Karims, Mutazlites were predominating the way of thinking of the Muslims God Almighty brought the divine being of Ghaus-Ul-Azam as a Reviver of the religion of Islam in the world.

The father of Ghaus Pak was a very pious and God-fearing man by the name of Hazrat Abu Saleh Zangi Dost who was the direct descendant of Hazrat Imam Hasan and his respected mother was Hazrat Bibi Umm-Ul-Khair Fatima bint Hazrat Abdullah Sawmai-Az-Zahid who was the direct descendant of Hazrat Imam Zainul Abedeen bin Hiazrat Imam

Hussain. This sacred betrothal came about through a strange act of coincidence ordained by God. It so happened that Hazrat Saleh was sitting and contemplating on the bank of the river deeply absorbed in prayers when he noticed that an apple was floating towards him which he picked up and ate. Immediately he felt trait he had acted wrongly by eating the fruit without the permission of the owner and started to walk along the bank of the river towards the direction from where the apple had come.

Ultimately Hazrat Saleh reached a garden with the numerous trees of apples where he met the owner Hazrat Abdullah Sawmai-Az-Zahid and begged pardon of him for eating the apple from his garden without his permission. Hazrat Abdullah realized through *Kashf* (intuition) the sense of piety and simplicity in the words of truth that Hazrat Saleh had frankly confessed and stated. Hazrat Abdullah agreed to pardon Hazrat Saleh on the condition that he would serve him for a period of twelve years to which Hazrat Saleh agreed. After the period of twelve years when Hazrat Saleh asked for leave to go away Hazrat Abdullah imposed another condition that Hazrat Saleh would have to marry his daughter who was blind, deaf, paralytic, and lame. Hazrat Saleh agreed and the marriage took place; and when Hazrat Saleh was shocked and amazed to find his bride to be a lady of piety, simplicity and saintly.

On enquiring from Hazrat Abdullah the mystery in the wrong description that he had given about his daughter, he was explained that his girl was told to be blind because she had never seen any person whom she could lawfully marry—she was told to be deaf because she had never paid any heed to falsehood, she was told to be paralytic because she had never touched any unlawful thing, she was told to be

lame as she had never stepped towards an unjust act. The ways of God are strange and the tests of his beloved saint are stranger still.

Hazrat Ghaus Pak was given the basic religious teachings under the tender care of his mother and maternal grandfather from the age of ten to the age of eighteen. Hazrat Ghaus Pak was very shy and quiet by nature and was always found to be in a mood of contemplation and meditation. It was observed that he was always uttering the words '*La-Ilah-Ilallah*'. The teachers entrusted with the job of imparting basic rudiments of knowledge detected that the boy had a strange about hearing him and that he radiated divinity and tranquility from his being. When Hazrat Ghaus Pak attended his classes, the teacher would tell the other students to leave place for the Wali to sit.

After having learnt, the basic teachings in religion and other subjects Hazrat Ghaus Pak expressed his desire to his mother "to be permitted to go to Baghdad which was the centre learning, to acquire further knowledge and to perfect his faith and purify his soul at the hands of the learned men and saints of the town.

Hazrat Ghaus Pak told his mother that it was necessary for him to go to Baghdad to learn *Tafsir*, *Fiqh*, *Hadith* and Arabic Literature. The mother with a heavy heart reluctantly agreed and consented and permitted her son to leave for Baghdad for higher studies. While leaving his home-town Hazrat Ghaus Pak was strictly instructed by his mother to follow her following orders:

- (1) Obey God's Commands
- (2) Abstain from forbidden things
- (3) Be always pleased with the decree of Providence.

(4) Always be truthful.

While taking leave Hazrat Ghaus Pak was given 40 Dinars by his mother which were sewed in his garment. Hazrat Ghaus Pak left his home-town with the caravan of fellow-travellers and at a place called Hamadan they were attacked by a band of robbers. When one of the robbers enquired from Hazrat Ghaus Pak if he had any valuables or money the robber was told that he had 40 Dinars which were handed over to him. The robber reported the matter to his chief who not only became shocked at the truthfulness of Hazrat Ghaus Pak but repented before God for robbing people and became a disciple of Hazrat Ghaus Pak.

Hazrat Ghaus Pak reached Baghdad and while walking in the streets of the city he came across a *Khanqah* which belonged to Hazrat Hammad Al-Dabbas who was the *Qutb* of his time and for living sold syrups and was popularly called and known as the vendor of syrups by the people of Baghdad. Hazrat Ghaus Pak met Hazrat Hammad who instantaneously visualised divineness in the young boy whose forbearance and conduct radiated Piety, Simplicity and Love.

Hazrat Hammad gave a gaze of love and called Hazrat Ghaus Pak Al-Baz-I-Ashab. Truthful and chartable by nature Hazrat Ghaus Pak took leave of Hazrat Hammad with the object of embarking on the long road of knowledge that he was to walk. Little did Hazrat Ghaus Pak realize that before him was a long unending period of hardship, extensive studies, mystical training, spiritual discipline and practical experience which he was to face.

University education and educational service: Hazrat Ghaus Pak began his extensive studies in different subjects under famous

authorities of the time. He studied *Fiqah* (Religious Laws) under Qazi Abu Saeed Mubarak Bin Mokarrim, *Tafsir* (Commentary of *Quran*), *Sunnat-e-Nabvi* and *Hadith* (Traditions and sayings of the Holy Prophet) under Abu Ghalib Ahmad and Abu Qasim Ali and Arabic Literature under Hazrat Abu Zakariya Yahya Tabrizi—Principal of Madrasa Nizamia. In 521 A.H., Hazrat Abu Saeed Mubarak bin Mokerrim after being satisfied that Hazrat Ghaus Pak had gained perfection in the religious sciences the Principalship of his Madrasa Babul Ajaz (School of Hanbalite Law) was given to Hazrat Ghaus Pak who held this post for a period of thirty years. Hazrat Ghaus Pak imparted knowledge to students who came from different countries and his reputation of being a great master of learning and knowledge spread to different countries. The knowledge, exemplary conduct and pious way of living of Hazrat Ghaus Pak radiated through the length and breadth of Baghdad and adjoining countries.

Mystical training and spiritual experiences: Hazrat Ghaus Pak after attending to his studies usually would sit on the bank of the river Tigris contemplating and meditating and way always in the search of truth. For one year Hazrat Ghaus Pak lived by eating only vegetables, for one year he lived by taking only liquids and for one year he barely lived by eating very little, sleeping very little and talking very little. Hazrat Ghaus Pak was always on the look out for mystics and saints. Hazrat Hammad al-Dabbas was the first spiritual teacher of Hazrat Ghaus Pak who after trying, testing and putting him on trial through acts of Devotion, Patience and Tolerance blessed Hazrat Ghaus Pak by giving him spiritual insight into the mysteries of Divinity. Hazrat Ghaus Pak through hard study, meditation and

close association with great mystics passed through the stage of the mystic path by travelling through different stages of Divine Love For God And His Fellow Beings And Finally Reached And Achieved The Final Stage of Fana (Utter loss of self). It was during this period that Hazrat Ghaus Pak stated "I Acquired Knowledge To Such An Extent That I Became A Qutb And Reached Prosperity Through The Grace Of God.

Karkh: Hazrat Ghaus Pak usually visited the fields of Karkh which were located on one side of Baghdad, where he would seek aloofness and would find an ideal place for prayers and devotional practices.

Schuster: For eleven years Hazrat Ghaus Pak lived in Schuster which is a place that required twelve days to reach from Baghdad. Here also Hazrat Ghaus Pak spent his time in prayers and devotional exercises and in order to distract him from the path of truth and divinity Satan stood before Hazrat Ghaus Pak in a glaring shape and pronounced that

"I Now Make All Unlawful Things Lawful To You".

Hazrat Ghaus Pak through his divine depth of knowledge rebuked Satan by saying:

"I Seek The Protection Of God From The Damned Satan".

Burj-Ajami: Hazrat Ghaus Pak lived in a tower for eleven years called Burj- Ajami in prayers and devotional exercises and practices and decided that he would not touch a morsel of food until and unless someone put food in his mouth. At this time, Hazrat Abu Saeed Mobarik bin Mokerrim was passing near the tower; and on hearing the whole story of Hazrat Ghaus Pak's determination not to eat food unless someone fed him, Hazrat Abu Saeed

himself entered the tower gave food to Hazrat Ghaus Pak and then offered him a *Khirqah*, made him his disciple and blessed him with the highest spiritual status and rank of *Khalifa* of his.

Aiwan Kasra: Some times Hazrat Ghaus Pak would proceed to the ruins of Aiwan Kasra where he once met 70 Walis whose blessings he gained.

Madain: Hazrat Ghaus Pak also lived and spent his time in devotion in the ruins of Madain.

Baghdad: After travelling in the search of truth for a period of 25 years Hazrat Ghaus Pak returned to Baghdad after having undergone and experienced spiritual and mystical knowledge and passing all the stage of *Haqiqat* (knowledge of truth), *Shariat* (knowledge of Law) and *Tariqat* (knowledge of the Path, road, method based on spiritual rules to be followed in addition to ordinary observances of Islam). Further Hazrat Ghaus Pak while gaining knowledge and experience and associating himself with saints kept in view and to the best of his ability and endurance based on prayers and hope tried to follow the great qualities of the great prophets Of God, namely generosity of Hazrat Ibrahim, Patience of Hazrat Yakub and *Sunnat-e-Nabvi*.

Preacher-Philanthropist-Reformer: After performing Haj with his son Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Razak and having completed his course of knowledge and spiritual experience Hazrat Ghaus Pak now reached the Zenith of Divinity. This high status was confirmed by the following episodes:

- (1) On a Friday, Hazrat Ghaus Pak was walking bare-footed in the streets of Baghdad when someone approached

him and said "I am of the religion of your grandfather. I became diseased and miserable but God has revived me through your help. The stranger disappeared and someone else came and offered Hazrat Ghaus Pak a pair of shoes and addressed him as "Mohiyuddin Or Reviver Of The Religion".

- (2) The Murshid of the Sheikh of Hazrat Ghaus Pak, Hazrat Abu Saeed, instructed him to preach Islam. Hazrat Ghaus Pak being a *Ajami* (Foreigner) felt reluctant and shy to preach specially when the learned men of Baghdad were present. Hazrat Ghaus Pak saw the Holy Prophet of God in his dream who spat seven times in the mouth of Hazrat Ghaus Pak with orders to preach Islam, give wise guidance and call people to good acts. Then Hazrat Ali blessed Hazrat Ghaus Pak by spitting six times in the mouth of Ghaus Pak. Thus knowledge and the gateway or knowledge were now opened to the great Hazrat Ghaus Pak.
- (3) It was during a sermon that Hazrat Ghaus Pak under divine command and in a mood of ecstasy proclaimed "My Foot Is On The Neck Of All Walis". These words were the seal of Ghaus Pak becoming and reaching the status of the greatest saint that had come, or was living or would come for all times to come till the Day of Judgement.

Prayers of Ghaus Pak: Ghaus Pak always prayed to God in the following words:

- (1) *Prayer for Mercy:* Allahuma Ma Manata Bihi Aa Laya Fa Atminhu Wa

Ma Aanamta Bihi Alya Fala Tasbihu Wama Satartahu Fala Tahtikhu Wama Aalimta Hu Fa Ighuru. The English tradition would read as: "Oh God What You Have Bestowed On Me Make It Complete and What You Have Given Me Don't Take It Back And What You Have Covered Me (From Sin) Don't Expose Me and Forgive Me For What You Have Known.

- (2) *Prayer of Devotion (Doa-e-Qutub):* From All Powerful: Who Speaketh the Truth: Feel Secure Under His Benign Protection: He Caters To All Of One's Needs: He Would Suffice For Combating All The Powerful That May Be: An Ideal Protector: Praise Be Unto Him.

Spiritual Lineage or Shijra: The Holy Prophet, Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Imam Hasan, Hazrat Imam Hussain, Hazrat Zainul Abedeen, Hazrat Imam Mohammad Baqr, Hazrat Imam Jaffer Sadiq, Hazrat Imam Musa Kazim, Hazrat Imam Ali Raa, Hazrat Maruf Kharki, Hazrat Saeeri Sakti, Hazrat Junaid, Hazrat Abdul Waheed, Hazrat Abu Saeed Mubarik bin Mokerrim and Hazrat Ghaus-ul-Azam.

Family and domestic life and daily routine: Hazrat Ghaus Pak married at the late age of 51. He married 4 times and had 27 sons and 22 daughters. Strictly in accordance with the traditions of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Ghaus Pak in matters of household affairs followed his exemplary practices in letter and spirit. He would go to the market for purchasing household articles. He would at times sweep the floor and sometimes would cook food. He brought up his children with very strict care and under strong discipline ensuring that

proper knowledge was imparted. Character and capability were the two aspects that Hazrat Ghaus Pak kept in view while bringing up his children. Four of his sons became great scholars and living authorities religious knowledge e.g., Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Wahab, Hazrat Sheikh Issa, Hazrat Sheikh Abdul Razzak and Hazrat Sheikh Musa.

Hazrat Ghaus Pak would give *Tafsir*, sermons and discourses in the morning and after the midday prayer would give *Fatwas*. He would distribute bread before Maghrib prayers and after the Magrib prayers would take his meals, After the *Isha* prayers he would return to his private quarters for purposes and of prayers devotional practices. 70,000 people would attend his Majlis. He had converted a number of Jews and Christians who became devout Muslims. Hazrat Ghaus Pak in very simple language and eloquently gave his sermons on subject of Islamic Law (*Shariat*) and mysticism (*Haqiqat*). Hazrat Ghaus Pak spent most of his time in prayers to God and service to his fellow-beings.

Books—Sermons—Qasida:

(1) *Books*: Hazrat Ghaus Pak wrote a number of books out of which the following are outstanding and most popular:

- (a) *Ghuniyat-Al-Talebin* which is a treatise on Sunni Law giving a comparison of Sunni Laws and views and opinions of 73 sects of Islam on matters of prayers, Fasting, Zakat, Hajj, etc.
- (b) *Futuh-Al-Rabbani*, which contains 68 sermons.
- (c) *Futuh-Al-Ghaib*, contains 78 discourses.
- (d) *Sirrul-Asra*, book on mysticism.

(e) *Qasida-Tul-Ghausia*, contains 29–31 couplets in ecstatic language defining the spiritual rank, role and status of Hazrat Ghaus Pak. The mystic dictum of Hazrat Ghaus Pak, namely, 'my foot is on the neck of all Walis' and further the highest Zenith of spiritual status of *Fana Fillah* as mystically based on the words *Kun-Faykun* (Be and it is done) are expressed in a state of deep trance and meditation in this *Qasida*, which is reproduced below: "*QASIDAH-E-GHOUSIYA*"

1. Cups of Union the Beloved gave me to drink; So I told my 'Wine', "Advance towards, me".
2. Then it moved and walked to me in cups; In my 'intoxication' I understood the Friends in my midst.
3. I said to all the Polar-Stars "Come and enter my State and become my Companions".
4. "Be courageous and drink. you are my army; Because the Cup-Bearer of the Fraternity has filled my cup to the full."
5. And you sipped from my cup, what I left after my deep 'intoxication'; But you neither attained my height nor my Union.
6. All your stations are high; But mine is higher ever.
7. I am singularly near to Him; The Mighty One Who changes my state and suffices.
8. I am a White Falcon of every mystic. "Who is there among the Saints, so gifted as me?"

9. He enrobed me with determination embroidered and He crowned me with the Crown of Perfection.
10. Unto me He revealed the ancient secrets; He adopted me and granted my request.
11. And He made me a Ruler over all the Polar-Stars. So my Orders are effective under all circumstances.
12. Had I thrown my secret into the Oceans, They would have at once dried up.
13. Had I thrown my secret over mountains, They would have become pulverised.
14. Had I thrown my secret into fire, It would have been at once extinguished by the secret of my mystic state.
15. Had I thrown my secret over the dead. He would have stood up with the power of exalted God.
16. There are no months or ages. Which flow but with my knowledge.
17. And they acquaint me with the present and the future. and they give me information; And so. Will you terminate your wrangles with me.
18. Be courageous, my disciple. Be cheerful and sing, in ecstasy; And act without restraint, for His name is exalted.
19. Do not be frightened, my disciple. Allah is my Sustainer; He has granted me the status through which I have attained high eminence.
20. My dreams have been beaten in the heavens and earth and I have been given the rank of Good Luck.
21. The empire of Allah is under my Command; And my time has been purified before my birth.
22. I cast a glance at the entire empire of Allah. It is like a mustard seed alongside my sovereignty.
23. I acquired knowledge till I became a Polar-Star: And I attained good luck through the great Lord.
24. They are companions remorseful like those who fast and are like pearls in the darkness of the night.
25. Each saint has a station; And I follow in the footsteps of the Prophet the Full-Moon of Perfection.
26. He is a Prophet belonging to the family of Hashim and to Mecca and to Hijaz, He is my ancestor. I achieve my objects through him.
27. Do not be frightened, my Disciple, of a slanderer, For I am a determined Combatant in battle.
28. I am Al-Jilani, my name is "Muhyiddin and my banners flutter on mountain tops.
29. I am Hasani and my abode is my cell. And my feet are on the neck of each saint.
30. Abdul Qadir is my famous name and my ancestor is one possessed of an insight perfect.

Sermons and Discussions: Some of the following quotations from the sacred sermons and discourses delivered by Hazrat Ghaus Pak will serve as a guideline for those who want to follow the path of Truth which can only be achieved through Devotion To God And

Service To One's Fellow Human Beings which were the motto and guiding spirit of the great saint:

1. O Peaceful *Nafs* turn to God being satisfied and giving satisfaction.
2. Be careful before meeting death.
3. When the heart is perfected all your conditions become perfect.
4. Good men abstain themselves from the world and conquer it by fear of God and piety.
5. My satisfaction with *Taqdir* has led me to God.
6. Make piety your weapon and make *tawhid* (unification of God) cotemplation. Piety and sincerity in seclusion and beseeching God's help your army.
7. When you get the ability assign this world to your *Nafs*, the *Nafs*, the next world to your heart and the Lord to your soul.
8. Be constant in fear of God and his worship. Do not fear anyone else nor expect anything from any one. Save yourself—Fear God, Fear God and Fear God.
9. Three things are indispensable for a believer in all conditions of life. He should keep that commandments of God: he should abstain from the forbidden things; and he should be pleased with the decree of Providence.
10. Then He will give you death in your will and desires; and when you are dead in your will and desires it will be said to you: "Many God have

mercy on you" and He will restore you to (a new) life.

11. When you are in a particular condition do not wish for another condition either higher or lower. Thus, when you are at the palace gate of the King do not wish for an entrance into the palace unless you are made to enter it by compulsion and not of your own accord.
12. Wealth is your servant and you are the servant of the Lord.
13. Then know that God is everyday in a new state of glory, in changing and altering and raising and lowering (people).
14. Trials and calamities strengthen the heart and certainty and establish the faith and patience and weaken the animal-self and its desires.
15. Be aware of sin in all its form in all your organs of body and in your heart.
16. Do not run away from God for He will overtake you.
17. Do you not know that for every occurs of events there is an appointed time and for every calamity there is a point of consummation?
18. Make your life after death your capital money and your wordily life its profit. Spend your time first of all in acquiring your life after death.
19. There is no spiritual state nor any spiritual station but has fear and hope attached to it. These two are like two wings of a bird but for which no flight can be perfect. And this is true of

every state and station. With this much of difference that every state has its corresponding fear and hope.

20. The worldly life is a cultivation ground of the life hereafter; and the good deeds of the Prophets and *Awliya* after the performance of commandments and prohibitions consist in patience and pleasure and reconciliation in the midst of trial.

21. In everything there is an attribute from the attributes of God and every name is a sign for one of His names. So surely you are between His names and His attributes and works, inwardly through His power and outwardly through His wisdom. He is manifest in His attributes and concealed in His person. His person is concealed in His attributes and His attributes are concealed in His works. And He has revealed His knowledge through His will and He has expressed His will in movements. And He has concealed His skill and His workmanship through His will. So He is hidden in His invisibility and He is manifest in His wisdom and power. There is nothing like even a likeness of Him and He is hearing and seeing.

22. *Tasawwuf* is based on eight qualities:

- (a) Generosity like that of Prophet Abraham,
- (b) Cheerful submission like that of Prophet Ishaque,
- (c) Patience like that of Yaqoob,
- (d) Prayer like that of Prophet Zachariah,
- (e) Poverty like that of Prophet Yahya,

(f) Wearing of woollen dress like that of Prophet Musa,

(g) Travelling about like that of Prophet Issa and,

(h) Religious poverty like that of Prophet Muhammad (Peace and blessings of God be upon him and all the rest).

23. And a *dervesh* is he who is indifferent to everything besides God.

24. All the parts of my body are ailing excepting my heart which has no pain in it and it is sound with God.

25. Human consciousness is divided into three conditions raising upward in the scale of evolution:

(a) *Nafs-Ammara* i.e., unruly animal self.

(b) *Nafs-Lawwama*, i.e., struggling moral self.

(c) *Nafs-Mutmainna*, i.e., struggling moral self.

(d) *Nafs-Mutmainna*, i.e., composed God realized self.

26. Do not will anything which is not the will of God.

Qadiri Order is based entirely on Shariat. It is spread in every corner of the world, especially in India, Ceylon, Indonesia, Africa, Turkey, Egypt, Arabia. A Qadiri will be found in every home where the sense of Love of God and service of fellow-being is found. The fundamental principals of the Qadiri order are based on the instructions that the respected mother of Hazrat Ghaus Pak gave to him when he left his home town Naif for studies for Baghdad, namely:

1. Obey God's Commands e.g., *Quranic* injunctions and *Sunnat-e-Nabvi*.

2. Abstain from forbidden things.
3. Be always pleased with the decree of Providence.
4. Always be truthful.

The end of the journey and the parting

words: Life is a journey where Prophets, Kings, Saints and every human being comes on the stage of life and then departs when the ordained time is up. Hazrat Ghaus Pak had assumed his disciples and followers in the following words:

"I would not leave the presence of God unless he does not accompany me and my Murids to paradise".

Hazrat Ghaus Pak had by now completed his task for reviving the spirit of Islam—the assignment given by God Almighty by creating him for this sole purpose.

Hazrat Ghaus Pak was not well and after a short period of illness felt that his time had come to leave this mortal world to meet his Creator. At this juncture Hazrat Abdul Waab, the son of Hazrat Ghaus Pak. Asked his father for his parting advice which Hazrat Ghaus Pak gave in the following words:

1. In response to the request the Hazrat said, "Be constant in fear of God and His worship, do not fear anyone else, nor expect anything from them, for all your necessities depend upon God the Majestic and the Omnipotent; and beg of Him for the things, do not depend on anyone else except God the Majestic and the Omnipotent. who is pure. Affirm the unification of God, Unification of God is the sum total of all things.
2. Surely no one, be it a man a *Jin* or an angel, knows and understands my

disease. The knowledge of God is not diminished by the command of God. The command changes but knowledge does not change. The command may be abrogated but not so is knowledge, God causes things to pass away and establishes what He pleases and with Him is the basis of the book. The *Quran* says and He is not questioned what He does and it is they who are questioned.

3. I wanted that which has no life in it and a life which has no death in it.
4. New outwardly I am with you, but really I am with others. Between me and you the distance is so great as the distance between heaven and earth. Do not consider me like others nor others like me.
5. When the son of Hazrat Ghaus Pak Hazrat Abdul Jabbar, enquired from his father as to which part of his body was paining—Hazrat Ghaus Pak replied, 'All parts of my body are ailing excepting my heart which has no pain in it. It sound condition with God.'

Hazrat Ghaus Pak was nearing his end and he breathed his last on the 11th of Rabi-us-Sani, 561 A.H. with the words: "I Seek The Help Of God". Then the *Kalima* was recited. This date is popularly known to this day and will be commemorated till the Day of Judgement as Gtarrawin Sharif. The mortal remains of Hazrat Ghaus Pak lie buried in a mausoleum in Baghdad and the area is known as Babul Sheikh.

Hazrat Ghaus Pak gained immortality and has left for Muslims and mankind a living

lesson of Devotion To God And Service To One's Fellow-Beings.

The Holy Prophet of Islam was the last and greatest of all Prophets of God and then came the line of Saints (Friends of God) as revivers of the spirit of Islam at different intervals and in the status of Saints. Hazrat Ghaus-Ul-Azam was the greatest.

All the Spiritual, Mystical and Sufi orders, whether it be Chistia, Soharwardia, Naqshbandia, Qalandaria, Shattariya, Sanusiyya or Moulvia, they all derive their spiritual and mystical knowledge and guidance and blessings in the Tariqat of Hazrat Ghaus-Ul-Azam.

We can only pay homage to his sacred memory by being good Muslims and by preaching the gospel of Islam in the world of strife, chaos and upheaval today by following the instructions of Ghaus-Ul-Aza (his *Tariqat*) which are based on the *Quran-e-Pak* and *Sunnat-e-Nabvi*.

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Al-Ghazali (1058–1111)

Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ta'us Ahmad al-Tusi al-Shafi'i, generally known simply by his *nisbah* al-Ghazali, was born in 450/1058 at Tabaran, one of the two townships of Tusi, now in ruins in the neighbourhood of modern Meshed in Khurasan.

Al-Ghazali was not the first scholar of distinction in his family: there had been another abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 435/1043), his grand-uncle, who was a theologian and jurisconsult of great repute, possibly a model which he might have set before him in his ambitious youth. But he was early exposed to Sufistic influences. His own father was a pious dervish who according to al-Subki would not eat anything but what he could earn with his own hands and spend as much time as he could in the company of the divines.

Early left as an orphan, al-Ghazali was brought up and educated by a pious Sufi friend of his father along with his brother who later made a mark as a great mystic. While still a boy al-Ghazali began the study of theology and canon-law, with the express desire for wealth and reputation as he himself has acknowledged first in his native town under Shaikh Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Radhkhani al-Tusi and then at Jurjan under the Imam abu Nasr al-Isma'ili.

After his return from Jurjan he stayed for a while in Tusi and possibly during this period studied Sufism under Yusuf al-Nassaj and perhaps, even undertook some of the Sufism exercises. At the age of twenty he proceeded to the Nizamiyyah Academy of Nishapur to study under abu al-Ma'ali al-Juwaini known as Imam al-Haramain, the most distinguished Ash'arite theologian of the day, only fourth

from al-Ash'ari himself in an apostolic succession of the Ash'arite teachers. The curriculum of the Academy included a wide range of subjects such as theology, canon-law, philosophy, logic, dialectics, natural sciences, Sufism, etc. Imam al-Haramain allowed full freedom of thought and expression to his pupils; they were encouraged to engage in debates and discussions of all kinds.

Al-Ghazali gave early proof of great learning and also of a tendency towards philosophising. Imam al-Haramain described him as 'a plenteous ocean to be drowned' and comparing him with two other pupils of his observed:

"al-Khawafi's strong point is verification, al-Ghazali's is speculation, and al-Kiya's is explanation."

In his debates with other students he showed great suppleness of mind and a gift for polemics. Not long afterwards, he began to lecture to his fellow-students and to write books. But al-Ghazali was one of those rare minds whose originality is not crushed by their learning. He was a born critic and possessed great independence of thought. It was verily during his studentship at the Nizamiyyah Academy of Nishapur that he became impatient of dogmatic teaching and freed himself from the bondage of authority (*taqlid*) and even showed the signs of scepticism.

During his stay at Nishapur, he also became a disciple to the Sufi abu 'Ali al-Fadl ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Farmadhi al-Tusi, a pupil of al-Ghazali's own uncle and of the reputed al-Qusari (d. 465/1074). From al-Farmadhi al-Ghazali learnt more about the theory and practice of Sufism. He even practised rigorous ascetic and Sufistic exercises under his guidance but not to the desired effect.

As he himself narrates, he could not attain to that stage where the mystics begin to receive pure inspiration from 'high above.' So, he did not feel quite settled down in his mind. On the one hand, he felt philosophically dissatisfied with the speculative systems of the scholastic theologians and could not accept anything on authority, on the other, the Sufistic practices so failed to make any definite impression on him for he had not received any sure results. There is no doubt, however, that the increasing attraction of the Sufistic teaching, with its insistence upon a direct personal experience of God, added to al-Ghazali's critical dissatisfaction with dogmatic theology.

Al-Farmadhi died in 477/1084, and Imam al-Haramain in 478/1085. Al-Ghazali was then, in his twenty-eighth year, ambitious and energetic; the fame of his learning had already spread in the Islamic world. He betook himself to the Court of Nizam al-Mulk, the great vizier of the Saljuq sovereign Malikshah (r.465/1072—485/1092) and joined his retinue of communists and theologians. Nizam al-Mulk by his munificent patronage of scholarship, science and arts had gathered round him a brilliant galaxy of savants and learned men. He used to hold frequent assemblies for debate and discussion and al-Ghazali soon made his mark at these and was conspicuous for his skill in debate.

Al-Ghazali's profound knowledge of Muslim law, theology, and philosophy so much impressed Nizam al-Mulk that he appointed him to the Chair of Theology in the Nizamiyyah Academy (established 458–60/1065–67) at Baghdad in 484/1091. He was then only thirty-four. This was most coveted of all the honours in the then Muslim world and one which had not previously been conferred on anyone at so early an age.

As a professor in the Academy, al-Ghazali was a complete success; the excellence of his lectures, the extent of his learning, and the lucidity of his explanations attracted larger and larger classes including the chief savants of the time. Soon, all Islam acclaimed his eloquence, erudition, and dialectical skill and he came to be looked upon as the greatest theologian in the Ash'arite tradition. His advice began to be sought in matters religious and political, and he came to wield influence comparable to that of the highest officials of the State. Apparently, he attained to all the glory that a scholar could by way of worldly success, but inwardly he began to undergo an intellectual and spiritual crisis. It may be recalled that not only theology but medicine and philosophy were also taught at Baghdad and the school of Baghdad from the first was characterised by its scientific spirit and freedom of thought. The city of Baghdad had more than thirty-five libraries for the use of scholars and the place attracted all sorts of people belonging to different sects and schools.

A few generations back there flourished the association of the Ikhwan al-Safa; its meetings were attended by abu al-Ala' al-Ma'arri, said to be the arch-heretic in Islam who died (at the age of 84) only a year before al-Ghazali was born. Al-Qushairi the teacher of Farmadhi, yet himself a pupil of al-Ash'ari in theology, died in 465/1074 when al-Ghazali was a boy of seventeen, but then probably this is also the date of the death of Nasir-i Khusrau, the Isma'ili propagandist and philosopher.

'Umar Khayyam (d. c.517/1123), the great mathematician, astronomer, and the agnostic philosopher (the Lucretius and the Voltaire of Islam in one), enjoyed with al-Ghazali the patronage of Nizam al-Mulk. Only a year after al-Ghazali's appointment in the Nizamiyyah

Academy, Nizam al-Mulk died (485/1092) as the first victim of the Isma'ili assassins headed by al-Hasan ibn al-Sabbah (483/1090–518/1124)—the second victim was no less than the king himself (Malikshah) only after an interval of thirty-five days.

His old doubts and scepticism began to assail him once again and he became highly critical of the very subjects that he taught. He keenly felt the hollowness of the meticulous spinning of casuistry of the canon-lawyers. The systems of the scholastic theologians (*Mutakallimin*) had no intellectual certainty, for they depended entirely on the acceptance of their initial dogmatic assumptions on authority. He denounced their over-emphasis on the doctrinal, for it led to a faulty representation of religion by reducing it to a mere mould of orthodoxy and catechism of dogmas. The disputes of the scholastics amongst themselves he considered as mere dialectical logomachies which had no real relation with religious life.

Al-Ghazali turned once again to the study of philosophy, this time as diligently and as comprehensively as he could, but found, like Kant, that it was impossible to build theology on reason alone. Reason was good so far as it went, but it could not go very far. The Ultimate, the Supreme Truth, could not be reached through it. Becoming keenly aware of the theological limitations of reason, he fell into a state of scepticism and lost his peace of mind. The hypocrisy of his orthodox teaching became unbearable and he found himself to be in a false position.

But all was not lost; he had some assurances that he could be delivered from this state of despair through the Sufi way. It was not that he now discovered that in Sufism lay the possibility for a direct encounter with

reality; this fact he had been realizing over a period of years. He had made a theoretical study of Sufism and had even ventured into Sufistic exercises; only he had not advanced far enough into them. If he could consecrate himself to the Sufistic way of life through spiritual renunciation, sustained asceticism and prolonged and deep meditation, he might have received the light he sought.

But this meant in his case giving up his brilliant academic career and worldly position. He was by nature ambitious and had great desire for fame and self-glorification. On the other hand, he was the most earnest seeker after truth. Besides, he had the anxiety to reach a secure faith which was accentuated by his thought of life after death. He remained in the throes of a severe moral conflict and in a spiritual travail for about six months beginning from Rajab 488/July 1095. He collapsed physically and mentally; appetite and digestion failed and he lost his power of speech. This made it easy for him to renounce his post as a professor. He left Baghdad in Dhu al-Qa'dah 488/November 1095, ostensibly on a pilgrimage to Mecca; actually he went into seclusion to practise the ascetic and religious discipline of the Sufis in order to secure certainty for his mind and peace for his soul. He gave away all his fortune except some 'trust funds' to maintain his family and proceeded to Syria.

For two years from 488/1095 to 490/1097 he remained in strict retirement in one of the minarets of the mosque of the Umayyads in Damascus, undergoing most rigorous ascetic discipline and performing religious exercises. He moved to Jerusalem for another period of meditation in the mosque of 'Umar and the Dome of the Rock. After having paid his visit to the tomb of Abraham at Hebron, he went on

pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina; then followed a long period of retreat at different places in holy shrines and mosques and wandering in deserts. After eleven years the life of a wandering dervish and scholar came to an end and he finally returned to his native town, Tus, in 499/1105.

Of his inner spiritual experiences in their experimental actuality, after he left Baghdad, al-Ghazali tells us almost nothing except that there were revealed to him in his periods of solitude things innumerable and unfathomable. Apparently, these experiences culminated in his acknowledgment of the authority of the Prophet and the complete submission to the truth revealed in the *Qur'an*. The first public sign of his recovery to orthodoxy is perhaps, *al-Risalah al-Qudsiyyah*, written during his retreat in Jerusalem, where in all probability he was before 492/1099, for in Sha'ban of that year Jerusalem was captured by the Crusaders.

This has been inserted as *Qawa'id al-'Aqa'id* in the third chapter of the second book of his massive magnum opus *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (The Revivification of the Sciences of Religion) in which he began to set down what he had learnt through his long periods of self-discipline and meditation. During his wanderings he not only kept on writing other books besides *Ihya*, but also resumed teaching from time to time. He keenly felt it incumbent upon him to crush heresy and unbelief around him and to call people back to the truth and moral power of Islam, both through writing and teaching: he virtually assumed the role of a moral and religious reformer. He began to devote himself more and more to the study of the traditions of the Prophet and make an extensive use of them for the purposes of edification and spiritual guidance.

On his return to Tusi he once again gave himself to the life of retirement and contemplation, but very soon Fakhr al-Mulk, the son of his old patron, Nizam al-Mulk, who was the vizier to Sultan Sanjar, urged him to accept the chair of theology at the Maimunah Nizamiyyah College at Nishapur which he did after some hesitation in Dhu al-Qa'dah 499/August 1106. But he did not stay there long and retired once more to his home in Tus and established a *madrasah* at which he began to teach both theology and *tasawwuf*.

At the instance of the learned and the common people of Baghdad he was once again summoned by the Grand Vizier al-Sa'id to take up teaching in the old Nizamiyyah Academy of Baghdad but al-Ghazali chose to remain at Tus. There he lived in peace with some personal disciples having charge of his *madrasah*. Every moment was filled with study and devotion till his death on the 14th of Jumada II 505/the 19th of December 1111. It was a beautifully complete and round life in which the end came to the beginning.

Method: The most important thing about al-Ghazali's system of thought is its method which may be described as that of the courage to know and the courage to doubt. The best expression of it is given in his famous autobiographical work, *al-Munqidh min al-Dalal* (The Deliverer from Error), which he wrote some five years before his death. In *al-Munqidh* al-Ghazali makes a critical examination of the methods of the various schools of thought current in his time in a manner closely similar to that of Descartes' (d. 1060/1650) in his *Discours de la methode* (1047/1637).

All kinds of knowledge, al-Ghazali held, should be investigated and nothing should be

considered dangerous or hostile. For himself he said that he had embarked on the open sea of knowledge right from his adolescence setting aside all craven caution:

"I poked into every dark recess and made an assault on every problem, I plunged into every abyss. I scrutinised the creed of every sect and I fathomed the mysteries of each doctrine. All this I did that I might distinguish between the true and the false. There was not a philosopher whose system I did not acquaint myself with, nor a theologian whose doctrines I did not examine. If ever I met a Sufi, I coveted to probe into his secrets; if an ascetic, I investigated into the basis of his austerities; if one of the atheistic *zindiqs*, I groped into the causes of his bold atheism."

Such was the courage of al-Ghazali to know. He was free from the parochialism of the dogmatic theologians of his day who would rather consign the books of the atheists and philosophers to flames than read them. Though he was to listen to every creed and doctrine, he would accept none and doubt all. For one thing, he came to the conclusion that the greatest hindrance in the search for truth was the acceptance of beliefs on the authority of others and blind adherence to the heritage of the past. He remembered the traditional saying of the Prophet:

"Every child is born with a sound disposition (*fitrah*); it is his parents who make him a Jew or a Christian or a Magian and he was anxious to know what that sound disposition was before it suffered the impress of the unreasoned convictions imposed by others".

Indeed, he wanted to re-construct all his knowledge from its very foundation and was led to make the following reflections:

"The search after truth being the aim which I propose to myself, I ought in the first place to

ascertain what are the bases of certitude. In the second place I ought to recognise that certitude is the clear and complete knowledge of things, such knowledge as leaves no room for doubt, nor any possibility of error".

As one might foresee, this proposed test for certitude only led him to a series of doubts. No part of the knowledge he had acquired hitherto could stand this rigorous test. He further observed:

"We cannot hope to find truth except in matters which carry their evidence in themselves, i.e., in sense-perception and necessary principles of thought; we must, therefore, first of all establish these two on a firm basis".

But he doubted the evidence of sense-perception; he could see plainly as Descartes did later that they so often deceive us. No eye can perceive the movement of a shadow, still the shadow moves; a small coin would cover any star, yet the geometrical computations show that a star is a world vastly larger than the earth.

Al-Ghazali's confidence in sense-perception having been shaken, he turned to the scrutiny of what he called the necessary principles, but he doubted even these. Is ten more than three? Can a thing both be and not be at the same time or be both necessary and impossible? How could he tell? His doubt with regard to sense-perception made him very hesitant to accept the infallibility of reason. He believed in the testimony of sense till it was contradicted by the verdict of reason. Well, perhaps, there is above reason another judge who if he appeared would convict reason of falsity and if such a third arbiter is not yet apparent it does not follow that he does not exist.

Al-Ghazali, then, considers the possibility that life in this world is a dream by comparison

with the world to come; and when a man dies, things may come to appear differently to him from what he now beholds. There may be an order of reality different from this spatio-temporal order which may be revealed to a level of consciousness other than the so-called normal consciousness such as that of the mystics or the prophets. Such was the movement of al-Ghazali's thought, which though formulated a little artificially in the *Munqidh* was dramatic enough to make out a case for the possibility of a form of apprehension higher than rational apprehension, that is, apprehension as the mystic's inspiration of the prophet's revelation.

Al-Ghazali's method of doubt or sceptical attitude did certainly have its historical antecedents. The Ash'arites' system of atomism, by reducing all categories except substance (*jauhar*) and quality (*ard*) to mere subjectivities, virtually amounted to a form of scepticism. Even earlier the Mu'tazilites like al-Nazzam (d. 231/845) and abu al-Hudhail (d. 266/840) had formulated the principle of doubt as the beginning of all knowledge. But with al-Ghazali this was as much a matter of an inherent trait of his intellectual disposition as a principle.

One may be tempted to say that his keenly alert and sensitive mind, though exposed from early youth to all the various intellectual and spiritual movements of the times such as scholasticism, rationalism, mysticism, etc., was not fully captured by any one single movement. Ambitious and self-confident, he had been in a way playing with the various influences rather than affected exclusively by anyone of them. His restless soul had always been trying to reach for what it had not attained. In his sincere and open search for absolute truth, he possibility remained oscillating for a long time between the mountains of belief and disbelief—moments

when he might have found comfort in his religious convictions with complete submission to the teachings of the *Qur'an* and the moments when his doubts and scepticism might have overwhelmed him, clamouring for indubitable certainty.

It is certainly very difficult to map the exact chronology of the spiritual development of such a complex mind as that of al-Ghazali's. The usual method of working out to history of the mental development of an author on the basis of the chronological order of his works is not possible in the case of al-Ghazali for our knowledge of his works is incomplete both with regard to their extent and relative order, not to speak of exact dating. None of his works, not even *al-Munqidh* which has often been compared with the *Confessions* if Augustine allows us a peep into the inward working of his soul. It is merely a schematised description of his spiritual development and not an existential study of the 'phenomenology' of his soul; he has simply arranged in a logical order what must necessarily have come to him in a broken and sporadic form.

Nevertheless, *al-Munqidh* is our most valuable source to determine al-Ghazali's relative position with regard to the various schools of thought around him. He had been moving through them all these years, studying them very closely in his quest for certainty, and of them he now gives us a critical evaluation in a summary fashion. He divides the various seekers after truth into the four distinct groups: Theologians, Mystics, Authoritarians (*Ta'limites*), and Philosophers.

His criticism of the theologians is very mild. He himself had been brought up in their tradition and was thoroughly saturated into their system. It is doubtful if he ever parted company

with them completely. He did not cease to be a theologian even when he became a mystic and his criticism of the philosophers was essentially from the stand-point of a theologian. Only he was dissatisfied with the scholastic method of the theologians, for it could not bring any intellectual certainty; their doctrines, he deemed, however, to be correct.

His belief in God, Prophecy, and Last Judgement were too deeply rooted in him to be shaken altogether. His scepticism with regard to them, if at all was a temporary phase. He only very much desired a confirmation of these fundamental beliefs either on some philosophical grounds or through some sort of first-hand experience.

So far as the mystics were concerned, al-Ghazali found himself hardly in a position to level any criticism against them except for the extravagantly pantheistic utterances or antinomian tendencies of some of the intoxicated Sufis. They were essentially men of feeling (*arbab al-ahwal*) rather than men of words (*ashab al-ahwal*) and he had himself early realized the importance of experience and states rather than of definitions and dogmas. The claims of the mystics he knew could not be challenged by one who lacked their experiences. Al-Ghazali held a very poor opinion of the pretensions of those whom he called the party of *ta'lim* or authoritative instruction also known as Isma'iliyyah and Batiniyyah. Theirs was a kind of Muslim popery of Montanist movement.

They renounced reason and held that truth can be attained only by a submissive acceptance of the pronouncements of an infallible Imam. This doctrine indeed was a part of the propaganda of the Fatimid Caliphate (297/909–555/1160) with its centre in Cairo and, thus had its moorings in the political chaos of the

day. Al-Ghazali's examination of the Ta'limites was certainly due to his love for thoroughness in his search for truth, but perhaps, he also wanted to make clear his position with regard to an ideology having political string behind it. It was the fourth class of the seekers of truth, namely, the philosophers, who engaged his attention most of all and troubled his mind more than anyone else.

Al-Ghazali occupies a position unique in the history of Muslim religious and philosophical thought by whatever standard we may judge him: breadth of learning, originality, or influence. He has been acclaimed as the Proof of Islam (*hujjat al-Islam*), the Ornament of Faith (*zain al-din*) and the Renewer of Religion (*mujaddid*). Al-Subki (d.771/1370), went so far in his estimation of him as to claim that if there had been a prophet after Muhammad, al-Ghazali would have been the man. To be sure he gathered in his own person all the significant intellectual and religious movements of his time and lived over again in the inwardness of his soul the various spiritual phases developed by Islam. He was in turn a canon-lawyer and a scholastic, a philosopher and a sceptic, a mystic and a theologian, a traditionalist and a moralist.

His position as a theologian of Islam is undoubtedly the most eminent. Through a living synthesis of his creative and energetic personality, he revitalised Muslim theology and re-orientated its values and attitudes. His combination of spiritualisation and fundamentalism in Islam had such a marked stamp of his powerful personality that it has continued to be accepted by the community since his time.

His outlook on philosophy is characterised by a remarkable originality which, however, is

more critical than constructive. In his works on philosophy one is struck by a keen philosophical acumen and penetration with which he gives a clear and readable exposition of the views of the philosophers, the subtlety and analyticity with which he criticises them and the candour and open-mindedness with which he accepts them whenever he finds them to be true. Nothing frightened him nor fascinated him and through an extra-ordinary independence of mind, he became a veritable challenge to the philosophies of Aristotle and Plotinus and to their Muslim representatives before him, al-Farabi and ibn Sina.

The main trends of the religious and philosophical thought of al-Ghazali, however, come close to the temper of the modern mind. The champions of the modern movement of religious empiricism, on the one hand and that of logical positivism, on the other, paradoxical though it may seem, would equally find comfort in his works. The teachings of this remarkable figure of Islam pertaining either to religion or philosophy, either constructive or critical, cannot, however, be fully understood without knowing the story of his life with some measure of detail, for, in his case, life and thought were one: rooted in his own personality. Whatever he thought and wrote came with the living reality of his own experience.

Al-Ghazali's critical examination of the method and doctrines of the philosophers is the most exciting and important phase of his intellectual inquiry. He was not at all against philosophical investigation as such. His early interest in philosophy is evidenced by the treatises that he wrote on logic such as *Mi'yar al-'Ilm fi Fann al-Mantiq*:

"The Touchstone of Science in Logic" (quite an elaborate treatise) and *Mihakk al-Nazar fi*

al-Mantiq: "The Touchstone of Speculation in Logic" (a smaller work).

In the history of Muslim thought his is the first instance of a theologian who was thoroughly schooled in the ways of the philosophy; the doctors of Islam before him either had a dread of philosophy considering it a dangerous study or dabbled in it just to qualify themselves for polemics against the philosophers. But al-Ghazali very strongly realized that to refute a system before literally inhabiting it and getting thoroughly immersed into its very depths was to act blindly. He tells us:

"A man cannot grasp what is defective in any of the sciences unless he has so complete a grasp of the science in question that he equals its most learned exponents in the appreciation of its fundamental principles and even goes beyond and surpasses them...."

In all intellectual honesty he refrained from saying a word against the philosophers till he had completely mastered their systems.

He applied himself so assiduously to the study of the entire sweep of Greek philosophy current in his time and attained such a firm grasp of its problems and methods that he produced one of the best compendia of it in Arabic entitled as *Maqasid al-Falasifah* (The Intentions of the Philosophers). This compendium was such a faithful exposition of Aristotelianism that when it came to be known to the Christian scholastics through a Latin translation made as early as 540/1145 by the Spanish philosopher and translator Dominicus Gundisalvus, it was taken to be the work of a genuine Peripatetic.

Albert, the Great (d. 679/1280), Thomas Aquinas (d. 673/1274), and Roger Bacon (d. 694/1294) all repeatedly mentioned the name

of the author of the "*Intentions of the Philosophers*" along with Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd as the true representatives of Arab Aristotelianism. But never did Arab Aristotelianism find a more vigorous foe than al-Ghazali. His compendium in philosophy was merely peripatetic to his *Tahafut al-Falasifah* (The Incoherence of the Philosophers) in which he levelled a devastating attack on the doctrine of the Muslim Peripatetic with a dialectic as subtle as any in the history of philosophy.

Al-Ghazali, for the purposes of his scrutiny, divided the philosophers into three main groups: The materialists (*dahriyyun*), the naturalists or the deists (*tabi'yyun*), and the theists (*ilahiyyun*). The materialists completely dispensed with the idea of God and believed that the universe has existed eternally without a creator: a self-subsisting system that operates and develops by itself, has its own laws, and can be understood by itself.

The naturalists or the deists, struck but the wonders of creation and informed of a running purpose and wisdom in the scheme of things while engaged in their manifold researches into the sciences of phenomena, admitted the existence of a wise Creator or Deity, but rejected the spirituality and immortality of the human soul. They explained the soul away in naturalistic terms as an epiphenomenon of the body and believed that the death of the latter led to the complete non-existence of the former. Belief in heaven, hell, resurrection, and judgment they considered as old wives' tales or pious fictions.

Al-Ghazali discussed the theists at length for they, according to him, held a comparatively more final position and exposed the defects of the materialists and the naturalists quite effectively, thus saving him from doing so for

himself. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle he listed as theists but concentrated on Aristotle who had criticised all his predecessors and even had refuted his own teacher, excusing himself of this by saying:

"Plato is dear to us. And truth is dear, too. Nay, truth is dearer than Plato."

As far as the transmission of Aristotle's philosophy in Arabic was concerned, al-Ghazali found that none of the Muslim philosophers had accomplished anything comparable to the achievements of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. These two were Aristotle's most faithful and capable translators and commentators; the works of others were marked with disorder and confusion.

Thus, al-Ghazali came finally to concentrate on that philosophical thought of his day which had emerged from the writings of these two theistic philosophers (particularly Ibn Sina) and applied himself to its examination in a systematic manner. He divided the philosophical sciences into mathematics, logic, physics, politics, ethics, and metaphysics, and went into their details in order to see if there really was anything false or untenable.

He was most scientific in his approach: ready to accept whatever he found to be based on the evidence of factual data or susceptible of proof by argument in conformity with the principles of reason. He had least hesitation in accepting as true much of what the philosophers taught with regard to their science of mathematics, logic, and physics; he even had no serious quarrel with them in the spheres of politics and ethics.

The most grievous errors of the theistic philosophers, he found, consisted in their metaphysical view which, unlike mathematical

and natural sciences, were not grounded in compelling reason or positive inquiry but on conjecture and fanciful speculations. Had their metaphysics been so very well grounded in sound reasoning as their mathematical sciences were, they would have agreed amongst themselves on metaphysical issues as they did on the mathematical ones.

But, above all, what al-Ghazali saw to his dismay was that the philosophies of al-Farabi and Ibn Sina at points did violence without any philosophic warrant or justification to the principles of religion as enunciated in the *Qur'an*.

His empirical and theological spirit revolted very strongly against this. The positive facts of religion could not be sacrificed for sheer metaphysical speculations, nor could they be interpreted externally from the point of view of a pre-conceived system of philosophy. These had to be interpreted intrinsically and reckoned on their own grounds.

The Muslim philosophers had failed to take this empirical stand-point. They had also been slow in realizing that notwithstanding a great breadth of outlook that the study of Greek philosophy had brought to the Muslims, there was in the ultimate analysis quite a gulf between the inspiration of the *Qur'anic* teachings and the spirit of Hellenism. Carried away by their enthusiasm to bring a reconciliation between philosophy and religion, al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, according to al-Ghazali, had so compressed the dogmas of Islamic religion within the moulds of Aristotelian and Plotinian systems as to fall either into a morass of inconsistencies or get implicated into heretical positions.

All this, al-Ghazali brought out with most accomplished understanding and admirable

skill, and with a 'transcendental' dialectic as subtle as that of Kant's in his *tahafut al-Falasifah* which indeed is the most important of all his works from the point of view of our present study. Within less than a hundred years it called forth the most stimulating rejoinder (entitled *Tahafut al-Tahafut*) from the celebrated ibn Rushd and then a rejoinder of a rejoinder from Muslih al-Din Mustafa ibn Yusuf al-Bursawi generally known as Khwajah Zadah, a Turkish theologian who died in 893/1488. These works, particularly the first two, taken together epitomise the essential problems arising from the impact of classical philosophy on the teachings of religion.

Method and Problems of Tahafut: It is generally believed that al-Ghazali wrote his *Tahafut al-Falasifah* during the period of his doubts, but in fact, the work is essentially of a polemical nature and shows in him an odd combination of scepticism and ecstatic assurances. The general effect of the teaching of the philosophers, al-Ghazali felt, was so ruinous to the religious and moral life of the masses that his well-nigh apostolic humanism revolted against it and he dedicated himself to an open warfare against the philosophers.

There is no doubt about the theological inspiration and the polemical spirit of the *tahafut* but then we add most emphatically that neither of them seriously affects the great philosophical value of this work. The modern reader cannot fail to be struck with clear anticipation of Hume (d. 1190/1776), Schleiermacher (d. 1250/1834), Ritschl (d. 1307/1889), and others, and even of the logical positivists of our day in some of the arguments and the general *motif* of the *Tahafut*. His general position may be briefly described to be that the truths of the positive facts of religion

can either be proved nor disproved, and to do otherwise leads the philosophers to take more often than not quite nonsensical positions.

Al-Ghazali assails the philosophers on twenty points (beginning with creation and ending with the last things) and endeavours to show that their dogmas of the eternity and the everlastingness of the world are false; their assertion that God is the creator of the world is dishonest for it is flagrantly inconsistent with their dogma of the eternity of the world; that they fail to prove the existence, the unity, the simplicity and the incorporeality of God or God's knowledge either of the universal or of the particulars; that their views with regard to the souls of the celestial spheres, and the spheres' knowledge of the particulars and the purpose of their movement are unfounded that their theory of causation which attributes effects to the very nature of the causes is false; and that they cannot establish the spirituality of the should, nor prove its immortality; and, finally, that their denial of the resurrection of the bodies in the life hereafter is philosophically unwarranted. Al-Ghazali charges the philosophers with infidelity on three counts, viz.,—

- (1) eternity of the world;
- (2) denial of God's knowledge of the particulars, and
- (3) denial of bodily resurrection.

For the rest their views are heretical or born of religious indifference. But in all they are involved in contradictions and suffer from confusion of thought.

The problem which al-Ghazali considers the most important is that of the eternity (*qidam*) of the world to which he allots the

greatest space, almost a quarter of his book. This has been one of the most challenging and uncompromising problems in the conflict between religion and philosophy. The advocates of orthodoxy considered the eternity of the universe to be the most pernicious thesis of the philosophers and vehemently combated against it. Al-Ash'ari (d. 324/935) wrote a refutation of it in his *Kitab al-Fusul* which probably is the earliest scholastic treatise dealing with this question, and ibn Hazm (d. 457/1064) made the doctrine a dividing line between the orthodox and the heterodox sects. The orthodox could not possibly concede the philosophers' claim of the eternity of the world, for with them there is nothing eternal but God; all else is created (*hadith*).

To make anything co-eternal with God is to violate the strict principle of monotheism, for that infringes the absoluteness and infinity of God and reduces Him to the position of an artificer: a Demiurge. Virtually, the doctrine drives one to the materialists' position that the world is an independent universe, a self-subsistent system, which develops by itself and can be understood by itself. All this was hard to swallow for a theologian like al-Ghazali.

The philosophers like al-Farabi and ibn Sina as Muslims did not deny that God is an eternal creator of the diverse, but as true Aristotelians believed that God's activity consists merely in bringing forth in the state of actuality the virtual possibilities inherent in the prime matter which was alleged to be co-eternal with Him. This was in conformity with the Aristotelian notion of change not as a passage from non-being into, which would make it unintelligible, but as a process by which what is merely 'potential being' passes over, through 'from,' into 'actual being.' So, God as an

eternal creator constantly combines matter with new forms; He did not create the universe out of sheer nothingness at a definite time in the past. As a corollary they believed in the infinity of time.

Al-Ghazali, on the other hand, in accordance with the obvious teachings of the *Qur'an* firmly holds the position that the world was created by God out of absolute nothingness at a certain moment in the past which is at a finite interval from the present. He created not only forms but also matter and time along with them which had a definite beginning and hence is finite.

The two positions as outlined above readily remind one of Kant's thesis and antithesis in the first antimony which present an impossible problem in the sense that conditions requisite for their verification or falsification are *de facto* impossible. One is tempted to say that al-Ghazali does recognise the impossibility of the problem for he clearly proclaims that he does not intend to defend his own position but only to refute that of the philosophers. This is true in general of all the other disputations in *Tahafut al-Falasifah*. The arguments of the philosophers are presented with very considerable plausibility, but the dialectical skill and philosophical acumen which al-Ghazali employs to refute them are also overwhelming. Though the whole discussion is surcharged with a polemical spirit, yet one cannot fail to see that al-Ghazali's stand-point throughout remains highly scientific and logical; he does not succumb merely to verbal quibbles. He clearly says that he does not have any quarrel with the philosophers on the usages of terms.

Al-Ghazali's quarrel with the philosophers is because many of their particular arguments are logically false and the various positions that

they take in their system as a whole are inconsistent with one another, but, above all, because some of their basic assumptions are unfounded. These assumptions, al-Ghazali proves most powerfully, can neither be demonstrated logically, nor are they self-evident through 'intuition'. Such, for example, is the assumption that every event has a cause or that causes produce their effects necessarily. The Muslim philosophers have accepted these assumptions merely in the dogmatic tradition of Aristotelian philosophy.

The faulty reasonings of the philosophers or the inconsistencies in their positions are remediable but not so the uncritical acceptance of their assumptions. Al-Ghazali for himself is not prepared to accept any part of the Aristotelian system except the first principles of logic and rules of syllogism— nothing else until and unless it has logical corrosiveness about it. On the other hand, he is not prepared to reject any of the doctrines of religion until and unless it is disproved with a similar logical rigour and cogency. Nothing is 'possible' in philosophy till it is logically necessary and nothing is 'impossible' in religion till it is logically self-contradictory.

Apparently, this is a double-faced criterion to judge variously the truths of philosophic assumptions and those of religious assumptions, but from the point of view of philosophy of religion it is perfectly justified. Philosopher *qua* philosopher has to accept the facts of religion as given by religion; this is the *sine qua non* of any empirical philosophy of religion.

Thus, in spite of the fact that al-Ghazali's whole polemic against the philosophers derives its inspiration from the Ash'arite theology, his method remains in its essentials purely philosophical, fulfilling in its own way some

of the most important requirements of the modern and even contemporary approaches to the problems of the philosophy of religion.

These few observations with regard to al-Ghazali's method in the *Tahafut* were necessary before we could enter into some of the detailed arguments which he gives in the refutation of the philosophers' various positions.

Eternity of the World: The proof of the philosophers for the eternity of the world starts with certain assumptions with regard to the notions of cause and will. These they take to be true axiomatically:

- (1) Every effect has a cause.
- (2) Cause must be the action of some external force other than the effect.
- (3) Cause or an act of will when executed must immediately lead to the effect.

For world's coming from non-existence to existence there certainly should have been some cause this cause; could not be a physical cause for *ex hypothesi* none yet existed. If this cause arose from an act of will by God at some specific time, then the divine will itself should have been determined by some other cause. This cause which led God to change His mind should certainly be outside His mind; but again this was not possible, for nothing outside Him yet existed. Thus, one is forced to conclude that either nothing ever arose from the being of God—which is not true, for the world does exist—or that the world must have been in existence from all eternity, as an immediate effect of His eternal will.

Al-Ghazali declines to subscribe to any one of the assumptions as stated above and shows that belief in the origination of the world from the eternal will of God at a specific moment of time as chosen by Him involves no violation

of the fundamental principles of logic. The assumptions of the philosophers, that every effect has a cause and that a cause is a force external to its effect, do not have a logical coerciveness about them. It is quite legitimate to believe that God's will does not have any cause or at least that this cause does not lie outside His will but in itself. Similarly, it is not logically necessary that the effect should follow a cause immediately, for it is not logically contradictory to hold the notion of 'a delayed effect.' It is possible to think that God's will is eternal and yet an object of that will has occurred at some period in time.

Here, a distinction should be made between the eternity of God's will and the eternity of the object of His will. God, for example, can eternally will that Socrates and Plato should be born at such and such a time and that the one should be born before the other. Hence, it is not logically illegitimate to affirm the orthodox belief that God eternally willed that the world should come into being at such and such a definite moment in time.

But the philosophers point out a real difficulty here. According to them, it is impossible to find out a differentiating principle for God's eternal choice of a particular moment for the creation of the world. All moments of time are completely similar; how is it possible to choose between two completely similar things? Why, in short, was the world not created earlier or later than when it was created? One of the answers to this is that there arises no question of world's being created earlier or later, for time yet was not; time too was created along with the creation of the world, i.e., both world and time are finite in duration. Al-Ghazali adds further that should one assume with the philosophers that time is infinite, then at any

present moment that infinite time has been brought to an end and a time that has an end is not infinite but finite. It is note-worthy that is exactly the argument given by Kant in the thesis of his first antinomy.

Al-Ghazali's real stand-point, however, is that God just arbitrarily chose one particular moment rather than another for world's coming into being. We need ask no more about this choice, for god's will is completely undetermined. His will does not depend upon distinctions in the outside world, for it is itself the producer of all the distinctions therein. This creating of the distinctions in fact is the true significance of God's will. God chooses a particular moment for the creation of the universe as He chooses particular direction for the movement of the spheres of the (Ptolemaic) heaven, in some cases from east to west in others from west to east (as described in the Aristotelian astronomy) even when the reversal of directions would have made no difference. There is no way to explain God's choice either in one case or the other.

The difficulty posed by the philosophers arises because of their misguided attempt to understand the nature of divine will altogether in the terms of man's will. Certainly, God's will is not like man's as God's knowledge is not like man's knowledge. So far as God's knowledge is concerned, the philosophers avowedly admit that it differs from man's knowledge in so many respects that in their final position it becomes indeed an inexplicable mystery. God, according to them, possesses the knowledge of all the universals without this knowledge necessitating plurality, without its being additional to His essence and without its multiplying in proportion to the multiplicity of the objects known. Some of them assert after

Aristotle that God is the knower, the knowledge, and the known, and the three are one. Should we judge all this by what applies to man's knowledge, it will be found to be an utter impossibility.

While the philosophers admit that God's knowledge cannot be compared with man's knowledge, they insist upon drawing a comparison between God's will and man's will. This is exactly what al-Ghazali calls the incoherence of the philosophers and, according to him, their thought-system taken as a whole reveals quite a number of such incoherences. Indeed, the philosophers' very notion of eternal creation is self-contradictory and meaningless. Is it sense to speak of a creation of that which exists eternally? If God and the prime matter are both eternal existents, does it make sense to say that one is the cause of the other? Can the relation between two existents *qua* existents be regarded as a causal one?

Further, the philosophers put different constructions upon their notions of space and time. They assume time to be infinite and space to be finite and yet consider time to be co-implicant of movement in space. Al-Ghazali insists rightly that one who believes in the finite of space must in consistency assume the existence of finite time, particularly when one holds the Aristotelian position that space, time, and movement in space are all related to one another. And if they insist that it is impossible to think of empty space, they should equally realize that it is impossible to conceive of an empty time.

These are just a few of the inconsistencies of the philosophers pointed out by al-Ghazali in the course of his disputation with regard to the eternity of the world and they could be mentioned here only very briefly, considering

the space at our disposal. One further point of criticism may, however, be added for its importance in the history of modern philosophy. Prior to its origination, the philosophers hold, the world must have either been possible (*mumkin*), or impossible (*mumtani*), or necessary (*wajib*).

It is impossible that it should have been impossible; for that which is impossible in itself is never brought into existence. Again, it is impossible for it to have been necessary in itself, for that which is necessary in itself is never deprived of existence. It follows then that the existence of the world must have always been possible in itself, otherwise it would never have come to be. This possibility cannot inhere in possibility itself, nor in the agent, nor in no-substratum, for the possible is that which is in the process of *becoming* actual.

Hence, the subject of possibility is some substratum which is susceptible of possibility and this is matter. Now, this matter cannot be considered to have been originated. If it had been originated, the possibility of its existence would have preceded its existence. In that case possibility would have existed in itself, but possibility existing in itself is unintelligible. Hence, matter is eternal and it is only the passing over of the forms to matter which is originated.

In rebutting this highly sophisticated argument of the philosophers al-Ghazali points out in Kantian fashion that possibility like impossibility is a purely subjective notion to which nothing need correspond in reality. If possibility requires an existent to correspond to it, so would impossibility require something to correspond to it, but avowedly there is no existing thing in concrete reality to which impossibility may be referred. Hence, possibility

like impossibility is merely a concept; the assumption of an existing substratum to which this concept may be related is to have a metaphysical jump from mere thought to actual existence and is to commit as we understand now an ontological fallacy.

Theory of Emanation: The entire argument of the philosophers with regard to the eternity of the world is, thus, full of contradictions and unproved assumptions, but the most manifest of their inconsistencies and the sheer baselessness of their assumptions become signally conspicuous when they come to explain the origination of the world from the being of God in the terms of the Plotinian Theory of Emanation. Plotinus considers the world to be a necessary outflow from the being of God like light from the sun or better as Spinoza described it later like the properties of a triangle from a triangle.

Muslim philosophers' subscription to this view according to al-Ghazali is the clearest evidence that their verbal avowal of creation is a mere dissimulation and duplicity. The problem of emanation with the philosophers, however, arises because of their over-emphasis on the abstract unity and absolute perfection of God. Creation through an act of volition implies both will and knowledge and these cannot be predicated of God as attributes apart from His essence without doing violence to His absolute unity.

Further, both will and knowledge are limitations will in particular implies a deficiency in a being who wills, for it means that he desires or wants to have that which he lacks. Hence, the philosophers elaborated an ingenious theory of emanation which contrives to erect a cosmological staircase between the stable stillness of God's unity and the changing and varied

multiplicity of the world. This staircase is constituted of a finely graded series of intelligences and souls of celestial spheres, each emitting from the other in an hierarchical fashion. The view that of celestial spheres are perfect and have souls and intelligences superior to that man had the overwhelming authority of Aristotle and further it was possible and even fascinating to conceive of them in terms of angels as described by the theologians.

The emanationism of the Muslim philosophers in the final analysis worked under two governing principles: First, it is not thinkable that from God who is a pure unity anything could proceed except that which is itself a unity. This gave rise to the formula: from one only one can follow. Secondly, being has two aspects: it is either necessary (*wajib*) or possible (*mumkin*); it is either essence (*mahiyyah*) or existence (*anniyah*). In the case of God alone are existence, identical; in all other beings essence is separate from existence. From this it follows that all things are possible by their essence and they become necessary by the existence given to them by God.

The first emanation from the First Principle (*al-mabda' al-awwal*), the Necessary Being (*al-wajib al-wujud*), i.e., God, is the first intelligence (*al-'aql al-awwal*) which is numerically one. Its existence is possible in itself and necessary through the First Principle; further, it knows its own essence as well as the essence of the First Principle. From its two-fold existence and two-fold knowledge springs a multiplicity of knowledge and existence. The first intelligence, in fact, has three kinds of knowledge: of the First Principle, of its own essence in so far as it is necessary and of its possible being. One might ask: What is the source of this three-foldness in the first

intelligence when the principle from which it emanates is one?

The answer is: from the first Principle only one proceeds, i.e., the essence of the first intelligence by which it knows itself. Now, its knowledge of its principle is evidently necessary, although this necessity is not derived from that principle. Again, being in itself the first intelligence cannot owe its possibility to the First Principle but possesses it in its own self. Though only one should proceed from one, yet it is possible that the first effect may come to possess not from the First Principle but by itself certain necessary qualities which express some relation or negation of relation and give rise to plurality. Thus, from the three kinds of knowledge possessed by the first intelligence emanate three beings, but only one from each kind. As it knows its principle there proceeds from it a second intelligence; as it knows its essence there proceeds from it the first soul of the highest sphere (which is the ninth heaven); and as it knows itself as possible in itself there proceeds from it the body of that sphere.

In a similar fashion from the second intelligence emanates the third intelligence, the soul of the stellar sphere and the body of that sphere. From the third intelligence emanates the fourth intelligence, the soul of the sphere of Saturn and the body of that sphere. From the fourth intelligence emanates the fifth intelligence, the soul of the sphere of Jupiter and the body of that sphere. Now there are, according to the then current Ptolemaic system, only nine celestial spheres in all including the sphere of the fixed stars all in concentric circles with earth in the centre. So, starting from the First Principle the emanations proceed on till the last or the tenth intelligence appears and with it the last sphere of the moon and its soul.

The tenth intelligence, also called the active intellect (*al-'aql al-fa'al*), acts in our world. It produces the first matter (*hayula*) which is passive and formless but which is the basis of the four elements from which all creatures arise.

The composition and decomposition of the elements is the cause of generation and corruption of all bodies. But all these transformations take place under the influence of the movement of the spheres. As the active intellect is the producer of matter, so it is the dispenser of forms, *dator formarum* (*wahib al-suwar*). It gives to each matter its proper form and it also gives each body a soul (which in fact is its form) when that body is ready to receive it. Thus, active intellect is also the source of the existence of the human souls.

But the human soul does not feel at home in its physical abode and yearns for nothing less than the First Principle Himself. Hence, it starts its spiritual journey back to the original source traversing through the various stages of the intelligences of the spheres. This is a rounded though brief description of the emanationistic world-view so enthusiastically elaborated by the Muslim philosophers, by ibn Sina, for example, in both of his major works on philosophy, viz., *Kitab al-Shifa'* and *Kitab al-Najat* and by al-Farabi in his *al-Madinat al-Fadilah*.

Determinism implicit in this emanationistic world-view is so opposed to the theistic voluntarism of the Ash'arite world-view that al-Ghazali launches the most vehement attack against it. His strictures against this grand cosmological construction made out of so many various foreign imported ideas are the strongest and the bitterest of all others that may be found in the entire *Tahafut*. All this, he inveighs, is arbitrary reasoning, idle speculation; a wild

guess work; darkness piled upon darkness. If someone says he saw things of this kind in a dream, it would be inferred that he was suffering from some disease. Even an insane person could not rest satisfied with such postulates. In our own times, to say nothing of the scientists, F. R. Tennant who may be described as an eminent 'religious positivist' holds the theory of emanation more or less in the same estimation.

Al-Ghazali's criticism of the emanationistic argument consists in showing, on the one hand, that it fails to account for the multiplicity and composition in the universe and, on the other, that it does not at all succeed in safe-guarding the absolute unity of God. If the formula ever so glibly repeated that from one only one proceeds should be observed strictly logically, then all the beings in the world would be units, each of which would be an effect of some other unit above it, as it would be the cause of some other unit below it in a lineal fashion. But in fact this is not the case. Every object, according to the philosophers themselves, is composed at least of form and matter. How does a composite thing such as a body then come into existence? Does it have only one cause? If the answer is in the affirmative, then the assertion that only one proceeds from one becomes null and void. If, on the other hand, a composite thing has a composite cause, then the same question will be repeated in the case of this cause so on and so forth till one arrives at a point where the compound necessarily meets the simple. This contact between the compound effect and the unitary cause wherever it occurs would falsify the principle that only one proceeds from one.

Now, strictly speaking, all the existents in the universe are characterised by composition and only the First Principle, i.e., God, alone can be said to possess true simplicity or unity,

for in Him alone there is the complete identity of essence and existence. This would lead us necessarily to the conclusion that either the principle of 'only one from one' fails to account for the composition and multiplicity which is apparent in the universe or that even God does not possess a genuine unity. But the philosophers cloak the issue with their artificial subtleties and the grandiose constructions they put upon their emanationistic foundations.

What earthly and even unearthly relation is there, al-Ghazali questions rightly, between the first intelligence's having a possible existence and the body of the sphere of the second intelligence which is supposed to proceed from it? Neither logic nor experience can substantiate this wild supposition and as such it is no more than pure nonsense. Further, how is it possible that from two kinds of knowledge of the first intelligence, that is, knowledge of the First Principle and that of itself, should arise two kinds of existence, first, that of the second intelligence and, second, that of the soul of the highest sphere? How can the knowledge of a thing lead to the existence of a thing (as we would now put it after Kant) without committing an obvious ontological fallacy? How can the knower emanate from the knowing al-Ghazali rightly wonders, as does F.R. Tennant, and like him deplores that of all the people. Philosophers should believe in such mystical nonsense.

Even if the triplicity with which the philosophers characterise the first intelligence should be taken for granted (which indeed cannot be done) it fails to account for all that they want to deduce from it. The body of the highest sphere, which according to them proceeds only from one aspect of the essence of the first intelligence, is surely not unitary in nature but composite and that in three ways.

First, as stated above, it is composed of form and matter, as indeed all bodies are according to the philosophers' own admission. True, form and matter always exist conjointly in all bodies, yet, they are so different from each other that one cannot be the cause of the other. Hence, form and matter of the body of the highest sphere require two principles for their existence and not one. A unitary aspect of the three-fold character of the first intelligence fails to account for it.

Secondly, the body of this sphere has a definite size. Its having a definite size is something additional to the bare fact of its existence. Certainly, it could have come into existence with a different size, bigger or smaller than what it is. Hence, over and above that which necessitated the existence of the body of the sphere, there should be an additional case to account for the adoption of this particular size.

Thirdly, in the highest heaven, there are marked out two points as its poles, which are fixed. This fact was admitted by the philosophers in accordance with the Aristotelian astronomy. Now, either all the parts of the highest sphere are similar in which case it is impossible to explain why two points should be chosen in preference to all the others as its poles; or they are different, some of them possessing properties which are not possessed by the others. Hence, we require yet another aspect in the first intelligence to be the cause for differences in the various parts of the highest sphere which differences alone would justify the choice of two points therein to be the poles.

In view of what has been stated above, it is sheer 'ignorance' on the part of the philosophers to hold that the body of the highest sphere has emanated only from one aspect of

the essence of first intelligence. Either the principle that only one proceeds from one is true, in which case the first intelligence which is not a mere triplicity but a whole multiplicity remains unexplained. Or this principle is an empty formula signifying nothing, and, thus, making it possible that "many may proceed from one." In the latter case the infinite variety and plurality of the world can be directly derived from the unity of God and there is no need to erect an emanationistic staircase between Him and the world.

The above principle certainly collapses when we come to the second intelligence, for it is supposed to be, in one of its aspects, the cause of the sphere of the fixed stars. These are twelve hundred or so (according to the then Greek or Arab astronomers' reckoning) and are different in magnitude, shape, position, colour, and in respect of their special function in nature, etc. Each one of these factors in every single star needs a separate cause as its determinant (*murajjih*). All this necessitates a bewildering multiplicity in the second intelligence and also indirectly presupposes the same in the first intelligence in so far as the latter is the emanative cause of the former.

Should the above arguments fail to convince the philosophers, there is another way to show that the first intelligence is more than a mere triplicity. Is the self-knowledge of the first intelligence identical with its essence or other than it? It is not possible that it should be identical, for knowledge is not the same thing as that which is known.

Hence, the first intelligence is not a triplicity but a quadruplicity, to wit: its essence, its knowledge of itself, its knowledge of the First Principle and its being a possible existent by itself. To all these four aspects there can be

added yet another, namely, its being a necessary being whose necessity is derived from an external cause. All this proves that the first intelligence has five aspects and not three, as arbitrarily assumed by the philosophers. Whether the first intelligence has five aspects or three, it certainly is not of purely unitary character according to the philosophers' own admission. This shows that there is something in the effect which is not present in the cause, i.e., the First Principle, and this is scandalous.

Not only does the formula that only one proceeds from one become shame-facedly invalid right at the outset, but further, according to al-Ghazali, the entire emanationistic line of argument does great violence to the concept of God's unity and, thus, nullifies the very purpose for which it is adopted. There is no reason, according to him, that the very arguments which the philosophers advance to establish the triple character of the first intelligence should not be applied to God Himself. One of the aspects of plurality in the first intelligence according to the philosophers is its being a possible existent by itself. It may be asked: Is its being possible identical with its existence or other than it? If it is identical, no plurality would arise from it. If it is other than its existence, then why should it not be possible to say that there is as much plurality in the First Principle, i.e., God Himself, for He not only has existence but is necessary in His existence? The necessity of existence as such is other than existence itself. In truth, existence may be considered to be a generic concept divided into necessary and possible. If one specific difference is an addition to existence *per se* in one case, it should be considered so in the other also.

If the philosophers insist that the possibility of existence is other than existence in the case

of the first intelligence, through the same argument they should admit that necessity of existence is different from existence in the case of the First Principle. Similarly, al-Ghazali asks: Is the first intelligence's knowledge of its principle identical with its existence and with its knowledge of itself or other than the two? If it is identical, then there will be no plurality in its nature. But if it is other than the two, then such a plurality exists also in the First Principle, for he too knows Himself as well as what is other than Himself.

Thus, al-Ghazali contends that either there can be no plurality in the first intelligence or if it is there, then it is for the same reasons in the First Principle too, and therefore, the beings characterised by diversity and plurality would directly proceed from Him. Al-Ghazali forces this conclusion upon the philosophers through their own logic. For himself al-Ghazali believes that:

"The First Principle is an omnipotent and willing agent: He does what He wills, and ordains as He likes and He creates the similar and dissimilar things alike, whenever and in whatever manner He wills? The impossibility of such a belief is neither a self-evident truth, nor a matter of inferential knowledge."

Al-Ghazali freakily and rightly confesses that the problem of God's relation with the universe in the final analysis remains ever beyond the comprehension of human understanding. The inquiry into the manner in which the world proceeded from God's will, He urges, is "an idle and aimless venture."

The *modus operandi* of God's creative activity is wholly inexplicable and this inexplicability is inevitable; indeed, if it were explicable, it would not be 'creative.' Explanation in all its forms establishes some

connection or similarity with what is experienced, whereas God's creativity is an activity through which the experiments and what is experienced by them come to be. How can human comprehension envisage the mode of God's act of creation when it is itself the creature of that act?

The philosophers try to avoid the charge of plurality with regard to the First Principle so far as His knowledge is concerned by affirming that the First Principle does not know anything other than Himself and that His self-knowledge is the same thing as His essence; so the knowledge, the knower, and the object of knowledge are all one in Him. This indeed was originally the position of Aristotle according to whom God is describable as thought thinking itself. In Aristotle's own words:

"...it must be itself that thought thinks and its thinking is thinking on thinking."

This view of God as reflective thought, reflective in the literal sense of turning back upon itself, has been subjected to severe criticism by al-Ghazali. According to him, self-knowledge of a literal and direct sort is an impossibility. He argues with Plotinus that self-knowledge even in the case of God implies an epistemological subject-object dualism and, therefore, would impede the philosophers' thesis of the absolute unity of the First Principle.

Not only the Aristotelian conception of God as thought thinking thought does not absolve the philosophers from introducing plurality in the First Principle, but further lands them into many more difficulties with regard to their emanationistic world-view. Consider, for example, the relative positions of the First Principle and the first intelligence in terms of their knowledge. The First Principle which is the emanative cause of the first intelligence does

not know anything other than Himself, whereas the latter knows not only its cause but further knows 'itself and the three effects which proceed from it, viz., the second intelligence, the soul of the highest sphere, and the body of that sphere.

It is a strange theory, al-Ghazali observes, which makes the effect have the knowledge of its cause but not the cause of its effect. The necessity of a cause possessing the knowledge of its effect is more compelling than the necessity of an effect possessing the knowledge of its cause. In fact, the philosophers make the first intelligence superior to and 'nobler' than the First Principle in so far as from the First Principle only one thing proceeds, while from the first intelligence three things proceed. Further, the First Principle does not know what proceeds from Him; in fact, He does not know anything other than Himself, while the first intelligence knows itself, its cause, and its three effects. Al-Ghazali feels so bitter at the Aristotelian conception of God as thought thinking itself that he goes to the length of saying that the philosophers by limiting God's knowledge to the sphere of self-knowledge virtually reduce Him to the status of the dead.

God's Knowledge of the Particulars: Al-Ghazali is very emphatic and uncompromising with regard to the all-circumscribing knowledge of God:

"God knows the creeping of the black ant upon the rugged rock in a dark night, and He perceives the moment of the mote in the midst of the air."

Ibn Sina also subscribes to the view that God knows everything:

"Nothing, not even as much as a particle of dust in the heavens or on the earth, remains hidden from His knowledge."

Yet, interestingly enough, al-Ghazali does not hesitate to level a charge of infidelity against Him on this score for, according to ibn Sina, though God knows all the particulars, He knows them only in a universal way. This means that God cannot have the perceptual knowledge of particular things but knows them by way of a universal knowledge. Ibn Sina realizes the difficulty of his position and so adds that the understanding of it needs great intellectual subtlety. The reasons that he advances to deny perceptual knowledge to God are fully recognised by al-Ghazali. Perceptual knowledge is characterised both temporally and spatially, whereas God is above both time and space and so it is not possible to ascribe perceptual knowledge to Him.

A particular event occurs at a particular moment of time and suffers change with the passage of time. Change in the object of perception implies a change in the content of perception itself which obviously leads to change in the subject of perception, i.e., in the percipient himself. But change in God is unthinkable; therefore, perception of a particular event is not possible for Him. Similarly, to distinguish between one particular object and another in space is possible only through the senses and implies a special relation of a sensible thing to the percipient as being near to or far from him or in a definite position and this is impossible where God is concerned. Hence, it is not possible for God to have *perceptual* knowledge of the particulars. His knowledge can only be that which rises above the particular 'nows' and the particular 'heres,' that is to say, is of conceptual or universal nature.

Ibn Sina's position as briefly outlined above seems to be very well grounded in sound

reasoning and is quite understandable, yet, according to al-Ghazali, it is so pernicious to religion that it altogether demolishes the entire edifice of religious Law (hence his charge of infidelity). The theory implies that God cannot know any new state that emerges in John—He cannot know that John has become an infidel or a true believer, for He can know only the unbelief or the belief of man in general in a universal manner and not in specific relation to individuals. Yes, God cannot know Muhammad's proclaiming himself a prophet at the time when he did. And the same will be true of every other prophet, for God only knows that among men there are some who claim prophecy and that such and such are their attributes; but He cannot know a particular prophet as an individual, for that is to be known only by the senses.

There certainly is a point in what al-Ghazali says here for it is really difficult to show any relation between the temporal and the timeless, yet, the above criticism of his is a little wide or the mark for it is based on a misinterpretation of ibn Sina's position. By the statement that God does not have *perceptual* knowledge of the particulars, ibn Sina does not mean to say that God does not have the knowledge of the particulars of that His knowledge is restricted only to that of the universals or general concepts. Ibn Sina insists that God does have knowledge of the particulars; only this knowledge comes to Him not through sensuous perception but through intellectual perception, not from moment to moment but eternally.

Ibn Sina starts with the Aristotelian conception that God has only self-knowledge but adds emphatically that His self-knowledge necessarily implies knowledge of all the existent

things in the universe in so far as He is the principal or the ultimate source of them all. There is not a single existent particular which does not proceed from Him directly or indirectly and the existence of which does not become in some way necessary through Him. The coming into existence of particular events and objects is due to the action and interaction of the various causes but ultimately all these have to be traced back to the First Cause. God, the First Cause, has the full prescience of the working of the various causes which originate from Him and knows the effects produced by them and the time involved in their occurrence and recurrence. Thus, God knows the particular events even when they occur to a single individual under specific conditions and at particular times in so far as they are fully explicable in terms of general laws and all-pervasive causal nexus.

This may be illustrated with reference to an analogous human situation. An astronomer who has full understanding of the general laws governing the movements of the heavenly bodies can, through his proper calculations, describe the various phenomena such as the particular eclipses and the conjunctions of the stars. The analogy, however, though helpful, cannot be stretched to an identity, for, strictly speaking, there is nothing in our experience to compare with divine knowledge. Our knowledge is liable to error and is fragmentary, whereas God's knowledge is infallible and all-embracing, so much so that the whole universe is known to Him in one single congruous manifestation which is not affected by time. God is immediately aware of the entire sweep of history regarded as an ordered string of specific events in an eternal now.

Further, God not only knows but is also the very ground of the objects that He knows.

The universe proceeds from the essence of God verily because of His knowledge of the universe; the ideal representation of the universal system is the very cause of its emanation. Had God not known the universe with all its concrete particularities, the universe would never have come into being. This indeed is a very original and quite ingenious theory with regard to God's knowledge of the particulars. Yet, it is undoubtedly of highly speculative nature and so al-Ghazali is all out to bring quite an arsenal of criticism against it with a dialectical analyticity and rigour not incomparable to those of the logical positivists of our own day. He is not at all prepared to accept any of the assumptions of the philosophers until and unless they should either be statable in the form of analytical propositions or be verifiable through some kind of intuitive experience.

The attribution of knowledge to God as it is, but particularly that of 'the other,' cannot go without jeopardizing to some extent at least His absolute unity and simplicity which otherwise are so much emphasised, rather over-emphasised by the philosophers. Above all, the theory, like any of its kind, fails to relate in any satisfactory manner the eternality of God's knowledge with the transiency of human experience, which relation indeed is the very crux of religious experience. And so far as it suffers from the pre-suppositions of the intellectualistic-deterministic world-view of the philosophers, al-Ghazali simply has no patience with it. For one, it suggests a block universe such as makes little allowance if any at all even for the exercise of god's will. These are just a few general remarks to indicate the mode and the various lines of al-Ghazali's arguments against the philosophers; they may now be substantiated and amplified by listing some of the actual points of his criticism.

The statement that God's self-knowledge necessarily implies the knowledge of all the existent particulars in the universe cannot be logically validated, nor can it be verified on the basis of any analogous human experience. God's self-knowledge and His knowledge of others do not have the relation of logical entailment, for it is possible to imagine the existence of the one without imagining the existence of the other at the same time. Looking to our own experience it would be wrong to claim that man's knowledge of what is other than himself is identical with his self-knowledge and with his essence.

It may be said that God does not know other things in the first intention (*al-wajh al-awwal*) but that He knows His essence as the principle of the universe and from this His knowledge of the universe follows in the second intention (*al-wajh al-thani*), i.e. by way of a logical inference. Now, the statement of the philosophers that God knows Himself directly only as the principle of the universe, according to al-Ghazali, is as much an arbitrary assumption as the earlier statement and is exposed to exactly the same kind of criticism. According to the philosophers' own admission, it would suffice that God should know only His essence; the knowledge of His being the principle of the universe is additional to it and is not logically implicated in it. Just as it is possible for a man to know himself without knowing that he is 'an effect of God' (for his being an effect is a relation to this cause), even so it is possible for God to know Himself without knowing that He is the principle or cause.

The principle or cause is merely the relation that He bears to His effect, the universe. His knowledge of His *relation* to the universe

is not by any means entailed by His knowledge of His own essence. Do not the philosophers themselves in their doctrine with regard to the attributes of God affirm the possibility only of negative or relational statements about God on the plea that negations or relations add nothing to His essence? The knowledge of the relation, therefore, cannot be identical with the knowledge of the essence.

Hence, the philosophers' assumption that God knows His essence and thereby also knows Himself as the principle of the universe, remains unproved logically and unverified experientially. Al-Ghazali raises many more points of criticism of a similar nature which fully bring out the 'positivists' and 'analytic' thrusts in his thought. This type of criticism should have been sufficient with al-Ghazali, for it served his purpose of refuting the philosophers quite effectively, but his religious calling and persuasion impell him to launch many more attacks on the philosophers. They do not aim so much at the complete smashing of the philosophers' arguments as to bring out either inconsistencies in their various positions or more so the difficulties of a religious nature in accepting them.

Al-Ghazali fully appreciates the motive of the philosophers in elaborating their theory with regard to the nature of God's knowledge of the particulars, which is no other than that of safeguarding the immutability and the unity of God. Eliminating the factor of time or change altogether in God's knowledge, however, has difficulties of its own which will be noted presently, but there is another aspect of the philosophers' treatment of the problem of God's knowledge which lands them into a morass of contradictions and annuls the very purpose for which it is belaboured, i.e., that of establishing

the unity of God. Granted that God's knowledge remains unaffected by change, for it rises above the distinction of 'is,' 'was' and 'will,' yet how can God's knowledge remain unaffected by the multiplicity and diversity of the objects that He knows? How can it be claimed that knowledge remains unitary even when the things known are unlimited in number and are different, for knowledge has to conform to the nature of the things known? If the change in the objects of condition necessarily presupposes change in the subject, multiplicity and difference in the former presuppose the same in the latter. al-Ghazali Says:

"Would that I could understand how an intelligent person can allow himself to disbelieve the oneness of the knowledge of a thing whose states are divisible into the Past, the Present and the Future; while he would not disbelieve the oneness of knowledge which relates to all the different Genera and Species. Verily, the difference and the disparity among the diverse Genera and Species is more marked than the difference which may actually be found to exist among the states of a thing divisible in accordance with the division of time. If that difference does not necessitate multiplicity and difference, how can this do so either?"

Even though al-Ghazali is not justified in alleging that philosophers restrict God's knowledge merely to the universals, namely, the genera, the species, and the universal accidents, yet his criticism of the philosophers on this point is not vitiated by this misunderstanding and he is quite right in pointing out the inconsistency in their position.

Though the philosophers ascribe omniscience and fore-knowledge to God, they make His knowledge a sort of mirror which passively reflects in an eternal now the details

of an already finished sequence of events just as we in a particular present moment have the memory of a fixed and inalterable sequence of past events. Thus, God's knowledge of time is restricted only to the relational aspect of time, i.e., that of the sequence of before and after or of earlier and later. There is, however, another aspect of time which typically characterises the human experience and forms its very essence, namely, that of the ever-fleeting, ever-changing now.

This is the time which is born afresh at every moment, the time in which the future is perpetually flowing through the present into the past. Now, according to the philosophers' thesis of God's knowledge as explained above, in God's eternal being there can be no counterpart of the experience of this living time in which we humans move and act. God may know, for example, that my acts of religious devotion are subsequent to my religious conversion, but He cannot know *now* that I am acting or have acted in such and such a way. So God, in His supra-temporal transcendence would remain impervious to my religious solicitations, for I am eternally doomed to the tyranny of this ever-fleeting, ever-trembling now. Should this be true and should I come to realize it, I may cry in despair: "Of what use is God to me!" Such is the catastrophe to which the philosophers' over-emphasis upon the eternity and changelessness of God's knowledge leads through its very incumbent logic.

The problem of the relation of the eternity of God to the temporality of human experience is almost an impossible problem and the philosophers of all times have stumbled over it. It may be suggested, however, that God is transcendental to both time and change and yet in some mysterious way immanent in it. Viewed

superficially, this seems to be an apparent logical contradiction. But, adds al-Ghazali, the philosophers dare not point this out for they themselves have affirmed with regard to their doctrine of the eternity of the world that the world is eternal and yet, at the same time subject to change.

The statement that God not only knows the universe but, further, that this knowledge is the very ground and the cause of the universe, though very significant in itself, is made by the philosophers essentially within the frame-work of their deterministic-emanationistic world-view and as such, according to al-Ghazali, involves them into an embarrassing predicament. There is no sense in talking about the knowledge of an agent when his action is a 'natural action' in the sense that it follows from him necessarily and is not the result of his volition. We do not say that knowledge of light possessed by the sun is the requisite condition for the emanation of light from the sun, and this in fact is the analogy which the philosophers have employed to explain the procession of the world from the being of God. Further, according to them, the universe has not been produced by God all at once but has proceeded from Him through the intermediaries and the other consequences and the consequences of those consequences all indirectly connected with these intermediaries.

Even if it should be granted that the necessary procession of something from an agent requires the knowledge by him of that which proceeds, God's knowledge at best would be only that of the first intelligence and of nothing besides. That which proceeds from something which proceeds from God may not be necessarily known to Him. Knowledge is not necessary in the case of the indirect consequences of volitional actions; how can it

be so in the case of the indirect consequences of necessary actions? Thus, the assertion of the philosophers that God's knowledge is the very ground and cause of that which He knows loses its entire significance because of its moorings in the Plotinian scheme of emanationism.

Through a strange irony of logic the emanationistic argument of the philosophers, instead of building a staircase between God and the world, creates almost an unbridgeable gulf between the two. It certainly leads to the conclusion that God is directly related only to the first intelligence, i.e., the first item of the series of emanations between God and the world; on the other hand, the world is directly related only to the lowest end of that series. Further, the argument makes the world an independent and autonomous system, which can be understood by itself because of its insistence on an inexorable causal necessity such as pervades the entire scheme of things.

This conception of a through and through causally determined universe rooted in the intellectual-emanationistic metaphysics of the philosophers was so radically different from his own dynamic-occasionalistic world-view grounded in the theistic-voluntaristic metaphysics of the Ash'arite tradition that al-Ghazali declared a complete parting of the way with them. Their world-view, al-Ghazali made it clear, militates particularly against the fundamental Islamic doctrine of God's providence and omnipotence and leaves no possibility for the happening of miracles such as turning of a rod into a serpent, denaturing fire of its capacity to burn, revivification of the dead, splitting of the moon (all so clearly referred to in the *Qur'an*).

There certainly is no scope for the exercise of God's free-will in a universe in which there

is no real becoming and in which the future is already given in the present as its necessary effect. Nor, in view of the reign of the inexorable law of causal necessity in such a universe, is there any possibility for the miracles, except those which can be 'naturalized' through scientific explanation.

Causality: Al-Ghazali's desire to vindicate the truth of the religious position mentioned above led him to make a highly critical and acute analysis of the philosophers' concept of causality. This analysis, which bears a strikingly close similarity to that of Hume's brings out clearly the most remarkable originality and acumen of al-Ghazali's thought. The problem that engaged him at the outset of his inquiry with regard to the seventeenth disputation in the *Tahajut* is the problem of the alleged necessity of the causal connection as mentioned and insisted on by the philosophers. He challenges the validity of this necessity right as he opens the discussion. He asserts:

"In our view the connection between what are believed to be cause and effect is not necessary."

The reason that he offers for the justification of his position is that the relation between cause and effect is not that of logical entailment. The affirmation of the one does not imply the affection of the other, nor does the denial of the one imply the denial of the other. Neither the existence nor the non-existence of the one is necessarily presupposed by the existence or the non-existence of the other. The relation between quenching of thirst and drinking, satiety and eating, burning and fire, or light and sunrise, etc., is not a necessary relation, for in no case does the one term logically imply the other other. There is nothing logically contradictory in assuming that fire may

not burn, and drinking may not quench thirst and so on.

The alleged necessity of the causal connection is not logically warranted because through no amount of logical reasoning can we deduce the effect from the cause. At best it is based on observation or experience. We observe that objects succeed one another or that similar objects are constantly conjoined. Now, this proves succession, not causation, or conjunction, not connection. The fire which is an inanimate object has no power to produce the effect of burning; "observation shows only that one is *with* the other and not that it is by it," i.e., the effect happens *with* the cause and not *through* it ('*indahu la bihi*).

The notion of necessity is valid only in the case of logical relations such as identity, implication, disjunction, etc. In the sphere of mere natural relations necessity has no scope. In the order of nature, unlike the order of thought, we deal merely with the contingent and logical entities which remain unrelated to each other except in the minds of the perceiver. Objects as such are not connected with one another; only the ideas of them get connected in our mind by association. The relation between fire and burning is not a necessary relation, for it does not belong to the realm of necessity but to that of possibility such as may happen or may not happen depending on the will of God. al-Ghazali enunciates clearly:

"It is only when something possible is repeated over and over again (so as to form the Norm), that its pursuance of a uniform course in accordance with the Norm in the past is indelibly impressed upon our minds".

Thus, if there is any semblance of necessity in the order of natural relations such as that of cause and effect, it is merely because the two

terms which in nature remain extrinsic to each other, through constant repetition become conjoined in our consciousness. Casual necessity is just the habit of our mind: it is merely a psychological necessity and not a logical necessity.

The psychological necessity differs from logical necessity in this that its denial like the latter does not involve us in a logical impossibility. Hence, the miracles, such as the fire not burning the body of Abraham when he was thrown into it, are not impossible to think. Al-Ghazali insists that the denial of miracles can be justified only when it should be proved that they are logically impossible and where such proof is not forthcoming their denial is sheer ignorance and obduracy.

It is interesting to note further that al-Ghazali, in the course of his discussion of the principle of causality and the possibility of miracles, comes close to propounding the notion of the composite nature of a cause and also that of plurality of causes. Cause he understands to be the sum total of many contributory factors, some of which are positive while others negative and all of which have to be considered in conjunction. Take the case of a man seeing a coloured object: he should possess sound vision, he should open his eyes, there should be no obstruction between the eyes and the object of vision, the object should be a coloured one, atmosphere should be not dark but have sufficient light, etc. Any one condition by itself cannot be taken to be a cause and a single negative condition such as the blindness of the person or the darkness of atmosphere may make the cause non-operative though logically not impossible. The relation of cause and effect is based on observation and observation as such does no rule out the possibility that the same

effect might follow some cause other than the apparent one.

Even where we recognise that there are many cause for the same effect, we cannot limit the number of causes just to those which we ourselves have observed. So, there are many causes for the same effect and a cause is a sum total of many conditions. In view of this it is not possible to negate an effect on the negation of the particular cause but on the negation of all the various causes. This latter possibility, however, is emphatically discounted by al-Ghazali so far as we are concerned, for it presuppose a complete and exhaustive knowledge of all the causes and their conditions, which knowledge we humans can never come to possess. Moreover, causes by themselves are inert entities; will and action cannot be attributed to them. They act only through the power and agency of God. The only will is the absolutely free-will of God which works unconcerned by any extraneous law of incumbency except the self-imposed law of contradiction.

Thus, the thing to which God's power extends include mysterious and wonderful facts such as "elude the discernment of human sensibility". Indeed, God's power extends to all kinds of logical possibility such as turning of a rod into a serpent, or the revivification of the dead. For the same reason it is not impossible for Him to bring about the resurrection of bodies in the life hereafter and all other things with regard to paradise and hell which have been mentioned in the *Qur'an*. To deny them is both illogical and irreligious. One may add that, according to al-Ghazali, not only all miracles are natural but also all nature is miraculous. Nature, however, seems to be pervaded by a casual nexus only because as a

rule God does not choose to interrupt the continuity of events by a miracle; it is possible, however, that He might intervene at any moment that He deems fit. Such a stand-point may make one sceptical of the phenomena of nature, but it may equally lead one to an acute mystical sense of the presence of God to all things. Scepticism of this kind and mysticism need not always be *atti-thetical*—the former may as well lead to the latter. This indeed is said to have happened in the case of al-Ghazali.

Mysticism: It will not be quite true to say that al-Ghazali's final resort to Sufi-mysticism was merely the result of his disillusionment with philosophy and dissatisfaction with scholastic theology. This is only a part of the truth; his own confessional statement to this effect in *al-Munqidh* seems to be rather an over-statement of the actual facts. Sufistic influences had all along been working upon his mind right from his early childhood. We need only recall that his father was a pious dervish and his guardian a Sufi devout, that in his youth he studied and even practised Sufism first under Yusuf al-Nasaj in Tusi and then under al-Farmadhi at Nishapur and that his own brother Ahmad al-Ghazali (d. 520/1126) made a name as a great Sufi.

It is not improbable that he should have also learnt of Sufism from his teacher Imam al-Haramain, for it is reported that the Imam himself had been the pupil of the renowned Sufi abu Nu'aim al-Isfahani (d. 430/1038). So al-Ghazali's eventual adoption of the Sufi way of life was in reality a continuation of these early influences and not simply the consequence of his failure to find the philosophical solution of theological problems. Further, it has to be emphasised that, in spite of his explicit official

denunciation of philosophy, al-Ghazali could never completely part company with it. His Sufi-mysticism was as much influenced by his thorough study of philosophy as by theology; in its final development it was the mysticism of a philosopher and a theologian. There is a marked note of Hellenic thought in his mystical doctrines and even the tracings of Neo-Platonism, and yet paradoxical though it may seem they remain circumscribed within the limits of orthodoxy. His is surely a sober kind of mysticism carefully eschewing all kinds of pantheistic extravagances and severely criticising the anti-nomian tendencies of the intoxicated Sufis.

On the one hand, he tried to make mysticism orthodox and, on the other, orthodoxy mystical. It is the mystical element in religion, he insisted, which is most vital and makes religious life a reality. Both to the philosophers and the scholastic theologians he brought home the fact that the basis of all religious certainty is the first-hand living experience of God. He indeed did his best to vitalise the Law and the doctrine of Islam through this emphasis on the living religious experience and this is evident from the very title of his magnum opus, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Revivification of the Sciences of Religion).

But the mystical teaching of al-Ghazali found in *Ihya'*, meant for all to read, must be studied in conjunction with what is given in his other works dealing more specially with the Sufi doctrines such as *Mishkat al-Anwar*, *al-Ma'arif al-'Aqliyyah*, *Mubashafat al-Qulub* and the like. The theory developed in these works represents that may be labelled as theosophical mysticism and this cannot be properly understood without reference to al-Ghazali's specific views about the nature of God and

human soul. From the point of view of our present study his mystical views with regard to God and soul may be profitably compared with those of the philosophers, i.e., al-Farabi, ibn Sina, and their followers.

God: The philosophers have particularly emphasised the absolute unity of God. No positive attributes can be ascribed to God for that leads to the subject-predicate dualism. Even existence can only be referred to Him. He is above all distinctions and above all the categories of thought. This over-emphasis on unity shorn of all qualities reduces God to a mere contentless inanity. He becomes an ineffable, indescribable impracticable something. Such is the result of the dialectic of the philosophers' monistic reductionism.

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, some of them, following Aristotle, have described God as thought thinking thought. That which He knows comes into being emanating from the over-effulgence of His Being, but He does not positively will anything, for willing implies a need—a deficiency. He recognises only Himself or at best His first eminent, the first intelligence, and thus, is purely transcendent to this world of change and multiplicity.

Like the philosophers, al-Ghazali lays stress on the unity of God: God is the sole-existent and the ultimate cause and ground of all being, the only self-subsisting reality. Yet, He possesses the fullness of being all attributes mentioned in the *Qur'an* inhere in Him, only the modality of this inherence is rationally unknowable. We should, however, understand that all His attributes are spiritual. He is perfect goodness and perfect beauty: the supreme object of love. He is the light of lights, the eternal wisdom the creative truth, but above all He is the eternal will.

To the philosophers God is primarily thought or intelligence, but to al-Ghazali He is primarily a will which is the cause of creation. He says:

"The First Principle is an omnipotent and willing agent, He does what He wills, and ordains as He likes, and He creates the similar and dissimilar things alike, whenever and in whatever manner He wills".

So Ultimate Reality is essentially will. The entire choir of the heavens and the furniture of the earth are the direct work of God, produced out of sheer nothingness simply through His terrific 'Be'. God has created the universe through His will, sustains it through His will, and one day will let it pass away by His will. According to the philosophers, God wills the world because He thinks of it. According to al-Ghazali:

"God has cognisance of the world because He wills it and in His willing it".

Like other philosophers, al-Ghazali also emphasises the transcendent aspect of God. He is exalted beyond the limitations of space and time, for He is the creator of space and time. He was before time and space were. But He is also immanent in this spatio-temporal order; His eternal wisdom and supreme beauty manifest themselves through the wonders and glory of His creation. His eternal will is in action throughout the universe; it is in the swing of the sun and the moon and in the alternation of day and night. Everywhere around is the touch and working of God. Al-Ghazali's God is not the Absolute of the philosophers who is bleak and cold, but a personal God, a living God. He desires intercourse with His creatures and makes it possible for them to enter into fellowship with Himself through prayer and contemplation and, above all, through the gift of mystical gnosis.

Soul: The difference between al-Ghazali and the philosophers with regard to the nature of the soul is not so very well marked. He only insists, like Kant, that the philosophers through their rational arguments cannot give any conclusive proof for the spirituality, substantiality, unity, immortality, etc., of the human soul. His attacks on the philosophers on this issue is as incisive and analytic as that of Kant but probably more violent. He actually smashes one by one all the ten arguments which he himself expounds as forcefully as they could be in favour of their thesis. Like Kant again, he does not disagree with their basic position but only with their method.

He even joins the philosophers in their refutation of the position of some of the scholastic theologians, who maintained that the soul is a kind of subtle body or an accident and not a substance. What is more and rather strange, while determining the place of the soul in the realm of beings, al-Ghazali talks the very language of the Neo-Platonic philosophers. His cosmological triad of the divine world (*'alam al-malakut*), the celestial world (*'alam al-jabrut*), and the material, phenomenal world (*'alam al-mulk w-al-shadadah*) runs closely parallel to that of Plotinus consisting of the universal mind, the universal soul, and matter. Like Plotinus, he seems to vouch-safe that the human soul belongs to *'alam al-jabarut*, i.e., mid-way between the divine world and the material world, and so is neither purely eternal like the former nor merely temporal like the latter but partakes of them both.

Al-Ghazali's conception of the human soul, however, is essentially based on the teachings of the *Qur'an* and the Tradition. The interesting thing about this conception is that it runs parallel to his conception of God. Soul like God is a unity and like Him it is primarily and

essentially a will. Further, as God is both transcendent to and immanent in the universe so is soul with reference to body. "Man is made in the image of God," is a saying of the Holy Prophet and it is twice stated in the *Qur'an* that "Allah breathed into man of His own spirit". The soul is a mirror illumined by the divine spark reflecting the qualities and even the essence of God. al-Ghazali says:

"Not only are man's attributes a reflection of God's attributes but the mode of existence of man's soul affords an insight into God's mode of existence..."

Knowledge of the self is the key to the knowledge of God, for so is the oft quoted tradition. al-Ghazali adds:

"He who knows himself knows his Lord. "Both God and soul are invisible, indivisible, unconfined by space and time and outside the categories of quantity and quality; nor can the ideas of shape, colour, or size attached to them...."

The soul of man is different from everything else in the sensuous world. There are two worlds: the world of command (*amr*) and the created world (*khalq*). Everything devoid of quantity and dimension belongs to the world of *amr*. Soul belongs to the world of *amr* also because it proceeds from the command of God: 'Say, the spirit proceedeth at the command of my Lord' is God's instruction to the Prophet.

It is the world of *amr* that rules the created world; the command is the divine force which directs and regulates the world. Thus, soul is a spiritual principle which having life in itself vitalises the body and controls it and regulates it. Body is the instrument and vehicle of the soul. God is primarily a will and man is akin to God especially in respect of will. *Volo ergo*

sum is the distum on which al-Ghazali builds his mystical psychology and epistemology.

The essential element of the soul is not thought which in the final analysis is based upon the bodily perceptions and the categories of thought but will which created them both for its own purposes. Man in himself has the infinite spiritual possibilities and it is through his will that he comes to realize them and thus brings himself close to the mind and will of God till God says:

"O soul at rest! Return to thy Lord, satisfied with Him, giving satisfaction unto Him. So enter among My servants and enter My garden."

This final encounter of the soul with God through the unfolding of its own spiritual possibilities and the realization of its most aspirations is attained by walking on a mystic Path, under the guidance of a *shaikh*, and constitutes what is the very essence and acme of religious experience.

Religious Experience and Moral and Intellectual Values: Whatever the essence or inner content of religious experience may be, it certainly is not a mere state of pure contemplation or knowledge as the philosophers proclaim it to be. It is a vital experience which must translate itself into good action. Religion without good works, according to al-Ghazali, is a dead religion. The life of the true mystics is the best life and their character the purest character.

"Were the intellect of the intellectuals and the learning of the learned and the scholarship of the scholars... brought together to improve the life and character of the mystics, they would find no way of doing so."

Indeed, the source from which the philosophers derive their ethical theories is the

lives and teachings of these moral geniuses, i.e., the saints and the mystics. In the final analysis the mystics themselves are illumined by the light of the lamp of the prophetic revelation. But what if you were to doubt the prophethood of a prophet? So close is the relation between the inner religious life and the outer moral expression of it that you can move from one back to the other. The authenticity of a prophet can be attested by applying a moral test, that is, by making a close study of his conduct, by assessing the transformations which his creative will has wrought in human history and by evaluating the new socio-political-legal system that he has introduced and established in a society. Of the truths of religion, we acquire not a theoretical but a moral certainty: the deed is more important than mere idea, the will is more ultimate than pure intellect.

Though the philosophers do not deny the importance of transforming truth values into moral values, ideas into deeds, so far as their theory of prophecy is concerned, yet, in pursuance of the dominant Hellenic tradition they seem to hold that knowledge without consequent action has its own intrinsic value. God deeds are preparatory to correct thinking. The ultimate perfection of the soul consists in God-like contemplation, in a state of pure knowledge which though not without joy is certainly without action. Al-Ghazali strongly revolted against this extreme intellectualism of the philosophers, yet, did not remain altogether unaffected by it. It is indeed futile to look for any lifeless consistency in his attitudes which make a happy synthesis of voluntarism, pragmatism, and idealism.

He concedes, for example, that a prophet is a person endowed with extra-ordinary intellect which enables him to attain contact with the active intellect, the proximate source

of prophetic revelation. Like the philosophers, he also affirms that perfection of the soul consists in knowledge, albeit intuitive knowledge; like them, he also sows predilections for knowledge for its own sake.

"The ink of the scholar is better than the blood of the martyr."

It is certainly true so far as by knowledge we here understand knowledge of the religious sciences, but it is also in a sense true of all other sciences. Knowledge of the sciences dealing with things that God has made is regarded by al-Ghazali as a necessary prelude to the knowledge of God Himself. The study of all branches of knowledge and taking the greatest share of most of them is a necessary part of the mystic discipline.

"If the soul has not been exercised in the sciences dealing with fact and demonstration, it will acquire mental phantasms which will be mistaken by it to be truths descending upon it... Many Sufis remain stuck for years in such figments of imagination, but they certainly would have been saved from these, had they first followed the path of scientific study and acquired by laborious learning as much of the demonstrative sciences as human power could encompass..."

It has almost become a fashion to label al-Ghazali as an anti-intellectualist and to ascribe to him much of the backwardness of Muslim community ever since the sixth/twelfth century: its conservatism and its anti-liberalism. It is alleged that al-Ghazali through his emphasis on fundamentalism and spiritualism initiated a movement in Muslim thought that killed all zest for philosophic inquiry and scientific reflection, if it did not outright create an antipathy for them. The anti-intellectualism the anti-liberalism of the Muslim community is a highly

complex sociological phenomenon and its causes shall have to be explored in a great many areas; it would be too much of an oversimplification of facts to ascribe it to a single name, however great that name may be.

We have only to remember that al-Ghazali never left philosophy altogether and that he himself was very well acquainted with the scientific knowledge of his day, most of which he accepted as true. The charge of the kind mentioned above may be made only with reference to some one particular work but it cannot at all be justified if the whole course of his works is taken into consideration.

Considering, however, the number and complexity of the subjects with which his works deal, the various levels of readers for whom they were written and the fact of his own spiritual development, it is not always possible to reconcile his various views and attitudes and to defend him against all charges of inconsistency. One such difficulty arises when, after having considered his views about the nature of the soul and God, we come to formulate his position with relation between the two. Whether his conception of this relation makes an allowance for pantheism, is a question which has puzzled some students of al-Ghazali.

M. Iqbal says:

"...to this day it is difficult to define, with accuracy, his view of the nature of God. In him, like Borger and Solger in Germany, Sufi Pantheism and the Ash'arite dogma of personality appear to harmonise together, a reconciliation which makes it difficult to say whether he was a Pantheist, or a Personal Pantheist of the type of Lotze C.R."

Upper ends this article by a significant remark:

"Al-Ghazali's occasional pantheism is indubitable, yet, his orthodoxy is impeccable.

How this can be is the secret between him and Allah."

For the great synthetic acumen and creativity of al-Ghazali in having a *via media* between the various positions, cf. S.R. Shafiq, *Some Abiding Teachings of al-Ghazali*.

Pantheism: Al-Ghazali's view of God as being both immanent and transcendent, his firm belief in God being a personal God who allows His creatures to enter into communion with Him, his emphasis on God's being a creator who created the universe at a specific time through an act of volition, one and all, can hardly fit into any scheme of pantheism. The description of the mystic's experience of God at the higher reaches of his ecstatic flights as identification (*ittihad*) or unification (*wusul*) with God or inherency indwelling (*hulul*) in Him, al-Ghazali has expressly mentioned as false and erroneous. At best the mystics can claim only a nearness to or proximity with God and no more.

But it has been pointed out that in his doctrine of the soul he makes it resemble God so closely both in essence and qualities that there remains hardly any difference between the two. Al-Ghazali is aware of this dangerous deduction and asserts most emphatically that there is one special quality (*akhassu wasfihi*) which belongs to God alone and if which none else partakes and that is the quality of self-subsistence. God is self-subsistent (*qayyum*) while everything else exists through Him and not through its own essence.

"Nay, things through their own essence have nothing but non-existence comes to them only from something else, by way of a loan."

But surely, there is the lurking danger of pantheism in such a statement if it is stretched

to its logical limits. If the contingency of the world should be over-emphasised, it becomes nothing more than a show of shadows having no reality or actuality of its own whatsoever. All actuality is devoured by the being of God.

This conclusion is confirmed by al-Ghazali's own approval of the pantheistic formula: *la huwa illa huwa* (there is no it but He) to which may be added his statement:

"He is everything: He is that He is: none but He has ipseity or heity at all."

To this may be added that al-Ghazali has taken a very lenient view of some of the obviously pantheistic utterances of the Sufis of extreme type such as 'I am the Creative Truth'; 'Glory be to Me! How great is My glory'; 'Within this robe is naught but Allah,' etc. Statements of this kind clearly indicate a sense of complete self-deification. But al-Ghazali has no word of condemnation for them except the comment that

"the worlds of passionate lovers in the state of ecstasy should be concealed and not spoken of."

True, the statements of this kind should not be taken strictly philosophically but only as emotive expressions indicative of a deep inner experience which has many phases and aspects and a language and a logic of its own. But then, al-Ghazali seems to forget sometimes the advice he has so strongly given to those who have attained the mystic state that they should not try to speak the unspeakable and follow the poet who said, "What I experience I shall not try to say; Call me happy, but ask me no more."

Ethics: Al-Ghazali is the best known Muslim writer on moral subjects. But there are some critics who have recently made attempts to belittle the importance of his ethical theory

by trying to show that it is entirely, or at least mainly, derived from the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic doctrines and from the writings of the Muslim philosophers whose systems were Hellenic in spirit. Al-Ghazali was, undoubtedly, a widely read scholar and was, therefore, well-versed in the ethical thought of the Greeks, which did influence him. But it would be basically wrong to say that he was dependent on Greek philosophy for his inspiration. He was, in fact, against the philosophers and their heretical doctrines. Throughout his writings, al-Ghazali takes his stand upon Islamic teachings and invariably quotes from the *Qur'an* and the traditions in support of his views.

Following the *Qur'an*, for example, he lays emphasis on spiritual values like gratitude (*shukr*), repentance (*taubah*), reliance (*tawakkul*), fear (*khauf*) of God, etc., which were completely unknown to the Greeks. Similarly, al-Ghazali is thoroughly Islamic in taking the perfect human representation of the moral ideal in the Prophet of Islam (peace be on him), whom God Himself testifies to have the highest character. Further, we can legitimately say that the notion of the love of God as the *summum bonum*, leading directly to the beatific vision in the next world, has nothing like it in Greek philosophy. This is undeniably based upon the *Qur'anic* teachings. All these assertions will become clearer as we proceed with the detailed discussion.

Asceticism is the spirit that runs throughout al-Ghazali's ethics. He does not deal with the heroic virtues like courage, etc., in detail and lays greater emphasis on the purification of the heart after one has severed all ties with this world, at least in spirit He says:

"The experienced guide and teacher should bring home to the disciple that he should root

out anger and keep no wealth... otherwise if he gets the slightest hint that both wealth and self-assertion are good and necessary in a certain measure, he will get an excuse for avarice and self-assertion, and to whatever limits he goes he will imagine that he is permitted as far as that. So ought to be told to eradicate these tendencies."

Again, in *Minhaj al-'Abidin*, al-Ghazali differentiates between two kinds of virtues: positive, i.e., good actions, and negative, i.e., the abandonment of bad ones. The negative side is better and more excellent. To elucidate this point further, he discusses the question in *Ihya'* whether marriage or celibacy is better. After counting the advantages and the disadvantages of both, he ultimately tends to the conclusion that celibacy is better. One may marry, he grants, provided one is at the same time like the unmarried, i.e., lives always in the presence of God. All this has a colouring of other worldliness.

Avoidance of the world is, however, not put forward as an end-in-itself. It has been over-emphasised by al-Ghazali simply to counteract the tendencies to vice, luxury, and pride, which were so common in his days. The curbing or controlling of passions has been stressed merely to achieve moderation; otherwise he fully knows the psychology of human nature. He is quite aware of the social spirit of the *Qur'an* and of the Prophet's teaching that there is no asceticism in Islam. Accordingly, al-Ghazali does sometimes lay emphasis on our duties and obligations to other individuals and to society as a whole. *Jihad* has been mentioned as a necessary obligatory duty; even prayers have to be sacrificed, if need be, during a war.

In the chapter on 'Renunciation of the World,' in the *Ihya'* he warns against its evils and holds that renunciation is a grievous sin if

a man has dependants who need his support. He defends music by saying that

"gaiety and sport refresh and cheer the heart and bring relief to the tired mind..., rest prepares a man for work, and sport and gaiety for grave and serious pursuits."

Further, among virtues, he includes good appearance (*husn al-hai'ah*) with adornment which is sensible and no tinge of ostentation in it. Similarly, there are the virtues of self-respect, dignity, etc., which point to a man's relation with other individuals and pre-suppose a social set-up.

Before discussing al-Ghazali's theory of ethics we may consider the problem which forms the basis of all ethical systems, viz., the problem of the freedom of the will. The fact that man can change from the state of the insinuating self (*al-nafs al-ammara*) to the state of the self at peace (*al-nafs al-mutma'innah*) through a good deal of conscious struggle and deliberate effort necessarily suggests that he is free in his will. The Mu'tazilites had taught that the freedom of the will is an *a priori* certainty, that man possesses power (*qudrah*) over his actions and is their real author. The Ash'arites, who represented the orthodox reaction, however, held:

"Man cannot create anything. God is the only creator. Nor does man's power produce any effect on his action at all. God creates in His creature power (*qudrah*) and choice (*ikhtiyar*). He then creates in him action corresponding to the power and choice thus created. So the action of the creature is created by God as to initiative and as to production, but it is *acquired* by the creature. By acquisition (*kashb*) is meant that it corresponds to the creature's power and choice previously created in him, without his having had the slightest effect on the action."

This position comes very close to the 'pre-established harmony' of Leibniz. It, thus, gives us at the most only a consciousness of freedom, and not freedom in the real sense of the term.

Over this question al-Ghazali finds himself on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand, God is represented as the disposer of everything. He is the unmoved mover of the material world and the only efficient cause of all creation. Whatever happens in the heavens or on the earth happens according to a necessary system and a pre-determined plan. Not even a leaf can move without His decree; His law is supreme everywhere.

"Whomsoever God wishes to guide, He expands his breast to Islam; but whomsoever He wishes to lead astray He makes his breast tight and strait."

And, on the other hand, man is shown to be responsible for his actions and for deserving place either in hell or in heaven. This implies complete moral freedom. Al-Ghazali seeks to reconcile both these tendencies on the basis of an analysis of the human mind. The heart or the soul of man, according to him, is furnished with two kinds of impressions.

Either there are sensations through which one gets the sensible qualities of the outside world, or there is reflection or internal sense which supplies the mind with its own operations. These impressions, which al-Ghazali calls *khawatir* (Locke would call them 'simple ideas' and James Ward would term them 'presentation'), are, according to him, the spring and fountain-head of all activity. Whatever the heart intends, resolves, etc., must come to it as knowledge in the form of such impressions. These impressions or ideas have an inherent tendency to express themselves in overt movements. They have a motive part of their

own and are capable of exciting a strong impulse or inclination (*raghbah*) in the first instance. This inclination must, if the action is to take place, be followed by decision or conviction (*i'tiqad*). (These three stages correspond pretty closely to what psychologists call respectively appetite, desire, and wish.) Conviction, in turn, is followed by resolution or the will to act (*iradah*). Will excites power and then the action comes.

The first two stage of this process, viz., impression and inclination, are recognised to be beyond man's complete control; if an individual merely thinks intently of falling forward, swaying forward begins. So the conclusion would be that, while the occurrence of a strong desire or inclination may come without man's responsibility, his reason is free to make decision and his will is free to accept the decision of reason in as good and to implement the corresponding action. In such a case, man would be free to do what he desires, but the complete control of his desire would be beyond his power. Thus, al-Ghazali tries to reconcile the positions of the determinists and the indeterminists.

In fact, al-Ghazali recognises three stages of being. The lowest is the material world where the absolute necessity of God's will is all in all. Second is the stage of the sensuous and the psychical world where a relative sort of freedom is recognised. o Lastly, comes God who is absolutely free. But His freedom is not like that of a man who arrives at decisions after hesitation and deliberation over different alternatives. This is impossible in the case of God.

"To speak of choice between alternatives is to suggest that other than the best might be chosen and this would be inconsistent with the idea of perfection."

Thus, having established human freedom and responsibility and having justified his discussion of ethical questions, al-Ghazali goes on to present before us his notion of the moral ideal and the means that are to be adopted for its realization. The path is long and difficult and needs a great deal of patience and perseverance on the part of the seeker. Slowly and steadily, by leading a virtuous life, he has to take his soul towards perfection so that it might be able to attain the knowledge of God and consequently divine love, which is the *summum bonum* or the Highest Good in this world. This will lead to the beatific vision in the world to come. It should, however be remembered that man cannot move a single step forward without the help of God. He is guided throughout by the gift of God (*taufiq*). *Taufiq* manifests itself in various forms:

1. Guidance from God (*hidayah*) is the very condition of all virtues. It stands for the telling of the moral from the immoral, the good from the bad and the right from the wrong. Unless these distinctions are clearly seen, we cannot be supposed to do any good action or avoid evil.
2. Direction (*rushd*). Mere knowledge of good actions might be necessary but is not sufficient for their performance. We should also have the will to do them. This is 'direction'.
3. Setting aright (*tasdid*). It is the power from God which makes the body obey the will in order to realize the end.
4. Confirmation (*ta'id*). It makes circumstances congenial for the actualisation of the will.

Helped by God in this way the individual proceeds to exercise virtues which gradually

raise the heart higher and higher up towards the ideal.

Before taking up this enterprise, however, the soul or the heart is to be subjected to a through surgical operation and cleansed of all impurities. "He will indeed be successful who purifies it and he will fail who corrupts it." It is only when the heart has thus been freed of its fetters and the veils of darkness and ignorance have been rent asunder that anything positive can be attempted.

Al-Ghazali explains it by an allegory. Once the Chinese and the Greeks held a contest on the art of drawing and painting. One party of a big room was given to the Chinese and the other to the Greeks. In between was hung a curtain so that they might not see the work of each other. The Greeks decorated the wall with many rare colours, but the Chinese proceeded to brighten their side and polish it.

When the curtain was raised, the beautiful art of the former was reflected on the latter's wall in its original beauty and charm. Such is the way of the saints who strive for the purification of their heart to make it worthy of the knowledge of God Most High. But what are these impurities and what are they due to? What is that which darkens and casts gloom upon the soul of man? Al-Ghazali's answer is: love of the world—the root from which all the multifarious sins and vices spring. The pious people avoid it and seek loneliness.

"Be in the world as if you are a stranger or journeying upon the road."

On seeing a dead goat, the Prophet of Islam (peace be on him) is reported to have said:

"The world has lesser value in the eyes of God than this goat has for its owner."

Let us now discuss briefly al-Ghazali's enumeration of the main kinds of vices that result from the love of the world, the removal of which from the heart is incumbent upon us. First, there are those vices which are connected with a particular part of the body. Hunger is one of them. It is, no doubt, a very important biological function and, thus, indispensable for the preservation of life. But when it transgresses its limits and becomes gluttony, it is the cause of immense evil and disturbance. God says:

"Eat and drink but be not prodigal. Verily He loves not the prodigal."

Over-eating dulls the intellect and weakens the memory. It also causes too much sleep which, besides being a wastage of time, slackens the mind; the light of wisdom is dimmed and one becomes unable to differentiate good from evil. Further, the glutton forgets what need and hunger are. Gradually, he becomes oblivious of, and unsympathetic to, the poor and those who have really nothing to eat. So one should eat only as much as is barely sufficient to sustain oneself, out of what one has earned honestly.

The second group of vices belonging to this category are those arising out of the sex instinct. This instinct is supposed to be the most powerful in man, and so are its distractions from the right path. The sex appetite must always be directed, controlled, and managed by reason and should not be allowed to run wild: adultery is a moral and social as well as religious evil. Further, says al-Ghazali, the seeker after the ideal should not marry in the earlier stages of his search, for the wife and children may prove a hindrance. But if, in spite of wilful determination, he is not able to control himself, he may marry and then perform all his duties as a husband.

Lastly, we come to the vices of speech, which are many. Talkativeness, using indecent words, ridiculing, abusing, cursing, etc., belong to this kind. Similarly, lying is also a heinous sin: "A painful doom is theirs because they lie." Lying, however, loses its immoral sting in special circumstances when the end in view is good. We can, for instance, legitimately make use of it as a war tactic. "War is deception itself," goes the tradition. Slandering and tale-bearing are also very prominent vices of speech. "Don't back-bite one another," says God. Similarly, we have been prohibited from making false promises because it is the characteristic of hypocrites (*munafiqun*).

Next, there are vices arising out of self-assertion. When working in its proper limits, this instinct is, no doubt, natural. But the lack or excess of it makes it an evil. A person who has no self-assertion has no self-respect. He is disgracefully meek and silent and dare not make his personality felt. Excessive self-assertion, on the other hand, degenerates into vices like anger (*qhadab*), malice (*hiqd*), pride (*kibr*), and vanity (*'ujb*). Man is roused to anger when some desire of his is not fulfilled, when another person possesses the thing which, he thinks, should rightfully belong to him.

When not gratified, anger often turns into malice, which consists the desire that the desired thing should be lost to the possessor also. It is a feeling of pain at another's good. Sometimes, however, there is no feeling of pain but simply a strong desire that one should also possess a thing like the one the other has. This is known as emulation (*ghibtah*) and is not undesirable. We can overcome the vices of excessive self-assertion by forbearance, mildness, forgiveness, humility, etc.

Anger, malice, and emulation are aroused when man is not in possession of the objects

of his desire. Pride and vanity, on the contrary, occur when he has secured such objects. Vanity is a sense of self-admiration. The individual regards his possessions as great, has no fear of losing them, and forgets that they are merely gifts of God. If he is vain about his intellect, wisdom, and opinion, all development in knowledge ceases and all progress is congealed.

A proud man, on the other hand, actively compares himself with others, is rightly or wrongly aware of some religious or worldly perfection in himself, and feels elated and raised above them. He looks down upon them and expects respect from them as a superior. Learned men, worshippers and devotees are very much prone to this evil. The cure of pride lies in recognising God and one's own self.

By this he would come to know that pride becomes God and greatness belongs to Him alone. Further, he should remember his humble beginnings and recognise the filthy stuff he is made of. Let him consider the origin and end of his forefathers and of the proud persons like Pharaoh and Nimrud who tried to equal God Almighty. Let him consider also that beauty, wealth, and friendship are all transitory and unreliable.

To the third category of vices belong the love of wealth (*hubb al-mal*) and of position (*hubb al-jah*), hypocrisy (*riya'*) and wilful self-deception (*ghurur*). Wealth in itself, however, is not bad. It is the use of it that makes it so. Wealth can be spent on the poor and the needy to alleviate their suffering, but can also lead directly to sins or can supply means for them. Those who love money often forget God and He, in turn, prepares and reserves for them a painful doom. Love of wealth may lead to avarice: the more one has, the more one desires. It can also lead to miserliness, which means not spending even where one is duty-bound to spend.

The cure of all these evils is to give away all that is superfluous and keep only as much as is essential for supporting life and getting peace of mind. We must further be convinced in our hearts that wealth, like shadows, is a transitory affair and that God is sufficient for us and our children. We should hasten to spend when occasion demands, setting aside the checks and hesitations arising within.

Love of position means the desire to win and dominate the hearts of others. It is generally gained by creating in others a conviction that one possesses the so-called qualities of perfection such as beauty, strength, ancestry. Real perfection, however, lies in knowledge and freedom: knowledge of God and spiritual values, and freedom from the vices and the rebellious nature of passions. Just as wealth is allowed if used as a means for some good, so may we win the admiration of those whose help is necessary to realize the ideal. But if position is sought for its own sake, it is a vice and should be eradicated. One must impress upon oneself that position is not everlasting and that death is a leveller. One should also know that a prominent person creates enemies very easily.

The lover of position generally falls into hypocrisy and tries to deceive people that he possesses something which actually he does not. An individual, for example, may pretend to be a pious man by a thin, lean, neglected body, long prayers, virtuous and humble talk, and so on. In religious matters, hypocrisy has been condemned very much by both the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah*. This deadly disease must be cured, otherwise all the so-called virtuous actions, the inner spiritual basis being absent, will be entirely useless and unacceptable to God. One must perform all good actions, including the religious observances and acts of worship,

in secret. We may perform them in the open if our sincere intention is that others may also be persuaded thereby to do the same.

Love of position also gives rise to self-deception. The individual is convinced that he has something which he really does not have. Four classes of people among the believers are, according to al-Ghazali, very likely to involve themselves in this evil. They are, for example, such religious devotees as do not have the real sense of values. They do not realize what is more important and what is less important and, by performing the latter, they assume themselves to be exempt from the former. For instance, they take greater care in the correct pronunciation of the words of the *Qur'an* than in understanding their true meanings. Instead of helping a hungry neighbour, they would go on pilgrimage to Mecca. Some dress themselves poorly and meekly and think they have become saints thereby.

All these persons are deceiving themselves as to the true nature of things. Similar is the case with the Sufis. Some of them learn only the terminology of the real Sufis and think they are likewise able to see God. Some are always wondering about the power and majesty of God and do nothing more. Some do actually try to cleanse the heart and perform good actions but wrongly think that they have passed most of the stages and are the true lovers of God. Again, there are some who make a distinction between *Shari'ah* and *tariqah* and regard themselves above *Shari'ah*. They give up the performance of obligatory duties and religious observances. The same is the case with the learned and the rich, who are generally involved in one kind of self-delusion or another.

Thus, we end the brief and synoptic survey of al-Ghazali's account of the main vices of

character. Now we turn to virtues, which are the redeeming qualities (*al-munjiyat*) and represent the positive efforts of the seeker towards God. Al-Ghazali has given us a detailed, interesting, and illuminating discussion on this topic in the fourth quarter of his "Revivification of Religious Sciences." The virtues that, speaking chronologically, come first are repentance, abstinence, poverty, and patience. Repentance belongs to the purgative period of life which is an indispensable prerequisite for the higher stages. It means abandoning the sins of which man is conscious and resolving never to return to them. It is a sort of spiritual conversion.

"Those who repent and believe and do righteous work, for such Allah will change their evil deeds to good deeds."

The penitent knows that his heart has been shrouded in the mist and darkness of sins, feels contrition and shame and abandons them for ever.

Love of the world which is the root of all vices, has, however, to be removed first; the passions have to be subjected to a strict control and the devil within has to be turned out. But, certainly, we do not give up the world for nothing. We do get something in return:

"...the ascetic who renounces what is sensual and material knows that what is abandoned is of small value in relation to what is gained, just as the merchant knows that what he receives in exchange is better than what is sold, otherwise he would not sell."

Al-Ghazali compares the ascetic with a person who is prevented from entering into the palace by a dog at the gate. He throws a morsel towards it and thus, by distracting its attention, enters and gets his desires from the king. The dog is like Satan, who prevents him from going

towards God, and the morsel of bread is like the world by the sacrifice of which we can get something better.

This brings us to the virtue of abstinence (*zuhd*). Repentance is simply turning away from something, whereas abstinence includes turning away from as well as towards something better and more excellent. As term in Sufistic literature, it signifies severing the heart's attachment from all worldly things, purging it of the rubbish, and then adorning it with the love of God. Abstinence can, in fact, have three grades. We might be inspired and motivated by the love of God itself by the hope of reward, or by the fear of punishment. The highest grade is the love of God which makes us sacrifice all considerations of heaven and hell of the sake of God. This is absolute abstinence (*zuhd al-mutlaq*). We are reminded here of the fable of a saint who was carrying in one hand a flame and in the other a glass of water with the alleged purpose of burning heaven with the one and quenching the fire of hell with the other, so that everyone acts sincerely to attain nearness to God.

The individual who renounces the world is a poor man (*faqir*) in the terminology of al-Ghazali and, in fact, of all mystics. So poverty is to be wilfully cultivated. The *faqirs* are of various kinds: the abstinent (*zahid*), who is pained when wealth comes to him; the satisfied (*radi*), who is neither pleased at the possession of wealth nor pained at its loss and when it comes to him he does not positively hate it; the contented (*qani*), who wants to get wealth but does not actively pursue this desire; the greedy (*haris*), who has a very strong desire to get property but is somehow or other unable to do so; the constrained (*mudtar*), who, being in a state of want, such as starvation or nakedness, is ill at ease and in consternation. The first of

these, i.e., one in the state of being a *zahid*, is the best. The *zahid* is the one who, being busy in enjoying the love of God, is indifferent to all worldly losses and gains.

All the virtues considered above—repentance, abstinence, poverty—demand an immense amount of courage and steadfastness. They are not possible to attain without unswerving passion, which is doubly more difficult to cultivate, impatience being in the very nature of man. It however, does not mean toleration of things that are illegal and against religion. If a man wrongs us, we may pay him back in the same coin; if he strikes us, we can strike him too (though forgiveness is also commendable). Patience in the real sense of the term has three grades: patience in performing a religious duty, patience in avoiding actions prohibited by God and patience over suffering and difficulties in the arduous path towards Him. The last grade is the noblest.

Gratitude (*shukr*) too is a necessary virtue and also so difficult that only a few can exercise it. It is, according to al-Ghazali, complementary to patience: he who eats until he is satisfied and is thankful is in the same station as he who fasts and is patient. Further, gratitude is based upon man's knowledge that all that comes to him comes from God and upon the feeling of joy over it. If one is pleased with the gift only, without any reference to the Giver, it is no gratitude:

"Gratitude is the vision of the Giver, nor the gift."

Secondly, we may be pleased with the Giver over a gift because it is a sign of His pleasure. This is gratitude, no doubt, but of a low variety. The highest stage is reached when we are pleased with the Giver and determine

to use His gift in order to attain greater and greater nearness to Him. God says:

"If ye give thanks, I shall give you more, but if ye are thankless, My punishment is dire."

After repentance from sin and successful renunciation of the world, the individual directs his attention towards his own self with a view to making it submissive and obedient to the will of God. The process has various steps and stages: assigning the task to the self (*musharatah*), watching over the self (*muraqabah*), taking critical account of the self (*muhasabah*) punishing the self (*mu'aqabah*) exerting the self (*mujahadah*) and upbraiding the self (*mu'atabah*). The whole affair which results in self-mastery is so difficult that it has been called the bigger *jihad* (*al-jihad al-akbar*), while the physical fighting against the enemies of Islam is the smaller *jihad* (*al-jihad al-asghar*). We have constantly to keep a vigilant eye on our thoughts and actions and check ourselves at every step.

We have to convince our hearts of the omnipresence of God and His omniscience: that God knows even when lies hidden in the inners-most depths of our being. Such a conviction creates in the soul an all-pervading reverence for God. Single-mindedness (*ikklas*) is the fruit of the self thoroughly mastered and trained. A fashioned soul has only one motive force and that is the desire for nearness to God; the lesser purposes are weeded out.

Single-mindedness leads to the virtue of truthfulness (*sidq*). Truthfulness is there in words, intentions, and actions. Truthfulness in words consists in making a statement which is unequivocal and clear and is not aimed at deceiving others. We can, however, in some cases make ambiguous and false statements if

thereby we are aiming at the betterment of society. Such special cases may be war tactics, restoration of happy relations between husband and wife, amity among Muslims, and so on. Further, our intention must be rightful and true. The right direction of intention is very important because actions are judged only by intentions: If our intention is good and the result incidentally turns out to be bad, we are not to blame; conversely, if our intention is evil, we are culpable whatever its outcome.

Lastly, truthfulness in actions lies in the fact that the inward state of a person is literally translated into outward behaviour without any tinge of hypocrisy. The highest truthfulness which is at the something most difficult to attain is the complete realization of the various attitudes of the soul towards God, e.g., trust, hope, love, etc.

Fear (*khauf*) and hope (*raja'*) also mark stages in moral progress. Fear may be of the wrath and the awe-inspiring attributes of God, or it may be produced in man by the consciousness of his guilt and the apprehension of divine displeasure. A nobler kind of fear is aroused by the feeling of separation from God who is the ultimate goal of all our aspirations. Hope, on the other hand, is a pleasant tendency. It consists in the expectation, after the individual has tried his best, of the divine love in the world and of the beatific vision in the hereafter. Fear is the result of knowledge—the knowledge of our infirmity as compared with the supremacy of our ideal: hope is the result of assured faith in the loving kindness of our Lord in acceding to our requests and prayers. It lies at a higher plane because it strengthens love and enables man to realize the goal.

The highest vibrates, according to al-Ghazali, is reliance (*tawakkul*), which is based

on the knowledge of God's oneness or unification (*tauhid*). Those who profess belief in unification may be classified into three groups: those, including hypocrites, who confess the unity with the tongue only; those who believe on the basis of some so-called reliable authority; and those who, on the evidence of their direct, intuitive perception, believe that God is the unmoved mover of the material world and the ultimate cause of all creation and that He alone has real or absolute existence. The last stage is the highest. It signifies that

"the servant can abandon himself to God in complete trust and merge his will in the divine will. The servant no longer finds his own powers and personality to be self-sufficient and has allowed God to dominate his life... he considers himself as a dead body moved by the divine decree and is content that the divine strength should replace his own human weakness."

Reliance, therefore, is the casting of the soul into self-surrender and the withdrawal of it from self-assertion.

The moral soldier who is sincerely set upon his task must also form the habit of meditation and reflection. He has to reflect on the works of God, on the alternation of day and night, on the waxing and waning of the moon, on the rise and fall of nations, and on the general management of this cosmology scheme. For that purpose seclusion away from the active hustle and bustle of society is very necessary. A heart pre-occupied with worldly things has no place for the knowledge of God. The true significance of meditation is a firm conviction in the omnipresence of God, which results from the realization that He is aware of what we do under cover of darkness and of what lies buried in the inner-most depths of our heart. Further, from meditation and reflection the soul is led on to contemplation, which is of three kinds:

- (i) contemplation *bi al-haqq*, i.e., the seeing of things pointing towards divine unity;
- (ii) contemplation *li al-haqq*; i.e., seeing signs of the Creator in created things; and, finally,
- (iii) the contemplation of God Himself.

This form of contemplation surely and undeniably leads to His love, the final aim of all moral endeavour. The last stage of contemplation and the love of God are not, however, the results of, but are simply occasioned by, our concentration and thinking. There is nothing like a causal necessity here. The sacred knowledge is direct and immediate and is due to God only. The Sufi has the impression that something has dropped upon him "as gentle rain from heaven," a gift of God due to His grace and mercy.

The highest contemplation is the valence of love, absorption of all human attributes in the vision of God, and then annihilation in the everlastingness of God. But why in the first instance should mere contemplation lead to His love? In answer, al-Ghazali explains at length how God is the ultimate and absolute source of all the causes because of which objects are loved. The sentiment of love is, broadly speaking, of four kinds:

(i) *Self-love*: An egoistic tendency is ingrained in the very nature of man. Instincts and the so-called organic needs point towards that fact. Our soul, life, or the pure ego is, certainly, the dearest to us, but beyond that we also love what William James would call our material and social selves.

(ii) *Love of a benefactor for the benefits received from him*: This is also a sort of self-love, though an indirect one. We love others because they promote our own cause in one

way or another. We love the physician because he looks after our health and the engineer because he beautifies our material environments and, thus, makes our lives comfortable and happy.

(iii) *Love of beauty*: Beauty has almost universally been recognised as a thing of intrinsic value. It means the orderly and systematic arrangement of parts and this is not the quality of material things only; it lies in the activities and the behaviour of man and in his ideas and concepts. Whatever is beautiful is loved by us for its own sake.

(iv) *Love due to the harmonious interaction and secret affinity between two souls*: A thief and a noble person loves a noble friend. Now, if love exists for all these separate causes, will not that individual be loved who holds all these in their supreme and perfect form? Such an individual is God Himself, the possessor of the most lovable qualities. It is to Him that we owe our very existence. He is the only real benefactor and from Him all benefits are received. If we get something from a human being, it really comes from God. Had He willed otherwise, we would not have been able to get it. Thirdly, God also possesses the attributes of beauty. There is beauty in His design and in His creative behaviour. "God is beautiful and loves beauty," said the Holy Prophet. Lastly, the human soul has affinity with its divine source; God has created man after His own image. So, once we know God with all these attributes and also know where we stand in relation to Him, our love for Him becomes a necessity. And then He loves us too.

"Verily, Allah loves the repentant and those who purify themselves."

But the lover who claims to love the Most Lovable must show some signs. The first sign,

according to al-Ghazali, is that the lover has no fear of death, for it means meeting the Beloved face to face and having a direct vision of Him. This world is a hindrance and a barrier which obstructs the lover's path. The sooner it is done away with, the better. Another mark of the true lover is that the remembrance of God ever remains fresh in his heart.

Once the fire of love is kindled, it cannot be extinguished. It remains ever ablaze and the flames go on rising higher and higher. The lover, in fact, feels happy in this condition. That is why he often seeks undisturbed loneliness to brighten these flames by contemplation and one-sided thought. Further, the lover sacrifices his will for that of the Beloved. His likes and dislikes, his behaviour and his ways of life are entirely directed and controlled by God. Lastly, the intensity of love for God demands that we should love all His activities. So also we should love our fellow-men for they are all His servants and creatures.

Love includes longing (*shauq*), for every lover pines to see the beloved when absent. The lover of God craves for the vision of God which would be the noblest grace and the highest delight held out to him. Again, love results in affability (*uns*), which, according to al-Ghazali, is one of the most glorious fruits of love and signifies the feeling of pleasure and delight consequent upon God's nearness and the perception of His beauty and perfection. Thirdly, successful love means satisfaction (*rida*). This includes the satisfaction of God with men and the satisfaction of men with Him.

"God is satisfied with them and they with God."

This is the stage of the tranquil soul (*al-nafs al-mutma'innah*). God will say:

"O tranquil soul! return to thy Lord well-pleased (with Him) and well-pleasing (Him), so enter among My servants and enter into My garden."

Now, because love is consequent upon the knowledge and contemplation of God, the lover is the gnostic (*'arif*). Gnosis (*ma'rifah*), however, is a gem, a precious thing which is not to be wasted: the sun which enlightens the heart of the gnostic, says al-Ghazali, is more radiant than our physical sun; for that sun sets and may be eclipsed, but the sun of gnosis knows no eclipse nor does it set. It is an invaluable gift to be given only to those who deserve it and to be given more or less according to the degree of self-mortification to which they attain. The limited human mind is not capable of grasping the entire expanse of divine majesty.

The more one knows of God, the more one loves Him. The height of contemplation is reached when plurality passes away entirely, when there is complete cessation of conscious perception of things other than the Beloved, and the individual sees God everywhere. It was in this state that one said: "I am the Truth"; and another, "Glory be to Me! How great is My majesty"; and another, "Under this robe is naught but God." This is the state of absolute unicity and identity.

The gnostic and the lover of God in this world will see God in the next world. The Mu'tazilites had denied the beatific vision, because it involved a directing of the eyes on the part of the seer and the position on the part of the seen. They said that because God is beyond space, the question of limiting Him to a particular place and direction does not arise. But al-Ghazali meets their objection by saying that this vision, like meditation, will not have

any references to the eye or any other sense-organ. It will be without their meditation. Similarly, just as the conception of God is free from the implication of spatial and temporal characteristics, so will the vision of Him be beyond all such limitations and boundaries.

Al-Ghazali's influence within Islam has been both profound and most wide-spread: his works have been and still are being read and studied from West Africa to Oceania more than those of any other Muslim writer, and his teaching has been accepted and made a rule of life more than that of any other theologian. It has been claimed and rightly so that

"al-Ghazali's influence, taken singly, on the Muslim community has been perhaps, greater than that of all the scholastic theologians."

But we hasten to add that, like any other original thinker in the world, al-Ghazali did not go without his share of criticism. The unprecedented attempt on his part to make orthodoxy mystical and mysticism orthodox, and both philosophical, naturally incurred suspicion and criticism from all schools of thought and all shades of opinion both before and after his death. Liberals have criticised him for his conservatism and conservatives for his liberalism; philosophers for his orthodoxy and the orthodox for his philosophy.

Al-Ghazali's constant use of philosophical language and his mode argument and preoccupation with Sufism led Tartushi (d. 520/1126), al-Mazari (d. 536/1141), ibn Jauzi (d. 597/1200), ibn al-Sala (d. 643/1245), ibn Taimiyyah (d. 728/1328), ibn Qayyim (d. 751/1350) and other famous theologians of the orthodox school to denounce him publicly as 'one of the misguided.' Ibn Jauzi is reported to have once exclaimed: "How cheaply has al-

Ghazali traded theology for Sufism!" Ibn Taimiyyah, on the other hand, has accused him of having traded 'theology' for philosophy. Qadi abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn Hamdin of Cordova went so far as to issue a decree (*fatwa*) against al-Ghazali's works, with the result that all his books including the *Ihya* were burnt and destroyed throughout Spain and the possession of them was forbidden on the threat of confiscation of property or even on that of death. The destruction of his philosophical and even technological writings was also ordered in North Africa during the reign of the Marrakush Sultan 'Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashifin (477/1084–537/1142), who was fanatically orthodox in his religious views. Both of these incidents, however, bear ample testimony to the fact that al-Ghazali's writings had gained a very wide circulation in the Muslim West even as early as that.

Amongst the philosophers, al-Ghazali's most renowned and bitterest critic was ibn Rushd (520/1126–595/1198). He took up a point-by-point refutation of al-Ghazali's arguments against the philosophers as given in the *Tahafut* and named his own work *Tahafut al-Tahafut* (576/1180). Ibn Rushd's defence of the philosophers is as subtle and vigorous as is al-Ghazali's attack against them. Ibn Rushd indeed handles his arguments with accomplished understanding and ingenious skill, yet, in the considered opinion of those who are competent to judge, al-Ghazali's arguments are in the final analysis more telling than those of his adversary. Ibn Rushd in the course of his discussion accuses al-Ghazali of hypocrisy and insincerity by saying that his polemics against the philosophers was merely to win the favour of the orthodox; there is nothing to substantiate this charge.

He also accused al-Ghazali of inconsistencies in his thought. He alleges, for example, that in the *Mishkat al-Anwar* al-Ghazali lends whole-hearted support to the theory of emanation which he had so vehemently criticised in the *Tahajut*. Al-Ghazali's teaching, according to him, is sometimes detrimental to religion and sometimes to philosophy and sometimes to both. It is said, on the report of ibn Taimiyyah, that ibn Rushd was so struck by the duplicity of Al-Ghazali's thought that he would often quote the following verse with reference to him.

"One day, you are a Yemenite when you meet a man from Yemen. But when you see someone from Ma'add you assert you are from 'Adnan!'"

The charge of inconsistency against al-Ghazali has also been made by another Muslim philosopher, namely ibn Tufail (d. 501/1185), who says that in his works meant for general readers al-Ghazali is bound in one place and loose in another and has denied certain things and then declared them to be true. In spite of his pointing out certain contradictions in al-Ghazali's works, ibn Tufail had on the whole great admiration for his teaching, and the influence of it can be seen in his own greatly admired philosophical romance: *Hayy Bin Yaqzan*.

Indeed, the amount of criticism levelled against al-Ghazali is itself the proof of his widespread influence. The number of al-Ghazali's followers and admirers who accepted his teaching and spread it is immensely greater than that of his critics; it is neither possible nor useful here to give a long catalogue of names. One fact, however, becomes conspicuous that it includes mostly people of two types, namely, the orthodox theologians and the Sufis, or those

who were equally qualified as both. This makes it clear that the influence of al-Ghazali within Islam expressed itself simultaneously in two different traditions, i.e. those of mysticism and orthodoxy and, thus, along with the other forces of history went a long way in determining the permanent attitudes in the religious consciousness of the Islamic community, namely, the attitude of spiritualisation and fundamentalism.

Of all the works of al-Ghazali it is in his *Ihya'* that he tries to maintain an equi-distant poise between these two aspects of the religious consciousness. *Ihya'* indeed is still the most widely read of all the works of al-Ghazali in all sections of the community, if not in its entirety at least in the form of fragments and summaries which are available in large numbers. It has been so eulogised by some that they have not hesitated to call it the second *Qur'an*, and the theologians and traditionalists have not been tired of writing voluminous commentaries on it. But it is not within Islam only that al-Ghazali's influence exerted itself so strongly; it also had its impact on Western, particularly Jewish and Christian, thought, and indeed has flowed right into the most modern of our philosophical traditions.

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EB

Ghudjduwani, Khwadja 'Abd al-Djamil (d. 1033)

Ghudjduwani, Khwadja 'Abd al-Khalik B. 'Abd al-Djamil, famous sufi *shaikh*, was born in Ghudjdawan (according to al-Sam'ani) or Ghadjduwan (according to Yakut). His father, whose name has sometimes been corrupted into 'Abd al-Djalil, lived at Malatya (Melitene); he migrated from there to the vicinity of Bukhara, where his son received his education. Certain writers trace his ancestry to a royal dynasty of Rum (Asia Minor). Others consider him to a descendant of the *imam* Malik b. Anas and another source traces him back through ten generations to Abu 'l-Hasan Kharakani, a famous sufi *shaikh* who died in 424/1033. This seems inadmissible, since only 193 years separate the date of the death of Kharakani from that of the death of Ghudjduwani (which appears the more exact) and during that time ten generations cannot be admitted. Moreover Kharakani lived in Khurasan and the ancestors

of Ghudjduwani seem always to have been in Asia Minor.

The only information we possess on his life tells us that he studied at Bukhara where, at the age of 22, he met his *shaikh* Abu Ya'kub Yusuf Hamadani, who died on Thursday 8 Muharram 535/24 August 1140 (in reality a Saturday). Thanks to the latter he entered the sect of Sufis then called *Tarikat-i Khwadjegan*, later known as the Nakshbandiyya from the time of Baha' al-Din Nakshband. Most of his biographers place his death in 575/1179, while another version gives the date 617/1220, which seems more correct because he twice mentions the date 600/1204 in his *Risala-i Sahibiyya*. What is more, his successor in the *tarika* Khwadja Ahmad Siddik, died in 657/1259, so that if Ghudjduwani had died in 575 his successor would have disappeared 80 or 82 years after him, which is hardly likely. He was buried in Ghudjduwan.

He has left a work in Persian comprising: several quatrains, the *Risala-i tarikat*, the *Wasiyyat-nama* or *Wasaya* (which was the subject of a commentary composed by a Fadl Allâh b. Ruzbihan Isfahani, known under the title of Khwadja Mawlana, died after 921/1515), the *Risala-i Sahibiyya*, eulogies of his master Yusuf Hamadani, a *Dhikr-i Khwadja 'Abd al-Khalik*, mentioned by Storey (mss. of Leyden, of the British Museum and of the India Office). The *Risala-i Sahibiyya* has been published with a commentary by the author of this article. We possess another anonymous *risala* in Persian eulogizing him and his successor Khwadja 'Arif-i Riv-Gari, also published by the author of this article.

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S. NAFICY

Gilani, 'Abd Al-Razzak B. 'Ali B. Husayn (d. 1072/1661)

'Abd Al-Razzak B. 'Ali B. Husayn Gilani, theologian, philosopher and poet of the late Safawid period and a leading master of the so-called philosophical school of Isfahan. Although a favourite pupil and a son-in-law of Mulla Sadra Shirazi, he did not share his master's philosophical teachings over several topics. Among these one may mention Mulla Sadra's

belief in the movement of substances (*al-harakat al-djawhriyya*) and his opinion on the basicity of being (*asalat al-wudjud*).

Lahidji spent the latter part of his life in Kumm, where he died in 1072/1661, leaving behind him a considerable literary output. His own philosophy was of a rather eclectic character, owing much to Ibn Sina's and Nasir al-Din Tusi's thought. His works include the Hashiya-yi Kitab-i Isharat, being glosses upon Tusi's commentary on Ibn Sina's Kitab al-Isharat wa 'l-tashbihat, and the Shawarik al-ilham, a concise but original commentary on Nasir al-Din Tusi's Tadjrid al-'aka'id.

He wrote also a commentary on Shihab al-Din Yahya Suhrawardi's Hayakil al-nur, along with other theological works. Among these are two Persian books dealing with the elements of Shi'i theology: the Gawhar-i murad, which he dedicated to Shah 'Abbas II ca. 1052/1642, and Sarmayiyi iman which he composed in 1058/1648 at the request of a friend. Lahidji's poetical pen-name was Fayyad, under which he composed a diwan of no less than 5,000 verses.

He is said to have had personal connections with contemporary poets, such as Sa'ib-i Tabrizi and others. His own poetry contains gnostic ideas, though Lahidji had no sympathy for the Sufi shaikhs of his time. Although equally criticised by some fanatical 'ulama' of his epoch, Lahidji has been considered as in general more acceptable to orthodox Shi'ism than his teacher Mulla Sadra was. Lahidji's sons Mirza Ibrahim and Mirza Hasan were also theologians of some repute. The latter, who died in 1121/1709, left behind no less than twelve books on theological problems.

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Gilani, Shams Al-Din Muhammad B. Yahya (d. 912/1506)

Shams Al-Din Gilani was an eminent theologian, mystic and poet of the Timurid-Safawid period and a renowned shaikh of the Nurbakhshiyya Sufi order in Shiraz. He joined his master Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh in 849/1445, and during a period of 16 years, under Nurbakhsh's spiritual direction, accomplished considerable progress along the Sufi path. After the death of Nurbakhsh (869/1464), or even slightly before then, Lahidji retired to Shiraz, where he founded a Nuri (Nurbakhshi) khanakah, and spent much of his time in mystical exercises and teaching Sufi doctrines.

During this period of retirement, he was held in great respect not only by scholars such as Dawani and Djami, but also by the Safawid

Shah Isma'il I, who paid him a visit at his khanakah in 909/1503 in Shiraz. Nevertheless, the biographical data which we can glean from his own writings are minimal: a six-months' stay in Tabriz prior to his master's death; a pilgrimage to Mecca in 882/1477; and a short sojourn in Yemen, where in; the course of his way back home from Mecca, he made an investiture of Nurbakhshi khirkas to a couple of disciples—father and son—in Zabid, for whom he also wrote a concise idaza in Arabic, with traditional Sufi instructions.

His death, according to an oft-cited chronogram (Madda ta'rikh), occurred in 912/1506. Other dates, including 980/1572 and 869/1464 are definitely incorrect. Lahidji's literary output, including his Diwan, with Asiri as his pen-name, and a didactic mathnawi called asrar al-shdd, contains a theosophical prose work called Mafatih al-i'djaz (an extensive commentary on the well-known Gulshan-i raz of Mahmud-i Shabistari), together with a number of shorter tracts with comments on the difficult verses of some old poets. His own poetry, although of considerable theosophical value, is of rather mediocre literary quality. His son Fida'l-yi Lahidji (d. 927/1521), better known as Shaikhzada, was also a poet and reportedly a Nurbakhshi shaikh as well.

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H

Al-Hajweri, Hazrat Syed Hafiz Haji Abul Hassan Bin Usman Bin Ali Al-Jullabi (d. 1072)

The annual *Urs-i-Mubarak* of Hazrat Abul Hussan bin Usman bin Ali Al-Jullabi Al-Hajweri, popularly and out of love and reverence known as Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh, falls on the 20th of Safar. Hazrat Data Sahib was born in 400 Hujri in the town of Ghazni during the reign of Mahmood of Ghazni. The name of Jullabi and Hajweri are added to his name because his respected father belonged to the Mohalla named Jullabi and his mother belonged to the Mohalla of Hajwar, both in the town of Ghazni.

Hazrat Data Sahib travelled to Syria, Iraq, Khurasan, Turkistan and Iran with the object of studying the *Quran*, *Hadis*, *Fiqah*, Theology, Mysticism and allied subjects. In *Fiqah*, he followed the Hanfi school of thought, while in the Mystical system of thought and practice he adopted the doctrine as preached by Hazrat Junaid Baghdadi.

During his travels which were with the sole object of acquainting himself by establishing contact with great mystics of his time, he derived knowledge of Sufism from great mystics like Abul Qasim Jurgani, Saeed Abul Khair and

Qasim Qusheri, Hazrat Data Sahib adopted Hazrat Shaikh Abul Fazal Khutbi of Damascus as his *Murshid* and became his devoted disciple.

Hazrat Data Sahib was a great mystic, writer and a poet. His publications number eight, out of which *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob*, *Kashf-ul-Asrar* and his *Diwan* are the most famous. Hazrat Data Sahib was the direct descendent of Hazrat Imam Hussain. *Kashf-ul-Mahjoob* is the oldest Persian classic on Sufism which gives the doctrines and teachings of twelve mystical schools of thought.

There came a time when the Shaikh e.g. the Pir of Hazrat Data Sahib ordered him to proceed to Lahore. Hazrat Data Sahib was reluctant to go to Lahore as his Pir Bhai by the name of Hazrat Shaikh Hassan Zangani, a great mystic in his own right, was already settled in Lahore. On the strict orders of his Shaikh, Hazrat Data proceeded to Lahore and on reaching the city witnessed the *bier* of Hazrat Zangani being taken for burial.

Hazrat Data Sahib lived in Lahore for 34 years from 431A.H. onwards, preaching the gospel Islam and educating the people with the teachings of the *Quran* and *Summat-e-Nabyi*. Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti, the great saint of Ajmer, came to Lahore to meditate for forty

days at the sacred alter of Hazrat Data Sahib and after becoming enlightened in the mysteries of the Divine knowledge Hazrat Khwaja Gharib Nawaz expressed his gratitude and out of love and devotion uttered the following couplet which has come to stay as the greatest tribute paid to Hazrat Data Sahib for his height of Divine status as follows:

"Thou art Ganj Bakhsh, the bestower of treasures in both the worlds;
Thou art the manifestation of the Glory of God:
Thou art an accomplished guide for those who are perfect: and
Thou showeth the way to those who stray."

It is after this couplet that the words 'Data Ganj Bakhsh' were added to his name, meaning bestower of Divine Treasure.

Hazrat Data Sahib died in 464 A.H. or 1072 A.D. and his mortal remains lie buried in the city of Lahore enclosed in a beautiful marble mausoleum. Some of the following writings of Hazrat Data Sahib will not only show his greatness but will open the heart of the reader to Divine and hidden treasures of divinity:

1. I have found this Universe an abode of Divine Mystries which are deposited in created things, substances, accidents, elements, bodies, forms and properties—all these are veils of Divine Mystries.
2. God's knowledge is an attribute of Himself.
3. I know my daily bread is apportioned to me and will neither be increased nor diminished.
4. Knowledge of *Haqiqat* has three pillars:
 - (a) Knowledge of essence of God
 - (b) Knowledge of Attributes of God
 - (c) Knowledge of Actions and Wisdom of God.

5. Man has fallen in love with that which veils him.
6. The right way is resignation.
7. Hope and fear are two pillars of faith.
8. Repentance (*Tawabat*) is the first of the stations in the path; and service (*Ibadat*) is the last.
9. Divine guidance (*Hidayat*) involves self-mortification (*Mujahadat*) without which contemplation (*Mushahadat*) is unattainable.
10. Whoever knows God, knows him by one of his attributes and the most elect of his attributes are of three kinds:

Those connected with His beauty (*Jamal*).
His Majesty (*Jalal*),
and His perfection (*Kamal*).

11. The Divine knowledge penetrates what is hidden and comprehends what is manifest. The object of human knowledge should be to know God and His Commandments.
12. Avoid the society of three classes of men—heedless savants, hypocritical *Quran* readers and ignorant pretenders of Sufism.
13. The Sufi is he that is dead to self and living by the truth he has escaped from the grip of human facilities and has really attained to God.
14. He that is purified by love is pure and he that is absorbed in the Beloved and has abandoned all else is a Sufi. The Sufi is he who has nothing in his possession nor is himself possessed by anything.
15. Whoever becomes blind to self sees by means of God.
16. Sufism is goodness of disposition.
17. Sufism is good morals.

18. Sufi Shaikhs are physicians of human souls.
19. Whoever is approved by God is disapproved by the vulgar and whoever is elected by himself is not among the elect of God.
20. Real unification (*Tawhid*) consists in asserting the unity of a thing and in having a perfect knowledge of its unity.
21. Absorption of all human attributes is the search of God.
22. The first step in Sufism is liberality.
23. You must know that all mankind are veiled from the subtlety of spiritual truth except God's saints and his chosen friends.
24. The spiritual path is hard to travel except for those who were created for that purpose.
25. When God assists anyone to perform acts deserving recompense it is truly success given by God (*Tawfiq*).
26. The friends of God live by means of his secret bounties.
27. The wealth of God consists in his independence of anyone and in his power to do whatever he wills

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Al-Hallaj, Hazrat Abu Mughith Al-Hussain Bin Mansur (858 – 922)

Husayn ibn Mansur al-Hallaj (A.D. 922) of Persia, an eminent theologian and a profound Sufi of his age, was spiritually initiated by a number of Shaikhs like Sahl b. 'Abdallah, 'Amr b. Uthman i-Mkki and Junayd. His contribution to Sufism has been acknowledged by Sufis of different schools of thought. Muhammad b. Khafif speaks about him as a "divinely learned man (*'Alim-i rabbani*)."

He was one of those God-intoxicated mystics who lived a life of true asceticism and whose soul had attained mystical experience of the highest degree.

Hazrat Mansur Al-Hallaj was born in 858 A.D. Hallaj's father, a wool-carder by profession, took the boy, a wool-carder by name (for in Arabic word *Hallaj* means a wool-carder), with him to Wasit, an Arab city of the Hanbalites with a minority of the Shiahs. Wasit had a good school in which teaching of the *Quran* was undertaken. At this school, al-Hallaj became a *hafiz*, trying to 'interiorize' his recitation of the *Qur'an*, so that his '*bismillah*' could become his '*kun*', i.e., his invocation of the name of God might unite him with God's creative will. So did he begin the mystic quest.

He was called Hallaj al-Asrar (the carder of conscious) because he could read the secret thoughts of men. He was a student of great

Sufi Masters, namely Tustori, (the founder of the Salamiyyah school) whom he left in order to settle down in Basrah, where he received the Sufi gown (*khirqah*) from 'Amr bin 'Uthman Makki's hands. He possessed the highest form of Ecstasy and a lofty spirit. Hazrat Mansur came to Tussar at the age of sixteen and after a period of two years proceeded to Doharaqa where he stayed in the company of Hazrat Umar Bin Usman Al-Mekki.

He married to umm al-Husain, the daughter of Hazrat Yaqoob Al-Aqte. It was a monogamic wedding, unshaken during his whole life. From her he had three sons. She already had a daughter from another Sufi, abu Ya'qub Aqta 'Karnaba'i. The Karnaba'iyyah, banu al-'Amm of Nahr Tih, were clients of the banu Mujashi (Tamim clan) and political supporters of the rebellion of the Zanj, which raised the slaves of Basrah against the 'Abbasid Caliphate under a supposed 'Alid (*zaidi*) leader.

Such was the beginning of al-Hallaj's contacts with the revolutionary Shi'ahs, contacts perceptible in the technical terms of his apologetics. Al Hallaj, in fact, remained always a Sunni, with a strong leaning towards hard asceticism in observing the Ramadan fasts and, when in Mecca, in performing 'umrah, in complete silence (*Qur'an*, xix, 27) so as to listen to God from inside.

When he came back to Tustar, he threw off the *khirqah* to deliver God's message to laymen, scribes and publicans, most of them case-hardened and sceptical. Some of them, of vizierial families, listened to him, becoming his friends (Sunnis: Qunna'iyah: ibn Wahab and ibn Jarrah), or his enemies (Imamis: ibn al-Furat and ibn Maubakht), denouncing him either as a miracle-worker or as a trickster. Friends from Basrah induced him to carry on

his apologetical mission among the Arabs colonising Khurasan and among the *ribat* of the *mujaidin*.

After five years al-Hallaj came back to Tustar and, with the help of Hamd Qunna'i, settled among workers of the imperial *Dar l-Tiraz* (fashion-house of Tustar (for the *kiswah* [(covering) of the Ka'bah] in a suburb of Baghdad. Then took place a second *hajj* and a second mission to Khurasan and Turkestan (as far as Masin-Turfan), with a kind of apocalyptic goal (seeking the hiding-place of the Talaqaniyyin, the future *Ansar al-Mahdi*). Then he performed his last *hajj*; on the *Yaum 'Arafat*, he dedicated himself, at the *Waqfah*, as a substitute for the *dhabihah* (just as some Shi'ahs think of the Martyr of Karbala as *Dhabihah 'azim*).

Back in Baghdad, he began an extraordinary way of talking in the streets, about his desire of dying as sacrificed by the Law for the sake of the law (*kunu antum mujahidun, wa ana shahid*). It was in the last days of Mu'tadid's Caliphate that a decree (*fatwa*) was given against al-Hallaj for his queer way of proving his love for God by offering his life, by a Zahiri lawyer ibn Dawud (d.297/909), the author of charming anthology about pure love (*Kitab al-Zahrah*). But another lawyer, ibn Suraij, a Shari'i, saved him by pleading that mystical utterances were not to be judged on juridical grounds.

It is said that one day al-Hallaj uttered the famous words *ana al-Haqq* (I am the Creative Truth), a kind of eschatological cry (named *siyah bi al-Haqq*) in the Holy *Qur'an*. 'Blasphemy,' said the lawyers. Al-hallaj himself explained it in verses:

"Oh! the secret of my heart is so fine that it is hidden from all living beings...."

Involved in the Sunni plot of the Caliph ibn al-Mu'tazz, al-Hallaj was prosecuted; he remained hidden in Susa near the tomb of Prophet Daniel, the "announcer of the Last Day," but was arrested in 301/913.

The first trial under 'Ali bin 'Isa, the 'good vizier,' was suspended through the influence of ibn Suraij and al-Hallaj was merely kept as a prisoner in the royal palace for nearly eight years and eight months. Afraid of Hallaj's influence on the Court of the Caliph Muqtadir, two Shi'ah leaders, the *wakil* ibn Rauh Naubakhti and his rival Shalmaghani, succeeded in persuading the vizier Hamid bin al-'Abbas, through his Shi'ah financial supporters, to reopen the trial on two charges. The first of these charges was that he was a Qarmatian agent of the Fatimids. It is true that Hallaj on grounds not political but spiritual did share with the Fatimids belief in the apocalyptic significance of the year 290 of the Hijrah, for in the esoteric alphabet 290 means "Maryam" or "Fatir."

The second charge was that with the Qarmatian rebels he advocated the destruction of the Ka'bah and Mecca. It is also a fact that, while in Mecca, Hallaj did write to his disciple Shakir, "Destroy your Ka'bah," meaning in esoteric language "Do sacrifice your life for the sake of Islam as I do." The Qadir abu 'Umar Hammadi, a Maliki, insisted on taking this allegorical letter in an unjustifiable literal sense. And al-Hallaj was condemned to death and "crucified" (*maslub*, cf. *Qur'an*, vii, 124) on 24th of Dhu al-Qa'dah 309/26th of March 922. Curiously enough, this year 309 is the *Qur'anic* year of the "Awakening of the Seven Sleepers" (*Qur'an*, xviii, 25), celebrated by the Islami'ite Fatimid propagandists as the year of the coming out of the Mahdi from the cave of concealment

(but al-Hallaj's disciples explained it mystically).

Al-Hallaj's crucifixion has been looked at by Sunni Sufis as the height (*mi'raj*) of saintship; and many beautiful utterances are ascribed to Al-Hallaj while on the stake. Nasr Qushuri, the high chamberlain, put on mourning clothes publicly with the approval of the Queen-Mother, Shaghab. And some Sufi witnesses, Qannad and Shibli, acknowledged his death as the seal of a most saintly vocation.

Love, for Hallaj, is the very essence of God. It is love which lies at the root of all things; it is the cause of the origin of the world and the heavens. In the beginning, God was a Perfect Unity. He loved Himself and this Divine Act formed His Image manifesting Divine Qualities. He called that Image by the name 'man'. Hallaj says:

"In His Perfect isolation God loves Himself, praises Himself and manifests Himself by love. And it was this first manifestation of Love in the Divine Absolute which determined the multiplicity of His attributes and His names. Then God, by His essence, in His essence, desired project out of Himself His supreme joy, that Love in aloneness, that He might behold it and speak to it. He looked in eternity and brought forth from non-existence an image, an image of Himself endowed with all His attributes and all His names: Adam."

There is some controversy regarding an utterance of Hallaj—'Ana'l-Haqq' ('I am the Creative Truth' or 'I am God'). Hallaj explains this idea in one of his sayings:

"I am He Whom I love and He Whom I love is I,
We are two spirits indwelling one body.
When Thou seest me, thou seest Him,
And when thou seest Him, then thou dost see us both".

Such expressions made the orthodox Muslims believe that Hallaj was a pantheist. Even certain modern western scholars, like Von Kerner, have interpreted his concept of God from the pantheistic standpoint. But this is far from truth. Hallaj was not a pantheist. God, for Hallaj transcends all human qualities and He is other than 'man'. The mystic only realises Divine Attributes and reaches the stage of unicity (*wahidiyya*) in a high spiritual state.

"The Sufi is he who aims, from the first, at reaching God, the Creative Truth. Until he has found what he sought, he takes no rest, nor does he give heed to any person. For Thy sake I haste over land and water: over the plain I pass and the mountain I cleave and from everything I meet I turn my face, until the time when I reach that place where I am alone with Thee".

Such words of Hallaj clearly refute the concept of identity of God and world.

That Hallaj believed in a transcendent God is evident from many of his sayings. About Divine qualities transcending all possible limitations Hallaj says:

"Before" does not outstrip Him, 'after' does not interrupt Him, 'of' does not vie with Him for precedence, 'from' does not accord with Him, 'to' does not join with him, 'in' does not inhabit Him, 'when' does not stop Him, 'if' does not consult with Him, 'over' does not overshadow Him, 'under' does not support Him, 'opposite' does not face Him, 'with' does not press Him, "behind" does not take hold of Him, 'before' does not limit Him, 'previous' does not display Him, 'after' does not cause Him to pass away, 'all' does not unite Him, 'is' does not bring Him to being, 'is not' does not deprive Him of being. Concealment does not veil Him. His pre-existence proceeded time, His being preceded not-being, His eternity preceded limit. If thou sayest 'when',

His existing has outstripped time; if thou sayest 'before', before is after Him; if thou sayest 'he', 'h' and 'e' are His creation; if thou sayest 'how', His essence is veiled from description; if thou sayest 'where', His being preceded space; if thou sayest 'ipseity' (*ma huwa*), His ipseity (*huwiyah*) is apart from things".

Such mystical expressions uttered by the Sufis in their spiritual state (*hal*) often misguided us and their real meaning can be misunderstood. We can wrongly interpret these words in term of the doctrine of unity in existence. Hujiri says:

"Some orthodox theologians reject him (*Hallaj*) on the ground that his sayings are pantheistic, but the offence lies solely in the expression, not in the meaning. A person overcome with rapture has not the power of expressing himself correctly; besides, the meaning of the expression may be difficult to apprehend, so that people mistake the writer's intention and repudiate not his real meaning, but a notion which they have formed for themselves."

Islam does not recognise the theory of God's incarnation. Certain Sufis and scholars interpret the various remarks of Hallaj from the Christian or the Jewish standpoint of Deification (*hulul*) and consider his views as non-religious and anti-Islamic. His critics forget that the true saint of God, who spiritually transfigures this personality and discovers himself in ecstasy, can utter the words 'Ana'l-Haqq' (I am God) without assigning any particular theory to it. The Sufi's expressions in his state of spiritual transformation cannot be identified with the metaphysical theories like the doctrine of pantheism or the Christian dogma of god's incarnation in man.

Hallaj cannot be treated as an infidel or a heretic in the true sense of the word. He was not against his own religion. He clarified his position, when he once spoke to his disciple:

“O my son, some bear witness for me, saying that I am a saint and others bear witness against me, saying that I am an unbeliever. They that bear witness that I am an unbeliever are dearer to me and to God than those who bear witness that I am a saint because they that bear witness to my saintship do so on account of their good thoughts concerning me, while those who bear witness to my unbelief do so from zeal for their religion; and whosoever is zealous for his religion is dearer to me and dearer to God than one who thinks well of any man.”

It is also to be remembered that Hallaj was one of those orthodox Sufis who interpreted the *Qur'anic* concept of man's love for God from a mystical stand-point.

Hallaj should be regarded as an ascetic of a high rank who perfectly experienced all the spiritual states and had completely lost himself in his mystical ecstasy. His only fault was that he revealed the Truth (*al-Haqq*) when he experienced the state of self-annihilation. It would be worthwhile to remember the words of Hujwiri:

“In conclusion, you must know that the sayings of al-Hallaj should not be taken as a model, inasmuch as he was an ecstatic (*maghlub andar hal-i khud*), not firmly settled (*mutamakkin*) and a man needs to be firmly settled before his sayings can be considered authoritative. Therefore, although he is dear to my heart, yet his ‘path’ is not soundly established on any principle and his state is not fixed in any position and his experiences are largely mingled with error”.

Among the companions of Hallaj was the honoured spiritualist Abu Bakr al-Shibli (A.D. 945), who was initiated by Junayd. According to Hujwiri:

“He had a blameless spiritual life and enjoyed perfect communion with God”.

He believed in ‘self-examination’ (*mujahada*) and perfect control over the lower self (*nafs*). For him, the saint experiences true contemplation of God (*mushahada*) in the state of Divine love because here he gets detached from phenomenal world and feels kinship with Him. The state of sincere love is that which consumes everything save the Beloved's Will and the state of genuine affinity with God is that in which the lover becomes occupied with his Beloved.

In his fellowship with God the Sufi is unaware even about his stage of love. Like Rabi'a, Shibli preached the concept of pure love or love of God for the sake of God. In one of his famous prayers, Shibli says:

“O God! grant me this world and the other world so that I may prepare a morsel of this world and put it into the mouth of a dog and prepare a morsel of the other world and put it into the mouth of a Jew. Both are veils before the destination”.

According to Shibli, Truth (*al-Haqq*) is revealed in a spiritual state of gnosis which the seeker attains at a very high stage on the upward path. He says:

“The state of the gnostic is like the mode of spring. The thunder roars and the cloud pours rain, the lightning flashes and the wind blows, the bud opens and the bird sings. Similiar is the condition of the knower of God. He weeps through his eyes, smiles through his lips, burns his heart, gives away his head, recollects the name of the beloved and moves around His door”.

Al-Hallaj's first pilgrimage to Mecca and his early ascetic bouts illustrate this strain very well. During that first pilgrimage he remained immobile for a whole year in the hall of the mosque. Visitors who watched him as he later

sat down at high noon on a rock outside Mecca, with sweat streaming down his body, were amazed at his pig-headedness rather than his piety. Some mused:

"This man in his folly is out to rival God in his capacity for endurance".

One of his disciples states that he never lay down to sleep, but slept standing up or squatting for no more than one hour at a time. Back in Baghdad he sought the company of al-Jumayd once more. The latter reproached him for his misunderstanding of the nature of mystical intoxication (*sukr*), his dispensing with Scripture or ritual, but especially for his presumption to be God.

The break with al-Junayd coincided with the gradual disassociation of al-Hallaj from the established *Sufi* orders. From the somewhat monastic life of these orders, he now embarked on a public career of preaching, full of hazards. He associated with all manner of men—philosophers such as al-Razi, statesmen such as the Prince of Taliqan—and professed a variety of creeds which completely confused his contemporaries and increased the roster of his enemies. In particular, he appears to have identified himself at one stage with the Shi'ite 'Alid cause, a political step which radically compromised him.

Following a third pilgrimage to Mecca, al-Hallaj returned to Baghdad completely changed, as his son Hamd put it. The change appears to have been marked by a clearer and firmer sense of his identification with God, with whom he now entered into a more intimate personal converse, as it were. This condition of personal communion with the I-Thou is what he called the 'essence of union' (*ain al-jaim*'), in which all the actions, thoughts and aspirations of the mystic are wholly permeated by God. But,

according to him, this union did not result, as it had in the case of al-Bastami, in the total destruction or nullification of the self, but rather in its elevation to joyful and intimate communion with the Beloved.

The impact of his preaching on the Baghdad public was mixed. Some hailed him as a saviour, others as a miralec-worker of simply a pious practitioner of the religious way. His reverence for the memory of Ibn Hanbal, the great Traditionalist and anti-Mu'tazilite doctor, appears to have enhanced his prestige with the masses. But there were many who looked upon him as a charlatan and a heretic deserving death. In one of his sermons at the mosque of al-Mansur in Baghdad, he himself appears to have recognised that his execution was prescribed by the Holy Law.

Eventually, proceedings against him were instituted by the vizier, 'Ali b. al-Furat in 909, but he was actually arrested and brought before an extra-ordinary tribunal at Baghdad four years later, during the vizierate of 'Ali b. 'Isa. He was publicly exposed as a Qarmatian agent and then jailed for nine years. Despite a certain favour which he enjoyed for a while with the caliph, thanks to the good offices of the chamberlain, who was sympathetic to his case, he was finally convicted on the charge of blasphemy by decree of a canonical jury, which invoked the *Koranic* sanction against the heretics (*Koran* 5:32) and was counter-signed by the caliph.

Although the official charge against al-Hallaj was his claim to be God and to have the authority to free the pious of the ritual prescriptions of the Islamic law, political sedition was a decisive factor in his final torture and execution. As regards the charge of self-deification, it is note-worthy that when

confronted with statements he had made and in which he spoke on behalf of God in the first person, he defended himself on the ground that this practice was perfectly compatible with the *Sufi* doctrine of 'essence of union,' a mystical condition in which it is God who writes or speaks through the mystic, who is simply His instrument.

But his accusers, especially the vizier Hamid, would not hear of such theological subtlety and although he had been ordered to be whipped and decapitated by the caliph, in an excess of zeal the vizier ordered him to be whipped, mutilated, crucified, decapitated, cremated and his remains scattered to the four winds. Nothing like this had ever happened in the whole history of Muslim piety.

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For a period of twenty years, Hazrat Mansur lived in one cloak. During his life-time he visited and travelled to Sewistan, Kirman, Nimoroz, India and China. I quote from the Prayers of Hazrat Mansur Al-Hallaj:

- (1) Oh Allah; Ye are the guide of those ones passing through Valley of Bewilderment. If I am a heretion enlarge my heresy.
- (2) I know Thee alone and worship none besides Thee.

- (3) A man in his senses should never utter 'I Am The Truth', for as long as he is being (Man) he can never be God. If he utters these words it is heresy.
- (4) I have a secret matter with God which should be revealed when I had been conveyed to the Scaffold. I am the servant of the Lord Who is my master and I must show respect to His creatures.

Through religious academic knowledge, extensive travels and meetings with great Sufi Masters, prayers and devotional exercises Hazrat Mansur Hallaj reached the pinnacle of Spiritual Zenith. It is in this frame of mind of deep meditation, contemplation and deep absorption in the name of God that he uttered the words '*Anal Haq—I Am The Truth*'. For having uttered these words of Ecstasy Hazrat Mansur Al-Hallaj was crucified without any mercy or human feeling. These words were uttered by the saint in Mystical Poetry form also reading as follows:

"I Am He Whom I Love And He Whom I Love Is I. We Are Two Spirits Dwelling In One Body; When Thou Seest Me Thou Seest Him, And When Thou Seest Him, Then Thou dost See Us Both".

Hazrat Mansur had been ordered by the Caliph to be crucified for having uttered the words '*Anal-Haq*'. Before reaching the scaffold Hazrat Mansur uttered the following words of the highest form of spiritual language and terminology:

- (1) Hazrat Mansur was whipped three hundred times and every time a voice was heard saying "Oh Mansur! do not fear".
- (2) One-hundred thousand people had assembled around the Gibbet near the

scaffold to witness the crucifixion. Hazrat Mansur glanced all around and remarked—*Haq, Haq, Anal-Haq* (Truth, Truth, I am the truth).

- (3) When Hazrat Mansur was being taken to the scaffold his servant asked for his parting instructions which were given as—“Never Yield To The Carnal Self (*Nafs*).”
- (4) The son of Hazrat Mansur approached his parting instructions which were given as— “The World Runs After Ethical Life; Ye Shall Seek The Life Divine”
- (5) When Hazrat Mansur reached the scaffold he turned his face towards the Sacred Kaba and said “Ye Hath Conferred On Me What I Sought.” He further said, “Oh God—And These Thy Friends Who Are Gathered to slay me in zeal for Thy Religion And In Desire To Win Thy Favour. Forgive Them. Oh Allah. And Have Mercy Upon Them; For Verily If Thou Hadst Revealed To Them That Which You Had Revealed To Me They Would Not Have Done What They Have Done. And If Thou Hadst Hidden From Me That Which Thou Hadst Hidden From Them. I Should Not Have Suffered This Tribulation. Glory Unto thee In Whatsoever Thou Doest: Glory Unto Thee In Whatever Thou Willest.
- (6) Hazrat Mansur was struck with stones by the assembled crowd under the orders of Caliph. Later his hands were chopped. Then the executioner cut his feet. Hazrat Mansur at this stage

uttered “To Day I Feel Happy As The Martyrs’ Powder Is Rubbed On My Face”. Then his eyes were taken out and his tongue cut. All the parts of his body cut to pieces uttered the words “*Anal-Haq*—I am the Truth”.

The last words of Hazrat Mansur were:

“If Ye Do Not Recognise God, at least Recognise His Signs. I Am That Sign. I Am The Creative Truth—*Anal-Haq* Because Through The Truth I Am A Truth Eternally”.

Hazrat Mansur Al-Hallaj had written a large number of books on Theology And Jurisprudence. According to Hazrat Fariduddin Attar:

“What a pity that such a great Saint should have become so little understood by his contemporaries. You should know that all such great Saints who utter such words of ecstasy are merely speaking through the tongue of Allah. It is God who is speaking through them. The self is dead”.

According to Hazrat Shibly:

“Al-Hallaj and I are of one belief, but my madness saved me, while his intelligence destroyed him. He did not claim Divinity for himself, though the utterances which led him to the scaffold—*Anal—Haq*—seemed to his findings to have that inspiration”.

According to Hazrat Abbas Tusi:

“On the Day of Judgement they shall bring Mansur bound in fetters lest in his act of ecstasy he might turn the world up side down”.

Though it was proclaimed after the year 309/922 that Al-Hallaj had been executed in compliance with the unanimity (*ijma'*) of the jurists (*fuqaha'*), yet a respected lawyer, his friend ibn 'Ata, had objected to this verdict and was killed for that. Ibn 'Ata's death nullifies

this so-called *ijma'*. The memory of Al-Hallaj slowly spread aflame with beauty. Among the Shafi'iyah, ibn al-Muslimah, the very day he was appointed as vizier (437/1045), was seen coming to Al-Hallaj's place of crucifixion (*maslib* Al-Hallaj) and praying—a silent act of rehabilitation. Sufis have kept his creed (*'aqidah*) as a motto in their exoterical books (e.g., Kalabadhi and Qushairi); and they have his name 'understood' in their esoterical *isnad* (with his friends Shibli and Nasrabadhi).

Farid al-Din 'Attar celebrated Al-Hallaj's martyrdom as the 'apex' of Sufism and the great painter Behzad painted it for Baiqara in Herat. Independent Muslim philosophers, Balkhi, Mantiqi, abu Hayyan Tawidi and abu al-Hasan Dailami, set off the metaphysical originality of Al-Hallaj's spiritual experiences. In spite of his adversaries classifying him among the adapts of existential unity (*wahdat al-wujud*), Al-Hallaj has been proved to be a vindicator of cognitive unity (*wahdat al-shuhud*). 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani, Ruzbean Baqli and Fakhr al-Din Farisi have given convincing explanations of and commentaries on the doctrine of Unity, in spite of the subtleties of ibn 'Arabi's school.

Jalal al-Din Rumi and after him the great mystics of India, Semnani, 'Ali Hamadani, Makhdum-i Jahaniyan, Gisudaraz, Ahmad Sirhindi and Bedil have considered Al-Hallaj to be a believer in cognitive unity (*shuhudi*). In his *Javid Nameh*, the great poet-philosopher of Pakistan, Iqbal, stated that Al-Hallaj was a kind of 'Promethean' personality.

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EB

Hasan (642–728)

Hasan of Basrah belonged to the class of those who did not see the Prophet but his Companions (*Sahabah*) and the Companions of his Companions (*Tabi'in*). Although he took no active part in politics, yet, in his fight against the Umayyads, he was sympathetic towards Imam Husain.

Hasan represented a tendency towards otherworldliness, piety and asceticism in which the element of fear of God predominated. In a letter to 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Aziz, the Umayyad Caliph, he said:

"Beware of this world, for it is like a snake, smooth to the touch, but its venom is deadly.... Beware of this world, for its hopes are lies, its expectations false."

Later on, in the same letter, he praised hunger and poverty as symbols of the righteous and looked upon wealth as an evil which distracts people from their rightful goal. He regarded piety as the quintessence of true religion. According to him, it has three grades. The first is that a man should speak the truth even though he is excited through anger.

The second grade of piety demands that he should control his bodily organs and refrain from things which God has forbidden. The third and last stage of piety is that he should desire only those things which lead to God's pleasure (*rida*). A little of piety is better than prayer

and fasting of a thousand years. It is the lust for this world and avarice that destroy piety.

Hasan was so much overpowered by fear and was seldom seen laughing that when he sat he appeared as if he were sitting before an executioner. He was ever conscious of his sins and the fear of hell. He thought he would consider himself fortunate if he would be delivered from hell after tribulations of a thousand years. Somebody asked him how he felt himself in this world. He replied:

"Imagine people in a boat which has capsized and everybody is trying save to himself by clinging to broken pieces of wood. Such is the real position of man in this world".

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EB

I

Ibn Khafif (d. 982)

Ibn Khafif, Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad al-Shirazi, also called al-shaikh al-Kabir or al-Shaikh al-Shirazi, was a famous mystic of Shiraz, who died 371/982 in his native town. It is said at a very great age (Yakut, S.V. Shiraz). His works (26 titles preserved in the Shadd al-Izir, 42) are lost, with the exception of some sentences transmitted mainly by al-Sulami, Aby Nu'aym and al-Kushayri, from a biography written by his disciple, the Halladji 'Philosopher' Abu 'l-Hasan al-Daylami and later re-written and translated into Persian by Ibn Djuyd, the author of the Shadd al-izir (Sirat-Ibn Khafif ed A. Schimmel, with two professions of faith). But this work is more reliable for information on the life of the master than on his teaching.

According to al-Hudjwiri (456/1063) however, Ibn Khafif was the founder of an independent school of mysticism. He had a lasting influence on the Kazeruni movemet and he figures in the mystic genealogy of the Suhrawardiyya. As a result the name of Ibn Khafif found a place in the genealogical trees of the *futuwwa*. Ruzabahan Bakli (d. 606/1209), who was the author after Ibn Khafif of (d. 606/1209), *Kitab al-I ghana* and who reproduces in his Jasmin a long extract from the 'Alf of

al-Daylami, receives the Khirka at the hand of a descendant of the Banu Saliba, who were formerly proteges of the Daylami dynasty and among whom the office of Khafifi was haded on from father to son.

Finally, in the time of Ibn al-Djawzl (d. 597/1200), the ribat founded by Ibn Khafif at Shirza was still flourishing. Ibn Khafif's teaching, together with the more or less occult influence of Halladism thus penetrated deeply into the mystic life of Fars until just before the Mongol invasion. The question arises as to whether the historical personality of Ibn Khafif was such an important role. It is known for certain that he was *Zahiri* in *fikh*, an Ash'ari in *kalam*, and an anti-Salim in mystical theology. More simply, the life and the thought of this illustrious Shirazi can be said in principle to divide themselves into two successive periods.

The first is dominated by the practical problems of the mystic life (*Mu'amalat*) which pre-occupied greatly the ascetics of Fars, who often showed definite tendencies to Aahirism and particularly to nascent Malamtiyya or futwwa (examples are Abu 'Amr al-Istakhri, Ali b Sahl Bundar b. al-Hasan al-Muzayyin and especially Abu Dja'far al-Hadhdha', who enjoyed great prestige among them; Shadd, 96).

The second period, which came under the Djumaydi influence of the Baghdad school is more speculative it was during this period that the master finally settled in Shiraz, that his written work appeared and that he played a political role at the court of the Daylami 'Adud al-Dawla (who was ruler of Shiraz from 338/949), when his eminent position may have enabled him to offer protection to the Halladjis who were returning to their native country from 'Irak, where they had been persecuted.

It seems preferable to suppose his thought to have developed in harmony with these two broad phases of his life, leading him towards increasingly intellectualist theses (Djumaydi and semi-Halladji), than to attribute to him an eclecticism as vague as it was persistent. There are various indications to corroborate this hypothesis: Ibn Khafif used in turn two intimacy isnads, the one purely Shirazi with the names of *Dja'far al-hadhdha* (Sira, 149, 178, 202) and of *Abu 'Anr al-Istakhri* (Sira, 33, 35, 87, 152), the other artificially linked to al-Bjnnayd. Ibn Khafif retracted at the reading of a dissertation of al-Djumayd. He hesitated between the school of al-Djumayd and the teaching of his first Baghdadi master Ruwaym, a Zahiri mystic of Malamatiyya tendencies who had close links with Abu 'Ar al-Istakhri but was on rather bad terms with *al-Djunayd*.

The mystic theology of Ibn Khafif worked out from actual experience but rapidly codified at a later stage in a circle of theoreticians, reconciles after a fashion the two basic aspects of his life. It seems to have been governed by the following propositions:

- (1) The necessity of poverty (*fakr*) and the pre-eminence of this poverty over wealth ('Poverty' is an imitation of the Prophet, it is also 'to rid oneself

of one's attributes', hence it is like a negative realization of tawhid, "unification of the Divine names and attributes with verification in the heart".

- (2) the 'poor man' is not ipso facto a sufi, any more than the sufi is himself a wali.
- (3) The impression of the "moment" (*ghalaba*) is not enough to constitute ecstasy (*wadid*), just as the latter is an insufficient basis for sanctity (*wilaya*).
- (4) Sanctity is much more a condition, and one not clearly defined, than a transitory and unstable "state" (*hal*). Certainly, in the eyes of Ibn Khafif the "station" is preferable to the state", in the same way that 'sobriety' is of more worth than 'drunkenness'.

It is difficult to say whether Ibn Khafif gave anywhere in his works a valid definition of this 'sanctity' which he considered to be the true end of 'poverty'. It has been defined for him by his Halladj disciples of pseudo disciples on the basis of their conceptions of *ishk* and *mahababa*. Ibn Khafif contented himself with an incomplete synthesis. This fact helps to explain both the universal fame of the master of Shiraz and the almost total disappearance of his work.

The basic text remains the edition of the *Sirat-ilbn Khafif* by Dr. A Schinell (Ankara, 1955, with introd. and bibl.). This text, however, unfortunately does not supersede the notices by the two historians of Shiraz; Abu 'l-Abbas Zarkub (d. 734/1333; Shiraz-namd, ed Bahman Karima) and Ibn Dumayd al-Shirazi (d. 791/1388 *Shadd al-Izar*).

The life and doctrine of Ibn Khafif are part of a group of wider questions which have not yet been sufficiently answered, These are:

- (1) The opposition between the Djunaydism of Baghdad and the practical mysticism of Persia and Khursan in the 3rd/9th century (the memory of Abu Yazid al-Bistami, Malamatiyya, the insistence on 'poverty' and 'sincerity'; *futuwwa*; for a summary of their doctrine.
- (2) This opposition was not unconnected with the growing Ash'aris, and Zahirism: at the time of Ibn Khafif these were the two militant and opposing wings of Shafi'ism, particularly that of 'Irak, with which the school of al-Djumayd finally became integrated.
- (3) It is only when these first two questions have been answered that Ibn Khafif's rather ambiguous attitude to Halladjism will be better understood and with it perhaps the internal evolution of this doctrine, at least in Parts.

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J.C. VADET

Isa al-Kharraz, Abu Sa'id Ahmad b. (10th Century)

Abu Sa'id Ahmad b. 'Isa al-Kharraz of Baghdad was a leading Shaikh of the second half of tenth century. He is considered to be the first Muslim saint who gave an exposition of the Sufi concepts of '*fana*' and '*baqa*'. His views on the mystic's prayer to God, gnosis and unification with God had a great impact on the later Sufis and the Muslim theologians like Ghazali.

Kharraz considered '*Ibadat*' or the worship of God as the best means for the realisation of

spiritual affinity with God. For him, the prayer of the saints reflects an attitude of fear and reverence in relation to God. The worshipper concentrates on Divine Attributes, particularly the Attributes of Supremacy and Glory and thus comes closer to God.

The stage of 'ma'rifiat' or gnosis is a high station on the journey to God. At this station the aspirant comes to know the true meaning of the soul's unification with God. Kharaz says:

"The gnostics are the treasure-house of God: He deposits in them the knowledge of mysteries and information concerning wonderful things and they speak of them with the tongue of eternity and interpret them with an interpretation which is everlasting. If God desires to be united with a servant of His, He opens to him the gate of worship and if he takes delight in worship, He opens to him the gate of proximity; then He raises him to the station of fellowship; then He seats him on the throne of unification (*tawhid*). Then He raises the veil from him and makes him enter into His own and unveils to him His Glory and Majesty and when the servant's eyes fall upon the Glory and Majesty of God, he remains outside of himself and he comes into the care of God and is freed from self for ever".

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EB

J

Ja'far al-Sadiq (80–148 A.H)

Since most biographers lived in an age where divisions between *Sunni* had *Shi'i* and between followers of *shari'ah* and followers after *haqiqah* had hardened, these categories of approval or repudiation were often projected back to the earlier centuries of Islam. The life and thought of Ja'far deserve to be studied in their own right; one may then proceed to judge his social significance in the crucial years of the establishment of the 'Abbasi regime, and of the parting of the ways for Sunnis and Shi'is; one may also point to the way in which his thought significantly anticipates much of the Sufi spirituality which was to develop in both Sunni and Shi'i traditions in the next centuries. It is this latter purpose which is to be undertaken here. Having sketched the events of his life, and having touched upon some of its social implications, an attempt will be made to perceive the intellectual and spiritual achievements which make Ja'far so important a forebear of the Sufis.

The wide range of biographers of Ja'far is testimony to his influence. Apart from figuring in the histories of Tabari and Mas'udi, in the dictionary of Ibn Khallikan and in all such

general works, Ja'far is also important for three main groups of biographers: the heresiologists, the traditionalists and the hagiographers. Each of these in his turn will betray a particular motive for his work, but material taken from a combination of them may give a reasonably balanced picture.

Shahrastani and Nawbakhti show, from Sunni and Shi'i standpoints, how Ja'far belongs to the Shi'i tradition; Dhahabi, for all his opposition to *tasawwuf* and the Shi'ah, can recognize Ja'far's contribution to Sunni tradition; Abu Nu'aym and Farid al-Din 'Attar place Ja'far at the head of the line of saints and mystics. It is perhaps from early writers less concerned with such categories that the most faithful picture of Ja'far can come; some of the most suggestive clues to the personality and spirituality of Ja'far are to be found in Kulayni or Kashshi. The versatility and magnetism of Ja'far in his own age was still more strongly felt by subsequent generations.

His influence, or if one prefers it, the re-occurrence of his ideas, is particularly pervasive in the development of the Sufi movement. The Sufis took up those intimate spiritual issues of revelation and the search for *haqiqah*, of personal morality, of individual communion with God, and of His continuing guidance,

issues which will be seen to be the *raison d'être* for the early Shi'i's self-assertion. It was when sectarian considerations engrossed the Shi'ah that the responsibility of such spiritual leadership passed of Sufis of both Sunni and Shi'i persuasion.

The birth of Ja'far, son of the fifth Imam, Muhammad Baqir, and Umar Farwah, great-grand daughter of Abu Bakr, took place in Medina in 80 A.H., or perhaps 83 A.H. He thus inherited the position of Shi'i leadership held by his father.

The Shi'ahs were not a monolithic group ready to profit from the downfall of Umawi dynasty; the group which Ja'far headed was quietest in politics, although some of the ideas which he formulated were to become, after his death, divisive and even explosive. Shahrastani, having introduced the subject of the *Imamiyah* and having shown how sects multiplied from Ja'far's family's dissensions, makes clear his disapproval by exclaiming:

"As for him who wanders from the Path and goes astray, God does not care in what river-bed he come to grief."

Nevertheless he goes on to give a not unsympathetic picture of Ja'far:

"He was possessed of great wisdom in religion and letters, of perfect *hikmah* (science and philosophy), of mature ascetic discipline with respect to this world, and of complete abstinence from lusts. He stayed in Medina time enough to benefit the Shi'ah (sect) which traced their origin from him and to entrust his friends with the secrets of the '*ulum* (occult sciences). Then he went to Iraq and stayed there for a time, but never interfered in the Imamate and never argued with anyone about the Caliphate. He who is submerged in the sea of *ma'rifah* (inner knowledge) has no

desire for the shore, and whoever climbs to the summit of *haqiqah* (Truth) has no fear of falling down. It is also said that he who is intimate with God is unsociable with men, and he who is sociable with other than God will be carried off by Satan".

Ja'far's quietism is a frequent theme. In the above quotation Shah-rastani used the word *tawahhasha* for the concept "unsociable"; Nawbakhti too illustrates this almost farouche quality of the Imam with the following statement attributed to him:

"He who calls me by any name, God's curse be upon him. A man of the Shi'is came up to meet him, and Ja'far shunned him. It is told of him that a man of the Shi'is met him on the road and shunned him and omitted to greet him; and Ja'far thanked him for this and praised him and told him 'Such and such a man, however, met me and greeted me as nicely as possible' and he blamed him for this and did something unpleasant to him for it".

Ja'far did not commit any of the excesses of the *Malamatiyah* who were aggressively anti-social. He disowned and denounced the followers of Abu al-Khattab, whom he had originally sent out as a *da'i*, but who developed a perverse antinomianism; one sect went so far as to say:

"Abu al-Khattab was a prophet sent out by Ja'far and ordered to obey him.' But the *Khattabiyah* made lawful the forbidden acts of fornication, theft and wine-bibbing; they gave up almsgiving, prayer, fasting and pilgrimage".

Ja'far's rejection of these *ghulat Shi'is* was probably more painful to him than his instinctive and consistent rebuttal of ingratiating partisans and of all direct political involvement. Abu al-Khattab had been an intimate disciple

of Ja'far, but had misused his esoteric teaching. Both Shahrastani and Nawbakhti describe the belief of the *Khatabiyah* in a Divine incarnation in Ja'far and in his immortality.

Nawbakhti also sees among their extremist 'guilds' (*sunuf al-ghaliyah*) the roots of the *Qaramitah* who believed in a transmission of the soul of Ja'far through Abu al-Khattab and Muhammad b. Isma'il b. Ja'far. We shall see that Ja'far was indeed personally involved in formulating an 'imamology', but this was rooted in doctrines of prophetic revelation rather than political opportunism.

Ja'far anticipates the whole Sufi tradition in his political quietism. He took no part in the revolt of Zayd in 122 A.H.; nor would he set himself up over against Zayd. Tabari tells how deserters from Zayd came to Ja'far at Medina and were told that they should honour their oath and return to Zayd. However, Ja'far's blatant ignoring of the government in Baghdad did not please the Caliph, al-Mansur. The biographers who make most of this aspect of Ja'far's life are, predictably, the hagiographers like Abu Nu'aym and Farid al-Din Attar. The attitude in which the latter introduces Ja'far was to be emulated by countless Sufis:

"One evening the caliph al-Mansur said to his minister 'Go and bring Sadiq that I may kill him'. The minister replied, 'He is sitting in a Corner in seclusion and is engaged in worship. He has withheld his hand from any temporal power'.... 'The Commander of the Faithful will not be vexed by him. What use is there in killing him'. However much he said it, he had no effect. The minister went to look for Sadiq, and al-Mansur said to his servants, 'When Sadiq comes in and I raise the royal cap from my head, kill him'. The minister brought in Sadiq, but al-Mansur immediately jumped up and made way for Sadiq and seated him on

the throne, and made obeisance before him. His servants were astonished. Then al-Mansur said, 'What need do you have?' Sadiq said, 'That you should not summon me before yourself and should leave me to my worship of God.'"

Abu Nu'aym relates another tradition concerning Ja'far and al-Mansur:

"Some flies settled on al-Mansur, and he drove them away from him; they returned and he drove them away until he became angry with them. And Ja'far b. Muhammad came into his presence, and al-Mansur said to him, 'Abu 'Abdullah why did God create flies?' He replied, 'In order that the tyrants might be humbled by them.'"

Two further quotations from Abu Nu'aym may illustrate the motive behind Ja'far's passivity; he did not preach passive resistance as a political protest but as a spiritual affirmation. This is seen in a meeting of Ja'far with Sufyan al-Thawri:

"Sufyan al-Thawri said, 'I shall not rise until you relate me a tradition, Sufyan. When God blesses you with His blessing. I would that it were enduring and permanent! Multiply praises and thanks for this! God has said in His Book (14:7): If you are thankful, I shall assuredly give you increase. And if you find His providence slow, multiply your requests for pardon. For God has said in His Book (71:10): 'Ask pardon of your Lord; verily He is One Who pardons. He will send upon you the rains of heaven in torrents, and will aid you with wealth and sons, and will appoint gardens for you and rivers too'. O Sufyan, when the misfortune of an order from the sultan or someone else befalls you, multiply your affirmations that 'There is neither might nor strength but in God'. This is the key to the door of happiness, and one of the treasure of Paradise.' And he clasped Sufyan by the hand".

Ja'far's personal refusal of power is underlined in the tradition of his saying:

"God Almighty revealed to the world: 'Serve him who serves me, and weary of him who serves you.'"

Any organization of a following by Ja'far is to be seen chiefly in the intellectual and spiritual leadership which he exercised. The academic and spiritual disciples of Ja'far were not only concerned with the disciplines of *hadith* collection and criticism and of *fiqh* elaboration. Ibn Khallikan wrote:

"He composed a discourse (or treatise) on alchemy, augury and omens and the Sufi Abu Musa Jabir ibn Haiyan of Tarsus compiled a work of two thousand pages in which he inserted the problems of his master Ja'far as-Sadiq, which formed five hundred treatises."

This is not the place to pursue the many questions which surround the work of Jabir, much of which Ruska and Kraus have plausibly attributed to later Isma'ili writers. But it may be suggested that one should not too quickly dismiss this study of alchemy as nonsensical magic; its chief aim is a viable doctrine of gnosis, and even its syncretist echoes of Sabaeen rite should not rule it out of consideration as a genuine spiritual searching.

The associates of Ja'far were not all suspicious forerunners of the *Qaramitah* like Jabir ibn Hayyan or Abu al-Khattab. Ja'far is also frequently described in the company of such eminently respectable men as Abu Hanifah, Malik ibn Anas and Wasil ibn 'Ata, all of whom heard traditions from him. We shall return to Ja'far's role as a traditionist, but meanwhile we may complete our sketch of Ja'far's life by reference to the nature of Ja'far's relationship with these distinguished Sunnis. Abu Nu'aym records a pithy statement of Ja'far

which combines suspicion of both political and "ecclesiastical" institutions:

"The fuqaha are the confidants of the prophets but when you see them riding towards the sultans suspect them."

This is found more fully stated in Kulayni:

"Ja'far said that the Prophet said: 'The *fuqaha* are the confidants of the prophets in so far as they do not enter into the *dunya*'."

Ja'far was asked what their entrance into the *dunya* meant. He said:

"Following the sultan; when they do that beware of them for the sake of your *din*."

Stories of Ja'far's victory in argument with Abu Hanifah have appealed to people. Ibn Khallikan quotes an anecdote of Ja'far's tripping him for weak knowledge of a gazelle's teeth-construction.

Before turning to the aspects of Ja'far's intellectual, ascetic and spiritual life, one may note one final external observation of Ja'far's life which was to exercise such an attraction and command, such an allegiance among his posterity. Without searching for strikingly miraculous *Karamat* in Majlisi, one may cite as an example of the charisma of *walayah* attached to Ja'far's family a tradition recorded in Nawbakhti:

"Muhammad b. Ja'far entered into his father's presence one day. He was a little boy and, as he ran to him, he stumbled on his shirt. His face became flushed, and Ja'far rose for him, kissed him, brushed the dust from his face, and put him on his lap, saying, 'I heard my father say, 'When you have a child which resembles me—call him after me, and he will be like me and like the Prophet of God (peace be upon him, and his family, and his *sunnah*)'."

The response of popular piety which such a story suggests reminds one of the contexts in which spirituality, however abstruse, must eventually communicate its discoveries. Ja'far al-Sadiq died in 148 A.H., poisoned, according to Shi'i traditions, by grapes sent by the Caliph.

In considering Ja'far al-Sadiq as a spiritual forebear of the Sufis, we shall organize our observations under four headings: *Haqiqah* and Revelation, Personal Morality, Individual Communion with God, and Continuing Guidance. These issues seem to summarise some of the primary concerns, epistemological, ascetic, private and communal, felt by an early Shi'i like Ja'far and also by the Sufis who followed in later generations.

Haqiqah and Revelation: In their search for the Truth, early Shi'is and Sufis threw over the authority of the community and initiated a search which must be personal to be genuine. They rejected the legal, social *shari'ah* for the inner knowledge of the *haqiqah*, comprised in the revealed text. Yet despite the different concepts of what is authoritative, despite the difference in tools between the almost mechanical rules of *isnad* or *usul al-fiqh* and the esoteric art of *ta'wil*, nevertheless one should not forget that there is a revealed authority common to both, the *surahs* of the *Qur'an*.

That the *Qur'an* is central in all Muslim experience may seem platitudinous, until one remembers the accusations of unfaithfulness which have attached to all those who have gone further than the communally approved *tafsir* in exploring the meaning of the Qur'anic revelation. The very fact that the most bitter hostility directed to Sufis and Shi'is alike has been occasioned by their exegetical esotericism shows the centrality of the search for *haqiqah*

in Divine scripture, and the passionate convictions which surround it. Whereas it was the community which inherited, built and canonized its *shari'ah*, grounded in the principles of *tafsir*, it was the individual Shi'i and Sufi who sought after *haqiqah* in the inner meanings disclosed by *ta'wil* or *tahqiq*.

It is of great significance that Ja'far should be regarded as the author of a *tafsir* and of *hadith* which not only permeated into qualified Sunni acceptance but which also anticipated much of the mystical interpretation of the Sufis and the esoteric dogma of later Shi'is. Hujwiri speaks of Ja'far as having written famous books explaining *tasawwuf*. Broackelann is sceptical of the authenticity of works attributed to Ja'far. An edition of his *tafsir* was influential from an early date in the edition of Dhu al-Nun Misri (born c. 180 A.H.).

This widely travelled mystic is reputed to have written not only such spiritual meditations as Muhasibi quotes but also works of alchemy, such as the lost treatises *Rukn Akbar* and *Thiqah*; he clearly belongs in the line of intellectual and spiritual enquiry which stems from Ja'far. It is not certain that Ja'far composed the treatise edited by Dhu al-nun. Massignon makes two interesting suggestions.

Jabir ibn Hayyan al-Sufi dedicated books, including those on asceticism, to Ja'far; and Dhu al-Nun was a disciple of Jabir. Ibn Abi al-'Awja is said to have fabricated and edited a mystical *hadith* which was condemned for *tashbih* and *ta'til*; its avoidance of such terminology as *'ishq* and *tafwid* suggests one who, like Ibn Abi al-Awja, had left the school of Hasan al-Basri for that of Ja'far.

Whoever was responsible for the original compilation, it seems almost certain that these traditions and their exegesis did come from

Ja'far. Makki, the traditionist and ascetic of the third century of the *hijryyah*, makes several references to a written source which he describes as follows: *rawayna musnadan min tariq ahl al-bayt*. Massignon elsewhere describes these as "moral *hadith* with a Sufi tendency, circulating in the mystic circles of Baghdad and Kufah and attributed to Ja'far". A passage in the *Haqa'iq al-tafsir* of Sulami describes them as "detached verses, classed without order," however it was that they were compiled, the ideas, and more important, the terminology of Ja'far, made a significant contribution to *Sufi* thought. We shall return later to specific examples of this, collected by Massignon in the work of al-Hallaj. Meanwhile we shall notice the principles which must have guided Ja'far in his *tafsir*.

If may be misleading to dwell upon the cabalistic intricacies of the esoteric *Djafr* alphabet attributed to him; one must first appreciate the spiritual convictions which governed his attitude to the Qur'an. Corbin quotes an incident where Ja'far's disciples respected his long ecstatic silence after the prayer rite. Ja'far explained this was as follows:

"I did not cease to repeat this verse until I could hear it from that same Angel who pronounced it for the prophet."

Abu Nu'aym records Ja'far's exegesis of *Surah* 15:75, which reads:

"Surely in that there are signs for those who mark (*mutawassimin*)".

Ja'far gives the meaning as *mutafarrism*, those who look steadfastly at the outward to perceive the inward.

The importance of esoteric contemplation and apprehension is great for both Sufis and Shi'is; nor should it be incomprehensible to a

Sunni who perceives the dimension of mystery in God's dealings with men and man's response to God. Corbin points out that when Ja'far makes repeated references to *sirr* he is referring at once to that which is hidden and also to that which may be discovered through the 'pensee secrete,' 'transcendence' or 'supra-conscience'. He explains this with a quotation from Ja'far:

"Our cause is a secret veiled in secrecy (*sirr mastur fi sirr*), the secret of something which remains veiled, a secret, which only another secret can expound; it is secret on top of a secret, which is sufficient as a secret."

Again, Ja'far is quoted:

"Our cause is the Truth, and the Truth of the Truth of the Truth (*haqq al-haqq*); it is the exoteric, and it is the esoteric of the exoteric (*batin al-zahir*), and it is the esoteric of the esoteric (*batin al-batin*). It is secret and the secret of somethings which remains veiled, a secret which is sufficient as a secret."

Corbin goes on to show how this allowed *taqiyah* to develop to the point where Ja'far could say:

"He who is without *taqiyah* (he who does not observe discretion, through unawareness or refusal of the esoteric), such a man is without religion."

It was to be expected that a search for *haqiqah* such as Ja'far would earn disapproval and suffer misunderstanding and distortion. Such works as his *Misbah al-shari'ah wa-miftah al-haqiqah* have earned suspicious comment from orientalisists like Strothmann who speaks of its 'not-unobjectionable orthodoxy' and its 'mystical tone,' Corbin sees the profound influence that such a work played throughout the history of Shi'i spirituality, and sees that the chief issue is not the authorship

of this anthology, but the undoubted succession of gnostic thought from Ja'far right through to Mulla Sadra. Ja'far's work had its undeniable impact upon the Sunni community too. The assessment of Ja'far as its *muhaddith* which one reads in al-Dhahabi is perhaps typical. In his *Tadhkirat al-Huffaz* he quotes Abu Hanifah's saying:

"I never saw a man more learned than Ja'far ibn Muhammad."

He gives the testimony of Abu Hatim:

"Trustworthiness such as his is unquestionable."

And he records a saying of Ja'far himself:

"But with my loss before you miss me; assuredly no one will relate traditions to you after me as I do."

Dhahabi's account of Ja'far's role as a *muhaddith* is more critically and more epigrammatically expressed in his *Mizan al-i'tidal*:

"Bukhari did not base arguments upon him. Yahya ibn Sa'id (Qattan) said: 'Lashes are dearer to me than he; there is something about him which eats into my soul'. Mus'ab said on the authority of al-Darawardi, 'Malik did not relate traditions on the authority of Ja'far until the fortunes of the Banu 'Abbas were victorious; according to Mus'ab ibn Abbas, Malik was not wont to relate anything on the authority of Ja'far until it was gathered together into one corpus'."

Two further anecdotes of Dhahabi may conclude our observations on the intellectual and academic influence of Ja'far:

"Ahmad ibn Sa'd ibn Abu Maryam said: 'I heard Yahya saying: 'I used not to ask Yahya ibn Sa'id about Ja'far ibn Muhammad, and he said to me, 'Why have you not asked me about the *hadith* of Ja'far?' I said, 'I do not cite him

as an authority'. And he said to me that Ja'far was a *hafiz* and that his father's *hadith* was rightly-guided (*masdud*).'"

And ibn Mu'in said Ja'far is reliable; then he said:

"Hafs ibn Ghiath went away to Abadan, a place which is a staging point on the road (from Basrah); and he gathered to himself the people from Basrah, who said: Do not give us traditions on the authority of three men, Ash'ath ibn 'Abd al-Malik, 'Umar ibn 'Ubayd and Ja'far ibn Muhammad."

And he said:

"As for Ash'ath, he belongs to you, and I leave him to you; and as for 'Umar, you are better informed; and as for Ja'far, if only you were in Kufah and the blacksmith's mallet were beating your shoes'."

Ja'far was clearly a controversial figure. We shall return to some of the epistemological issues which underlie his philosophy, or rather theosophy, of revelation and Truth. His chief authority was, as for all Muslims, the Qur'an and the morality and spirituality which he advanced was subservient to this. Our preliminary study of Ja'far *mufassir* and *muhaddith* gives us the context in which to study that morality and spirituality, and thence the subsequent doctrines of the Prophet and imam.

Personal Morality: The moral issue which dominated the generation of Ja'far was that of Divine predestination. This doctrine often reflects an authoritarian tradition in political or theological circles. It is not surprising, then, that Ja'far shunned such a doctrine of *jabr*; nor did he go to the other extreme, attributed to Hasan al-Basri, whereby God 'invested' man (*tafwid*) with his own actions. Hasan Askari described the view of Ja'far as:

"Neither *jabr* (impiety!), nor *tafwid* (idolatry!) but something between the two."

Massignon's somewhat cryptic comments on the *tafsir* attributed to Ja'far mention that in the context of *adl*, Divine justice, a distinction is made by Ja'far between *amr* and *mashi'ah*; furthermore *mashi'ah* is chosen in place of *'iradah*. For the *Mu'tazilah*, God's *'amr* and His *'iradah* were the same thing; but Ja'far's category of God's 'good pleasure' is more intimate than His 'command' or 'will'. Shahrastani was apparently unaware of this lexical sensitivity, although he represents Ja'far's probable view clearly:

"This is his opinion on *siradah*, that God Almighty had willed one thing for us and has willed another thing through us. As for that which He has willed for us, He has concealed this from us, but as for that which He has willed through us, He has made it plain (*azharahu*) for us. So we are not so much concerned with what he has willed for us compared with what He has willed through us."

The chief solution to these moral dilemmas was not theoretical for Ja'far. Such problems were answered by a personal practical morality. Charitable expenditure or donation is a starting point for all Muslim social ethic, and so the tradition that 'Ja'far al-Sadiq used to give food until nothing remained for his family' is naturally popular; Dhahabi repeats it from Abu Nu'aym, and adds 'the virtues of this sayyid are told in great number.'

Abu Nu'aym records a very wholesome prescription for the good life, given by Ja'far to Musa:

"If you remember what I say, you will live happy and die honoured... Whoever stretches his eye towards what is in another's hand dies

poor. He who is not pleased with God's lot for him is suspecting God in His ordering of life. He who draws the sword of desire is killed by it. He who digs a ditch for his brother in kindness is watered by it."

Asceticism vies with generosity as a virtue which even today wins instinctive admiration from Muslims. Abu Nu'aym and Farid-al-Din 'Attar predictably endow Ja'far with the quality of *zuhd*, Dhahabi too quotes Abu Nu'aym's tradition of Ja'far's wearing the ascetic's *suf*, and of the Sufi Sufyan al-Thawri's discovery of this:

"I entered into the presence of Ja'far ibn Muhammad and he was wearing a full-sleeved gown of silk and a robe of smoke-coloured silk. And I began to stare at him in amazement. 'O al-Thawri,' he said, 'What is the matter with you that you stare at me? Perhaps you are amazed at what you see. And I said, 'Son of the Prophet, this is not your garment, nor the garment that your fathers wore'.... Then he rolled back the sleeve of his gown and he disclosed beneath it a white gown of wool (*suf*) bleached from end to end and sleeve to sleeve. And he said, 'O al-Thawri, our dress here belongs to God, and the other belongs to you. We have hidden that which belongs to God, and we have shown that which belongs to you.'"

This story is further elaborated by 'Attar:

"Sadiq was seen wearing a precious robe of silk. They said, 'Son of the Prophet of God, this is not in accord with the life of your holy family.' He took that man by the hand and drew it into his sleeve which was clad in coarse lint so that his hand was pricked. Sadiq said 'This is for God and this is for men (*hadha li al-huqq wa hadha li al-khalq*).'"

However attractive these anecdotes are, they are to be suspected as artificial attempts to clothe Ja'far in the charismatic *suf*. If these

sayings attributed to Ja'far have any historical value, it may be as echoes of his insistence upon *batini*, as opposed to *zahiri*, values. Suspicion hardens when one reads in the early source of Kashshi a remarkably similar story under the biography of Sufyan al-Thawri:

"Sufyan al-Thawri entered into: the presence of Abu 'Abdullah who was wearing splendid clothes. O Abu Abdullah, he said 'Your father used not to wear the like of these clothes! He replied, My father lived in a time of barrenness and shortage; but the present time is one when this world has loosed its water-skins and its people have a right to their stripped garmens'".

This example of the romanticizing by later hagiographers encourages a scepticism for some of the traditions concerning Ja'far which Ritter quotes from 'Attar's discussion of *zuhd* in his *Ilahinamah*; the world is represented as a wilderness to which the human heart should not cling:

"Ja'far al-Sadiq said, 'The world is a wilderness; but still more so is the heart which attaches itself to what is wilderness. However the other world is a well-built land; but still better-built is the heart which covets nothing else but that.'"

Ja'far's teaching should not so much point to an other worldly escapism as to a commitment to both this world and the next; the other pose of the paradox is seen in a statement attributed to Ja'far elsewhere in Attar's works:

"It is in this world that God Almighty has His Paradise and His Hell. Heaven is well-being and Hell is disaster. It is well-being when you do your own work with God; and it is Hell when you do God's work with your own resources."

Hujwiri quotes Ja'far as saying that there can be no *ibadah* without *tawbah*. The perpetual

spiritual exercise of *tawbah* is illustrated by Ja'far's plea and by Hujwiri's comment upon it:

"Ja'far replied: 'My actions are such that I shall be ashamed to look my grandsire in the face on the Last Day.' To see one's faults is a quality of perfection and is characteristic of those who are established in the Divine presence, whether they be prophets, saints or apostles."

Tawbah is the hallmark of preaching which insists that rite is insufficient; the celebrated Mu'tazili al-Jubba'i advanced the view that *tawbah* must be part of the sincere *amal* which authenticate *iman*. Ja'far—and al-Hallaj—went further in seeing it is something which must actually precede ceremonial rite and intellectual enquiry. 'Attar expresses as follows Ja'far's doctrine of *tawbah qabl 'ibadah* which al-Hallaj was to develop:

"*Ibadah* cannot become true without *tawbah*, for God Almighty made *tawbah* preferable to *ibadah* since God Almighty said (9.113) '*Al-taibuna al-abiduna*'."

Preliminary searches in Makki, when he commences his descriptions of the *maqamat* of mystical progression by discussing *tawbah*, have not shown any reference to Ja'far's doctrine of *tawbah*. This may be because Makki regards *tawbah* as a canonical necessity, *wajib*, whereas Ja'far's approach is less systematic. We shall see that the road which takes its departure from *tawbah* ends in *mahabbah*; the *tafsir* of Ja'far (apud Baqli) states:

"God made famous His love for the believers before His Creation; He showed that love is the most intimate form of observance which our rite can offer Him."

The metaphor of a road from moral conversion to the spiritual, reciprocal

relationship of love between God and the faithful (Massignon compares *Surahs* 5:59 and 2:160) is not fully adequate. Personal morality for Ja'far is not a steady progression from *tawbah* through *zuhd* to *mahabbah*. It is a spiritual communion, apprehended but uncomprehended, rooted in the historical revelation of the *Qur'an* but guided by the continual inspiration of God. To this avowedly esoteric, cyclical experience we now turn. It is built on the humble but confident personal morality which we have just sketched and which 'Attar tellingly summarizes:

"Sadiq was told, 'You have all the virtues—asceticism (*zuhd*) and inner nobility (*kuram-i batin*)! You are the lustre of your family! But you are very proud!' Ja'far said, 'I am not proud; but it is pride in God's Almightiness (*kibr-kibriya'i ast*), because when I desist from personal pride, His Almightiness enters in and settles in place of my own pride. There can be no Almightiness in personal pride, but there should be pride in God's Almightiness".

Individual Communion with God: The almost tangible reality of man's spirit (*ruh*) for Ja'far is shown in answers attributed to him which Kulayni records in the *Kitab al-Tawhid*, *Bab al-Ruh*, of his *Usul al-Kafi*:

"I asked Abu 'Abdullah concerning the spirit in man and God's saying (15.29; 38.72), 'When I have formed him and I have breathed into him of My *ruh*.' Ja'far said, 'This spirit is something created (*mahklūqah*), and the spirit that was in Jesus was something created.....' I asked Abu Abdullah about God's word, 'And a spirit from Him (4.169)'. He said 'This is the spirit of God, a created thing which God has created in man and Jesus'.....' I asked Abu Abdullah about the word of God, 'Mighty and Glorious, And I have breathed into him of My *ruh*.' I asked him how the breathing took place and he said 'The spirit is set in motion like

the wind, and it is only called the *ruh* because its name is derived from the *ruh*, for the soul resembles the wind..."

Ja'far was probably something of a metaphysicist as well as a theosophist. It is in the latter role that Sufis and Shi'is were to elaborate his personality, as we shall see when we come to study the development of his doctrine of *wahy* and *ilham*. Meanwhile another line of Attar seems relevant:

"Whoever strives with his soul for soul will achieve blessing, and whoever strives with his soul for his Lord will achieve his Lord."

It has already been realized in studying Ja'far's intellectual and moral priorities that his spirituality has practical foundations and manifestations. *I asawwuf* must not be understood as all ecstasy and escapism. Spiritual communion with God *al-Haqq*, is assuredly an inward, and an individual experience, but for Ja'far as for the whole line of Sufis, there was a compulsion to articulate and express this experience for others to recognize it and emulate it.

Even the most solitary ascetic can have this sense of responsibility for communication of his spiritual discoveries. Ja'far in his esoteric *tafsir*, as in his *hadiths*, which played so large a part in the formulation of Shi'i, and especially Isma'ili *fiqh*, introduced a terminology which attempted to explore and expose these spiritual realities, chief among which was the conviction that a man's soul may aspire to see God.

Ma'rifah qalbiyah is possibly the most important concept both for the mysticism of the Sufis and for the imami doctrines of the Shi'is. Corbin draws attention to the passage in Kulayni where one sees Ja'far's views on the vision of God growing out of the views of his father, the fifth imam, Muhammad Baqir:

"A man of the *Khawarij* came into the presence of Abu Ja'far and said to him, "Abu Ja'far, what thing do you worship?" God," he replied. "Do you see Him?" he said. "No", he replied, "The eyes do not see Him with the vision of sight, but the hearts (*al-qulub*) see Him by the realities of faith (*bi-haqa'ia al-iman*). He is not known by analogy (*aiyas*) and he is not grasped by the senses (*bi al-ayat*) and known by symbols (*Ma'ruf bi-al-'alamat*). He does not use force in His judgements. It is He Who is God, than Whom there is no other god."

Kulayni goes on to Ja'far's recording the answer of the first *imam*:

"A learned man (*habr* of the Jews?) came to the Commander of the Faithful and said, 'Commander of the Faithful, have you seen your Lord when you worship Him?' 'Woe on you!' he replied, 'I would not have worshipped a lord whom I did not see.' 'How did you see Him?' he said. He replied 'Woe on you! The eyes do not grasp Him with the vision of sight, but the hearts have seen Him by the realities of faith.'"

The theme of these two quotations is vividly taken up in the biographies of Ja'far by Abu Nu'aym and Farid al-Din 'Attar. Abu Nu'aym shows Ja'far's attacking the *ra'y* and *qiyas* of intellect on the occasion of Ibn Abi Layla's and Abu Hanifah's visiting him:

"He said to Ibn Abi Layla, 'Who is this with you?' He replied. 'This is a man with insight and penetration in the matter of religion.' He said, 'Perhaps he constructs analogies (*yaqisu* "measures" in the matter of religion with his *ra'y*.' 'Yes,' he replied; and Ja'far said to Abû Hanifah 'Have you measured your head yet?' (Ja'far proceeds to confound Abu Hanifah with various riddling questions)...Ja'far said, 'My father told me on the authority of my grandfather that the Prophet of God, upon whom be peace, said, "the first who measured

the matter of religion with his *ra'y* was Iblis...And him who measures religion with his *ra'y*, God Almighty binds together with Iblis on the day of Resurrection because he followed him in *qiyas*."

The problem of the true knowledge and vision of God in Ja'far's teaching is explained in the lively anecdote of 'Attar:

"A man came before Sadiq and said 'Show me God.' He said, 'But have you not heard that Moses was told (7.139), 'Thou shalt never see me?' He said, 'Yes, indeed; but this is the creed of Muhammad, that one man exclaims, 'My heart sees my Lord;' another man raises a cry that, 'I do not worship a lord whom I do not see,' Sadiq said, 'Tie him up and cast him into the Tigris'...(The man's cries of help to Ja'far are left unheeded until, on the point of drowning, he cries 'My God. Help! Help!')... 'Sadiq said 'Pull him out.' They did so, and left him for an hour till he regained his composure. Then Sadiq said 'Did you see *al-Haqq*?' He replied, 'So long as I put my hand in other than God's, I was behind a veil. When I took refuge in Him and was in desperate straits, a window was thrown open in my innermost heart. At that place where I was looking down, I saw Him Whom I was seeking. And when my desperation had passed away, He had passed away—(27.63): 'He is one to answer the man in desperation if he calls upon him.' Sadiq said, 'So long as you were saying '*Sadiq*' (trusty) you were (*kadhib*) false'. Now you should preserve that window which reveals that the God of the world is down below there!"

Once again one notes the elaboration of Kulayni's more historical account. While some of 'Attar's terminology is more poetically metaphorical—the 'veil,' the 'window into the heart'—than Ja'far may have used, the basic Sufi principle of *ma'rifah qalbiyah* is faithfully stated. Other lexical details, such as the use of

al-Haqa, are also (doubtless by accident) historically faithful. Massignon suggests that it was from the *tafsir* of Ja'far and the mystic circles of Kufah that the term *al-Haqq*, spread, through Dhu al-Nun al-Misri and others, to become the classic name for God in *tasawwuf*.

Continuing Guidance: Ja'far's thought, anticipating that of the Sufis in the several areas which have been noted, also extended beyond the conventional dimensions of theology; God's action in history, in the present, and in the hereafter. The intellectual, moral and spiritual concerns which we have discussed drew Ja'far to attempt a theosophical, metahistorical doctrine of God and man. The categories of theology and philosophy, the data of history, and existential experience—all were inadequate to express the mystery of God's continuing guidance within and beyond time.

Ja'far saw the points of man's contact with God in the person of the prophets and imams. The succession of imams and 'friends of God' as it was later regulated, was not, of course, at issue in Ja'far's day. But one may detect in his definitions of prophecy a conviction of Ja'far that it is these issues which hold the possibility of guiding mankind on the path of Truth. It is the doctrine of *Nur Muhammadiyah* which seems to have comprised much of this theosophy. A *hadith* relative to surah 43.81 is recorded in Baqli and attributed to Ja'far:

"The first thing which God created was the light of Muhammad."

Massignon points out that in the doctrine of Ja'far this could simply have implied the revelation of the Qura'an. However, it was apparently developed in a doctrine of emanation of Divine knowledge not only through the prophets from Adam to Muhammad, but also onwards through the imams after Muhammad.

Mas'udi quotes a *hadith* from Ja'far which recognises the Light's falling upon Adam and remaining veiled until Muhammad. Thereafter (in Donaldson's translation):

"The light descended upon our most noble men, and shone through our Imams, so that we are in fact the lights of Heaven and of Earth. To us is salvation committed, and from us are the secrets of science derived, for we are the destination that all must strive to reach. Our *mahdi* will be the final Proof, the Seal of the Imams, the Deliverer of the Imamate, the Apex of the Light, and the Source of all good works."

This transition of authoritative guidance from Prophet to Imam seems to require explanation. It has certainly been rejected by countless Muslims. It becomes coherent, though not necessarily acceptable, when one recognises that there can be common ground between *wahy*, Divine communication to the Prophet, and *ilham*, Divine communication to the imam or wali. Ja'far is described in the *Kitab al-Hujjah* of Kulayni as having established categories of this Divine communication. He recognises as first of the *tabaqal al-anbiya wa-al-rusul wa-al-a'immah* the *nabi* with no responsibility to transmit *ilham* and *a'lam* to others; secondly, he sees the *nabi* who does have visions and does hear messages in his sleep, but who has no mission and is therefore not a *rasul*.

These two categories account for the *walayah* of the *awliya'* and for the *nubuwwah batiniyyah*, which are so important for Shi'is. The further categories are the *nabi mursal*, sent to a limited group, and finally the prophet sent to bring a new *shari'ah*. The 'imamology' which results from this is not intended to infringe the uniqueness of Muhammad's mission, only to contest its isolation. The

imamate is not simply a genealogical succession from Muhammad, but more important, a prophetic succession, always remembering the definitions and stratification of prophecy.

Corbin points out that Ja'far insistence upon the necessity of God's sending prophetic guidance is not exceeded even by the logical insistence upon this by Ibn Sina and Biruni. Man's innate human weakness allows no possibility of his arranging his affairs alone. Accordingly, Kulayni attributed to Ja'far an eloquent justification for a continuing, cyclical prophetic guidance from God:

"It is settled, then, that men must have those who give orders and prohibitions in the name of God, the *Hakim* and *'Alim*, and who are His interpreters (*mu'abbiruna 'auhu*); they are the *anbiya* and the choicest of His creation; they are the *hukama'* taught and sent forth by *hikmah*. They are not different from men in their creatureliness and bodily frame, but in men's normal conditions they are assisted by *hikmat* through Him Who is *Hakim* and *'Alim*. This is a settled thing in each age and time through the signs and proofs (*al-dala'il wa-al barahin*) brought to them by the *rusul* and *anbiya'*, in order that God may not leave the earth bare of a *Hajjah* with whom there is an *alam* to show the truth of his sayings and the lawfulness of his justice."

Only the evidence and proof of such a *Hujjah* will maintain the permanence of God's guidance of mankind, the validity of the metahistorical pact whereby God challenges man's estrangement from Himself: *surah* 7.171 "Am I not your Lord?"

The sense of man's exile and need for guidance is a poignant and intimate conviction in the rich tradition that grew from Ja'far. For it is only in exile from the human community that one can feel the full force of exile from

God. Indeed, a man must become *gharib* if he is to be guided. Nawbakhti records Ja'far as saying:

"*Islam* in its beginning was a stranger and it will revert to being a stranger as it began. Paradise belongs to the strangers."

Corbin draws attention to the elaboration of this theme by Jabir ibn Hayyan al-Sufi:

"Indeed the summons of the Imam Ja'far does not tend towards a social religion. It is a summons to the spiritual exile, renouncing all established orders in this world in order to emigrate to the Imam of the Resurrection or towards the spiritual cult of Sufism, which is one and the same thing for Shi'i sufism."

The constant prayer for God's guidance expressed in *surah* 1.5—*ihdina al-sirat al-mustaqim*—is interpreted by Ja'far as *urshudna ila mahabbatika*. God's Love was the supreme aspiration of many Sufis, not so much a final goal as a permanent assurance. The continuing evidence and experience of God's Guidance and Love could illuminate the Sufi's mind, empower his will, and satisfy his soul. Among the first in the Muslim tradition to apprehend this was Ja'far al-Sadiq.

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JOHN B. TAYLOR

Jami, Abdul Rahman (1414-1492)

In the fifteenth century, Persia produced one of the learned Sufi poets, Nuru'l-Din 'Abdu'l-Rahman Jami (A.D.1492). He was well versed in Muslim Theology and Islamic Traditions and followed the mystical path under the spiritual initiation of Shykh Sa'adu'l-Din. His famous works *Nafahatu'l-uns* and *Lawa'ih* are a great contribution to theological Sufism. His philosophy is largely based on Neoplatonic thought and Ibn ul-'Arabi's pantheistic philosophy. Jami accepted only one God, a Perfect Unity in Himself:

"If thou regarded thyself, it is He whom thou art regarding; if thou speakest of thyself, it is He of whom thou art speaking. The relatives has become the Absolute and 'I am the Truth' is equivalent to 'He is the Truth'. When I say 'me', it is 'Thee' I mean to name".

Hence, the objects of the universe are nothing in themselves since nothing exists except God. They can be considered as the mirrors to illuminate the One Divine Glory:

"The various grades of created things are theaters of His revealed beauty and all things that exist are mirrors of His Perfections".

All these reflections of the manifestations belong to God Himself or His Essence and not even to the image of God. His Essence and Existence are one. The Divine Attributes like Knowledge, Power and Will might appear to us as distinct from one another and different in their meanings but, in reality, they are identical with the One Divine Existence. The qualities and the names merely qualify One Existent Being.

"There are not in Him many existences, but only one sole existence and his various names and attributes are merely His modes and aspects".

As regards the problem of God's immanence and transcendence, Jami believed that pure immense or pure transcendence implies limitation of Godhead. God transcends everything because everything is from Him and in Himself; He transcends even Himself, when viewed from the side of His manifestations.

"The essence of the 'Truth' most glorious and most exalted in nothing but Being. His Being is not subject to defect or diminution. He is untouched by change or variation and is exempt from plurality and multiplicity; He transcends all manifestations and is unknowable and invisible. Every 'how' and 'why' have made their appearance through Him: but in himself He transcends every 'how' and 'why'".

Hence God is transcendent as well as immanent. Jami says:

"The Loved One is quite colourless (*birangi*), O heart;
Be not engrossed with colours, then, O heart:
All colours come from what is colourless.
And "who can dye so well as God", O heart?"

According to Jami, all the things of the universe should be considered to be superficial or merely imaginary since God is the only Eternal 'Truth. Everything other than the Truth' is subject to decay and annihilation. Its substance is a mental figment with no objective existence and its form is a merely imaginary entity. Hence, there is only one Perfect Unity in Existence (*wahdatu'l wujud*).

From the stage of '*wahdatu'l-wujud*', Jami passes on to the pantheistic stage of '*hama ost*' (all is God). The One Reality may be viewed from two sides—its Unity and its Appearances in the form of plurality. Jami says:

"This unique Substance, viewed as absolute and void of all phenomena, all limitations and

all multiplicity, is the Truth. On the other hand, viewed in His aspect of multiplicity and plurality, under which He displays Himself when clothed with phenomena. He is the whole created universe. Therefore the universe is the outward visible expression of the 'Truth' is the inner unseen reality of the universe. The universe before it was evolved to outward view was identical with the 'Truth'; and the 'Truth' after this evolution is identical with the universe. Nay, more, in reality there is but One Real Being; His concealment and His manifestation, His priority and His posteriority are all merely His relations and His aspects. It is He who is the first and the last, the exterior and the interior".

In other words, God is in everything and everything is in God.

"Being's the essence of the Lord of all,
All things exist in Him and He in all;
This is the meaning of the Gnostic phrase,
All things are comprehended in the All".

There is complete identity between God and the Universe. It is the 'Truth' who in Himself at once the lover and the beloved, the seeker and the sought. He is loved and sought in His character of the 'One who is all'; and He is lover and seeker when viewed as the sum of all particulars and plurality.

"Thou hast Thy place in all forms of truth and in the forms of created things, there is none but Thou. Wheresoever I look, in all that I behold, throughout the world I see none but thee".

Thus, all is God (*hama ost*) for Jami. God reveals Himself in a number of ways. In His first infestation, He manifests Himself to Himself. In Himself, he reveals Himself with the attributes of Knowledge, Light Existence and Presence. The attribute of Knowledge includes both the features of 'knowing' and

'being known', Light is meant for the qualities of manifesting and being manifest. Existence contains the characteristics of creating or causing to exist and being existent. Presence signifies the qualities of beholding and being beheld'.

In the scheme of emanations the first emanation of God is pure 'Unity' which is unconditional as well as conditioned by qualities. When 'Unity' is unconditioned by any quality or aspect, it is 'Absolute' (*wahid*) and when it is regarded as a Reality conditioned by modes or qualities, it can be called single (*ahad*). The second emotion is the Universal Soul (*'martaba-i jam'*) appearing in the forms of the rational, the animal and the vegetative soul. The Universal Soul contains the attributes of Life, Knowledge and Will. The different forms of One Real Being with these attributes may be called Divine Substances.

Outwardly, these Divine Substances are the so-called sensible and empirical objects. There are some other modes also which simply qualify the One Real Being. They can be named 'mundane substances' like 'difference', 'property', 'accident', 'genus' and 'species'. Hence, the One Real Being assumes the forms of both the Divine Substances and the Mundane Substances in the state of the 'Unity of the Whole'.

According to Jami, the end or the final cause of the series of emanations is to realise in two ways, the perfection of Divine Names—'Jala' and 'istijla'. 'Jala' signifies the outward expression of Divine Names of One Real Being and 'istijla' implies the inward display of Names of the One. 'Jala' is the visible manifestation and 'istijla' is the Invisible Self—the consciousness of God Himself. The perfection of the Divine Essence is the

manifestation of the One Real Being to Himself, for Himself, without relation to anything beside Himself. this is a secret and intelligible manifestation. In this way the One Divine Being transcends even the existences of various beings appearing in the form of manifestations, belonging ultimately to the One Existent Being in Unity.

"In the external world there is only one Real Being, who, by clothing Himself with different modes and attributes, appears to be endowed with multiplicity and plurality to those who are confined in the narrow prison of the 'stages' and whose view is limited to visible properties and results."

Such a Unity of the One Real Being is not a Unity in the sense of 'synthesis' or 'collection' of different units. The relation of the objects to the Unity of One Being is not that of the part to the whole but that of the effect proceeding logically from its cause.

"When one says that the 'Truth' most glorious comprehends all beings, the meaning is that He comprehends them as a cause comprehends its consequences, not that He is a whole containing them as His parts, or a vase containing things within it."

At the same time, the One Real Being is quite independent of His outward appearances. He is a Perfect and Infinite Being. He is not affected by His manifestations just as the purity of light is not affected when it illuminates the clean as well as the unclean. But, on the other hand, the existences or the outward forms of the Unity need the Unity.

"The Absolute does not exist without the relatives and the relatives not formulated without the Absolute; but the relative stands in need of the Absolute, while the Absolute has no need of the relative."

In his mystical view of creation, Jami followed the Neoplatonic theory of Degrees of Perfection. A particular emanation possesses a particular degree of spiritual perfection. The word 'Allah', for example, cannot be used for the emanation at the plane of sensible things. According to Jami, the first degree of God's perfection consists in His transcending Himself.

"In the first degree, He is unmanifested and unconditioned and exempt from all limitation or relation."

Here, He is beyond all categories and attributes. He is beyond human thinking and transcends all the ways of description.

"His first characteristic is the lack of all characteristics and the last result of the attempt to know Him is stupefaction ('*hairani*')."

The second degree of perfection lies in the emanation of God's active, necessary, divine, passive, contingent and mundane aspects. This is the stage of the First Emanation (*ta'ayyun-i awwal*) or the Universal Reason ('*aql-i kull*'). The third degree of God's perfection consists in His active and efficient phases. It is the 'Unity of the Whole Aggregate'. It can be called the Second Emanation or Divinity (*Dahiyat*). It is exposed in various names and forms. This is the plane of the Third Emanation or Necessary Being (*Wujud*). The fifth degree of His perfection lies in 'passivity' or the quality of receiving impressions.

This is again a 'Unity of the Whole Aggregate'. It is the Fourth Emanation or 'Mundane Existence' and 'Contingency'. The sixth degree of perfection lies in the detailed manifestation of the Fourth Emanation. It is the stage of the Fifth Emanation or the Sensible World ('*alam*'). The last two Emanations are the outward aspects of the intelligible world

belonging to contingency. All the degrees of spiritual perfection belong to One Unity of Existence or One Being. The One Reality or Perfect Unity appears in different forms assuming different degrees of spirituality.

"In reality there is but One Sole Being, who is interfused in all these degrees and hierarchies which are only the details of the Unity (*wahidiyat*). 'Very Being' in these degrees is identical with them, just as these degrees, when they were in the Very Being, were identical therewith."

According to Jami, all emanations possessing different degrees of spiritual perfection and belonging to One Existent Being, can be viewed from two sides—subjective and objective. A subjective emanation means Self-manifestation of the Absolute to Himself or Self-consciousness of the Divine Being. It has an inward character. This can be named 'the Most Holy Emanation' (*fiyad-i aqdas*). An objective emanation consists in the manifestation of the Absolute in an outward form. It can be called 'the Holy Emanation' (*fiyad-i muqaddas*). The distinction between the two is only a matter of approach.

The second revelation refers to the external exposition of that which was revealed inwardly within the Absolute. Jami thus explains it:

"Mark well this subtle point—each quality,
Each action that in substances we see,
One one side is attributed to us,
On one to 'Truth', the sole Reality."

Jami believes in the theory of dynamic pantheism. No Divine manifestation is static. Reality comes out of itself at every moment and every manifestation is absolutely new and gives way to a new world, i.e., self-annihilation of everything at every moment.

"God reveals Himself at every breath in a fresh revelation and He never repeats the same revelation; that is to say, He never reveals Himself during two consecutive moments under the guise of the same phenomena and modes."

Since God is the only Existent Being, man is non-existent and unreal. He is a non-entity apart from God. Jami claims:

"Believe me, I'm naught-yea, less than naught. By naught and less than naught what can be taught?

I tell the mysteries of Truth, but know Naught save the telling to this task I brought."

The existence of man means the existence of God. Human qualities are Divine qualities in a manifested form. There cannot be any qualitative distinction between the two kinds of qualities. Human qualities are related to the Divine Attributes like a part to the whole; the part appears separate from the whole but does not remain separate from the whole. Human qualities like intelligence and wisdom are attributes of Deity which have descended from the zenith of the Universal and absolute to the *nadir* of the particular and relative. They have descended to the end that thou mayest direct thy course from the part towards the Whole and from the relative, deduce the Absolute and not imagine the part to be distinct from the Whole, nor be so engrossed with what is merely relative as to cut thyself off from the Absolute.

The Sufi experiences Truth (*al-Haqq*) through his contemplation on the One Existent Being or the Perfect Unity, the Absolute. According to Jami, God has bestowed one heart to man so that he may identify himself with the Absolute alone. Nothing except God can become the object of his devotion.

"Distraction or disunion (*tafiri*) consists in dividing the heart by attaching it to diverse

objects. Union or collectedness (*Jam'iyyat*) consists in foresaking all else and being wholly engrossed in the contemplation of the one Unique Being".

The heart of the true mystic remains free from all thoughts except the thought of God. Complete annihilation of the self implies annihilation of all the human qualities including the consciousness about self-annihilation.

"Self-annihilation consists in this, that through the overpowering influence of the Very Being upon the inner man, there remains no consciousness of aught besides Him. Annihilation of annihilation consists in this, that there remains no consciousness even of that unconsciousness. It is evident that annihilation of annihilation is involved in annihilation".

As all the manifestations belong to the Absolute Himself or His Essence, imperfections in the universe exist due to the absence of real knowledge. "Being, qua Being is pure good". The evil must come from 'non-being' and thus, our ignorance or the non-mystical knowledge about Truth is the sole cause of evil.

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Jilani, 'Abd-Al-Qadir (1077-1166)

Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir Jilani (470-561/1077-1166) was born at a period when Malikshah the Saljuq (465-485/1072-1091) ruled over a vast Muslim Empire. This period is famous for great patronage of learning. It was during this period that the great Nizamiyyah University was founded in Baghdad by Nizam al-Mulk. But after Malikshah's death in 485/1092, fight for succession started which

brought about anarchy and disorder in the country. In 513/1119, Sanjar succeeded in securing the throne and was crowned at Baghdad. But after his death in 552/1157, there was once again the same anarchy and disorder. Constant wars between the different factions of the Saljuqs destroyed the peace and security of the Empire.

But there are two events which stand out prominently. They contributed much towards the disintegration of the social and political structure of the Muslims of the period. The first was the rise and gradual spread of the group of people called Assassins under the leadership of Hassan bin Sabbah. Thousands of people, great and small, fell to the dagger of these fanatics. The second was the starting of the Crusades. The first Crusade lasted from 488-489/1095 to 493/1099. The Christian hordes succeeded in occupying Jerusalem in 492/1099 and putting to death thousands of innocent Muslims and Jews. News of the disaster and huge procession of refugees entered Baghdad where people clamoured for revenge. But the Saljuq rulers were too busy in their wars to take up the challenge. The Christian invaders were allowed, for a long time, to rob and destroy the country. Life became unsettled and there was no peace or security.

It was amid such circumstances that Shaikh 'Abd al-Qadir lived at Baghdad where he had come from far off Jilan. Being a man of great intelligence he was soon able to acquire what the usual system of education had to offer. He then became a pupil of Sufi saint Hammad under whose spiritual care he acquired great proficiency in the mystic lore. For eleven years he spent his life in total seclusion from worldly affairs. After this period of retirement and spiritual discipline he came back to Baghdad and adopted the career of a preacher to th:

people in response to what he calls the 'inner command. The students and the peoples in large numbers began to gather round him and within a short time the premises where he had started lecturing had to be enlarged and expanded.

At the age of 51, he got married and died at the ripe age of 91. He was a man of charming personality and by his eloquent speech exerted great influence on the people. He stands in the fore-front of the Muslim mystics of all ages and is the founder of the Qadiriyyah school of Sufism which includes within its fold many renowned Sufis of the Muslim world.

Futuh al-Ghaib (Revelations of the Unseen), a collection of eighty sermons which he delivered on different occasions, reflects the unstable condition of the times. He emphasises in almost every sermon that social ruin and instability is the result of excessive materialistic outlook on life; true well-being is the result of a harmonious development of an individual's personality whose material as well as spiritual demands are being properly looked after. But as a reaction against the prevalent materialism he emphasises religious values to an extent which seems to be exaggerated. In the fifty-fourth Discourse, for instance, he advises people in general to adopt an attitude of total and complete indifference towards the world, to kill desires and ambitions of all kinds.

In order that his indifference in worldly life may become complete and unalloyed, it is proper for an individual to remove all things from his heart and cultivate pleasure in annihilation, abiding poverty and want, so that there may not remain in the heart even so much pleasure as that of sucking the stone of a date.

With regard to the question of free-will he adopts an attitude of determinism, though sometimes he tries to avoid the extremes of

deterministic position by resort to what has come to be known in Muslim scholastic circles as acquisition (*kasb*). He says:

"Do not forget the position of human efforts so as not to fall a victim to the creed of the determinists (*Jabriyyah*) and believe that no action attains its fulfilment but in God. Nor should you say that actions of man proceed from anything but from God, because if you say so you will become an unbeliever and being to the category of people known as the indeterminists (*Qadariyyah*). You should rather say that actions belong to God in point of creation and to man in point of acquisition (*Kasb*)."

But in a later Discourse (sixteenth), he points out that to rely on *kasb* is *shirk*, i.e., association of partners with God. There is a verse in the *Qur'an* which refer to a particular episode in the life of Abraham. While denouncing idol-worship, he says that it is god who created you as well your handiwork (*ta'malun*). Muslim pantheists and determinists have always used this verse in support of their contention, rendering *ta'malun* as 'what you do,' instead of correct rendering, 'what you make.' Shaikh Jilani here follows the same line, arguing for total determinism, though he does not advocate cessation of all activities.

There is another verse of the *Qur'an* in which God says:

"Enter the garden of paradise because of what you have been doing".

Here, the text unequivocally points out that paradise is the reward of actions. But this being incompatible with the creed of determinism, Shaikh Jilani hastens to add:

"Glory be to Him, how generous and merciful of Him! He ascribes the actions to the people and says that their entry into paradise is on

account of their deeds, whereas their deeds owe their existence to His help and mercy."

Good and evil are the twin fruits of a tree; all is the creation of God, though we should ascribe all evil to ourselves. There is, however, the question of undeserved suffering which a man of conscience has to undergo. Shaikh Jilani thinks that the spiritual peace which is indispensable for a mystic cannot be said to be completed unless he is trained in the school of adversity. The degree of the undeserved suffering, according to him, determines his spiritual rank. He quotes a tradition of the Holy Prophet in this respect:

"We prophets are beset with the greatest number of trials and so on according to rank."

What is essential is to hold fast to faith for the ultimate victory of good over evil. This victory is possible not only in the hereafter but also in this world. If a man has faith and is grateful, these things will put out the fire of calamity in this life.

Men can be divided, according to the Shaikh, into four categories. The first category includes those who have neither tongue nor heart. They are the majority of the ordinary people, who do not care for truth and virtue and lead a life of subservience to the senses. Such people should be avoided except when they are approached and invited to the path of righteousness and godliness. In that case you shall be following in the honourable foot-steps of the prophets. Shaikh Jilani extols in many sermons the role of a mystic saint who, after completing his spiritual discipline and attaining proficiency in mystic lore, assumes the onerous duty of leading the people to the way of God. The ideal type of a mystic in his eyes is not one who becomes a recluse or anchorite but a man of the world who by the example of his

life and the words of his mouth helps the ignorant and misguided to the way of *taqwa*, righteousness.

The second category includes people who have tongue but no heart. They are people of great learning and knowledge and possess eloquent tongue with which they exhort people to live a life of piety and righteousness. But they themselves lead a life of sensuality and rebellion. Their speech is charming but their hearts are black. To the third category belong people who have a heart but no tongue. They are the faithful and true believers. They are aware of their own shortcomings and blemishes and are constantly engaged in purifying themselves of all dross. To them silence and solitude are far safer for spiritual health than talking to and mixing with people.

To the last category belong people who have heart as well as tongue. They are in possession of the true knowledge of God and His attributes and are able to reach and understand the ultimate truth. Equipped with this wisdom and truth they invite people to the path of virtue and righteousness and, thus, become true representatives of the prophets. They are at the highest stage, next only to prophethood, in the spiritual progress of mankind.

With reference to mystical states, he gives us four stages of spiritual development. The first is the state of piety when man leads a life of obedience to the religious Law, totally reliant on God and without any recourse to the help of other people. The second is the state of *reality* which is identical with the state of saintliness (*wilayah*). While in this state, man obeys God's commandment (*amr*). This obedience is of two kinds. The first is that an individual strives to satisfy his basic needs, but

abstains totally from any luxurious indulgence in life and protects himself against all open and hidden sins. The second obedience is to the inner voice, to what is directly revealed to him. All his movements and even his rest become dedicated to God. The third is the state of resignation when the individual submits completely to God. The fourth and last is the state of annihilation (*fana'*) which is peculiar to *Abdal* who are pure unitarians and gnostics.

The state of annihilation is the inactive state in which the individual attains nearness to God, which implies discarding one's own desires and purposes and identifying oneself with the cosmic purpose of God. Shaikh Jilani is careful to point out that the term union (*wusul*) is only symbolical, for this union is something totally different when applied to human individuals. In this state man comes to realize that there is nothing in existence except God—a position which is characteristic of pantheistic mysticism, though we do not find in the *Futuh al-Ghaib* this statement associated with the usual metaphysical implications that we find, for instance, in ibn 'Arabi and his followers. It is only an expression of psychological experience of the individual traversing the mystic Path. A man who reaches this stage acquires the creative power (*takwin*) like God's and his ordering a thing to be (*kun*) becomes as effective as God's.

Shaikh Jilani holds that mystic intuition gives the recipient knowledge of reality that is not possible to gain through reason. Not only that; vision (*kashf*) and experience (*mushahadah*) overwhelm the reasoning power of man. This manifestation reveals two aspects of God:

- (a) His majesty (*jalah*) and
- (b) His beauty (*jamal*),

both of which are revealed to one at different times. But in another Discourse he approaches the problem in a truly empirical way. He says that the only way to know Reality is to look to the self (*nafs*) as well as to observe nature (*afaq*). It is only through this approach that we can arrive at a true conception of God. He quotes with approval the following statement of ibn al-'Abbas, the famous Companion of the Holy Prophet:

"Everything reflects one or other of the attributes of God and every name signifies one of His names. So surely you are surrounded by His names, His attributes and His works. He is manifest in his attributes and concealed in His person. His person is concealed in His attributes and His attributes are concealed in His actions. He has revealed His knowledge through His will and his will is manifest in His continuous creative activity. He has concealed His skill or workmanship and has expressed it only when He has so willed. So He is hidden is His aspect of *ghaib* (unseen) and He is manifest in His wisdom and power."

Mysticism, according to the Shaikh, is not the result of discussion and talk but of hunger and privation. It consists of generosity, cheerful submission, patience, constant communion with God through prayer, solitude, wearing of woollen dress, globe-trotting and *faqr* and also of humility, sincerity and truthfulness.

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EB

al-Junaid, Abu'l-Qasim b. (d. 910)

Abu'l-Qasim b. al-junayd (A.D. 910) of Baghdad was a disciple of Sari al-Saqati and a follower of Thawri. He was well versed in theology, jurisprudence, and ethics and was acclaimed as a leader in the science of Sufism by the Sufis of all schools. The Sufis of the later centuries were deeply influenced by his mystical views on love of God, gnosis, self-annihilation and the Soul's unification with God. He was perhaps, the first mystic who explicitly expressed his indebtedness to 'Ali for his mystic knowledge, for 'Ali, according to

him, possessed an abundance of both exoteric and esoteric knowledge ('ilm and hikmah). He studied law under abu Thaur and associated with Harith Muhasibi and discussed different problems of Sufism during walks with him.

Junayd considered Sufi's mission of the realisation of perfect identity with God as a unique situation, which can only be achieved after true self-mortification. The aspirant's struggle against the appetitive desires (*mujahada*) is the foremost condition for the annihilation of the qualities related to human nature. He says:

"Sufism means that God makes you die to yourself and makes you alive in Him. It is to purify the heart from the recurrence of creaturely temptations, to say farewell to all the natural inclinations, to subdue the qualities which belong to human nature, to keep far from the claims of the senses, to adhere to spiritual qualities, to ascend by means of Divine knowledge, to be occupied with that which is eternally the best, to give wise counsel to all people, faithfully to observe the truth and to follow the Prophet in respect of the religious law."

And further:

"We did not take Sufism from talk and words, but from hunger and renunciation of the world and cutting off the things to which we are accustomed and which we found agreeable."

Junaid advocated the principle of sobriety (*sabr*) as opposed to that of intoxication (*sukr*). According to him, intoxication is an evil, because it disturbs the normal state of a mystic and leads to the loss of sanity and self-control. In this connection, the conversation between Junaid and Hallaj, when the latter after leaving the society of 'Ali b. 'Uthman al-Makki came to Junaid seeking his company, is illuminating.

Junaid refused to accept him as his disciple because, as he said, association demands sanity which was lacking in him. Hallaj replied:

"O Sheikh, sobriety and intoxication are two attributes of man, and man is veiled from his Lord until his attributers are annihilated."

Junaid replied:

"You are in error. Sobriety denotes soundness of one's spiritual state in relation to God, while intoxication denotes excess of longing and extreme of love, and neither of them can be acquired by human effort."

The Sufi attainment of proximity (*qurb*) to God and his fellowship (*ns*) with Him depend on the soul's progress on the path of Love. Love is the sole connecting link between a Sufi and his Lord.

"Love means that the attributes of the lover are changed into those of the Beloved. Now, he lives in accordance with the saying of God: 'When I love him, I will be his eye by which he sees and his ear by which he hears and his hand by which he reaches out.'"

The Sufi contemplation (*mushahada*) or the Vision of God occurs in a state of mystical ecstasy. This is the beginning of the Sufi's real Journey to God. It is at this station of the Path that he becomes perfect for the experience of absolute unification with God. Contemplation implies God's revelation of Divinity in the heart of the seeker. Junaid says:

"God gives the gnostic the ardent desire to behold His Essence, then knowledge becomes vision and vision revelation and revelation contemplation and contemplation existence—with and in God. Words are hushed to silence, life becomes death, explanations come to an end, signs are effaced. Mortality (*fana*) is ended and immortality (*baqa*) is made perfect. Weariness and care cease, the elements perish

and there remains what will not cease, as time that is timeless ceases not."

This advocacy of the doctrine of sobriety made Junaid a model Sufi who was acceptable both to the mystics and the theologians, and it is for this reason that we find in him an advocate of religious Law. Nobody could raise any objection against him with regard to his apparent behaviour (*zahir*) which was in perfect consonance with the *Shari'ah*, or with regard to his inner state (*batin*) which was in perfect harmony with the principles of mysticism. According to him, only he can truly traverse the Path (*tariqah*) who walks with the Book of God (*al-Qur'an*) in his right hand and the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet in his left hand.

He preferred to wear the dress of the '*ulama*' rather than mystics and in spite of constant requests by his disciples and others he would not like to change it for the woollen garb (*khirqah*) of the mystics. According to him, the only safe path open to the people is the path laid down by Muhammad, for true and sure knowledge is the knowledge revealed by God in the *Qur'an* and enunciated by the only Prophet as embodied in the Sunnah.

Tauhid, according to Junaid, is the separation of the eternal from that which was originated in time, for, as he puts it, God cannot be comprehended by any of the categories of our phenomenal existence. Explaining it further, he says:

"true belief in unification is that one should be a figure in the hands of God, a figure over which His omnipotence determines, and that one should be sunk in the sea of His unity, self-annihilated and dead alike to the call of mankind to him and his response to them, absorbed by the reality of the divine unity in true proximity, and lost to sense and action,

because God fulfils in him what He has willed of him, namely, that his state should be as it was before he existed."

According to Junaid, the efforts of man in search of truth throughout human history have been directed towards fulfilment of the covenant entered by man in the presence of God and to return to the state in which he was before he was born.

Most of the pantheistic Sufis look upon Iblis as their teacher in unification and regard his refusal to bow before Adam as a testimony of his strict unitarianism. In his conversation with Iblis, Junaid asked him the reason for his refusal and received the same reply. But Junaid does not become an 'advocate of the devil' like other pantheistic mystics, and points out his (the devil's) stake in taking cover under God's will (*mashiyyah*) in order to violate His command (*amr*). Junaid said:

"You lie. Had you been an obedient servant, you would not have transgressed His command,"

thus stressing the strictly monotheistic position that moral behaviour is the *sine qua non* of a truly religious life which consists in total obedience to God's command (*'ubudiyyah*). He defines '*ubudiyyah*' as the state in which a man realizes that all things belong to God, that He is the cause of their being and existence, and to Him alone they will all return.

Trust in God (*tawakkul*), according to Junaid, is to maintain your relation with God now, as you had before you came into existence; it consists neither in acquisition (*kasb*) nor in acquisition, but in putting your heart in tune with God's promise. Repentance involves Junaid's three stages: first, the expression of regret at the wrong done; secondly, the resolve to avoid doing that wrong

forever; and, thirdly, to purify oneself of all dross, evils, and impurities.

Junayd was the first Muslim saint who seriously concentrated on the passing-away of the Sufi's will in the Will of God. The state of unification with God is attained when the mystic completely surrenders his individual will to Him. It is more essential when the Sufi aims to realise the state of '*baqa*' or the unitive life in God. Describing the last stage of '*tawhid*', Junayd says:

"It is a stage where the devotee has achieved the true realization of the Oneness of God in true proximity to him. He is lost to sense and action because God fulfils in him what He hath willed of him."

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Al-Kalabadhi, Shaikh Abu Bakr (d. 995)

Shaikh Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi (A.D. 995) was a learned Sufi of Bukhara. He is well-known for his '*Kitab al-ta'aruf li-madhhab ahl al-tasawwuf*' (Book of Inquiry into the Tenets of the Sufis), recognised as an authoritative treatise on the mystical doctrines. He was the first mystic scholar who interpreted Sufi ideas from the *Quranic* stand-point and reconciled Sufism with Islamic orthodoxy.

In his theory of mystical detachment, Kalabadhi holds that detachment from everything is absolutely necessary for the adept's unification with God. The station of separation is a higher mystic stage and is attained when the seeker disassociates himself from all including the motive of gaining anything from God except unification with Him. Kalabadhi writes in *Kitab al-ta'aruf*:

"The meaning of detachment is, that one should be detached outwardly from accidents and inwardly from compensations: that is, the one should not take anything of the accidents of this world, nor seek any compensation for what one has thus forsworn, whether it be of temporal or eternal; but rather, that one should do this because it is a duty to God and not for any other reason or motive."

The meaning of separation is, that one should separate oneself from all forms and be separated in the states and one in the acts: that is, that one's actions should be wholly up to God and that there should be in them no thought of self, no respect of persons and no regard for compensation. Kalabadhi seems to have followed the mystic tradition of Junayd and Niffari in his concept of the ascetic life of the follower of the Divine Path.

Kalabadhi laid much emphasis on the realisation of '*ma'rifa*' or gnosis. He distinguished between intellectual and mystical knowledge on many grounds. Intellectual knowledge is ordinary, limited to the human faculties. It deals with the finite objects of the world or the creation of God; it is not concerned with the Creator. Gnosis is higher knowledge and directly deals with the Creator and the Divine Attributes. It is a gift of God. Kalabadhi says:

"The only guide to God is God Himself, holding that the function of the intellect is the function of an intelligent person who is in need of a guide: for the intellect is a thing originated in time and as such only serves as a guide to things like itself".

Kalabadhi was inspired by a great Sufi who believed:

"God made us to know Himself through Himself and guided us to the knowledge of Himself through Himself, so that the attestation of gnosis arose out of gnosis through gnosis, after he who possessed gnosis had been taught gnosis by Him who is the object of gnosis."

According to Kalabadhi, a gnostic is never aware of his own attributes like hope, fear, awe, love etc., for he is concerned with God alone. He knows the Attributes of God alone because he has passed away from his individual qualities. Kalabadhi quotes Dhu'l-Nun who said that the end of the gnostic is traceable, 'when he is as he was where he was before he was'. Kalabadhi himself says:

"The gnostic, then, has made every effort to discharge his duty to God and his gnostic, then, has made every effort to discharge his duty to God and his gnosis is a realisation of what God has given him: therefore, he truly returns from things to God."

In the state of '*fana*' the seeker of God transcends all kinds of worldly desires and human qualities including the quality of making distinction between the things of this world. He is completely annihilated from his selfhood and is united with God.

"Passing-away is a state in which all passions pass away, so that the mystic experiences no feelings towards anything whatsoever and loses all sense of discrimination: he has passed away from all things and is wholly absorbed with that through which he has passed away."

After such a state of '*fana*', the aspirant rejoices in the spiritual state of '*baqa*' which means eternal obedience in God through God. Now, every movement of his is in accord with God. God controls him in performing his duties to Him. He is protected by God and he acts according to His will. Thus, when he passes away from his qualities like ignorance, injustice,

ingratitude at the stage of '*fana*', he gains the Divine Attributes of Knowledge, Justice and Gratitude in the State of '*baqa*'. Persistence, which follows passing-away, means that the mystic passes away from what belongs to himself and persists through what is God's.

According to Kalabadhi, God does not return him to his human attributes, because he was chosen by Him for Himself. Kalabadhi was a follower of the mystic school of Junayd, Kharraz and Nuri who discarded the Sufi doctrine that the spiritual state of unification is momentary. The mystic never returns to his selfhood after having experienced the state of '*fana*'.

Kalabadhi accepted the Islamic concept of God. He described the attributes of God with reference to the *Holy Quran* in his *Kitab al-ta'arruf*. He, thus, explains the doctrine of '*tawhid*':

"God is One, Alone, Single, Eternal, Everlasting, Knowing, Powerful, Living, Hearing, Seeing, Strong, Mighty, Majestic, Great, Generous....He is qualified with all the attributes wherewith He has named Himself....There is no Eternal but He and no God beside Him; that He is neither body, nor shape, nor form, nor person, nor element, nor accident; that with Him there is neither junction or separation, neither movement nor rest, neither augmentation nor decrease; that He has neither parts nor particles nor members nor limbs nor aspects nor places."

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Kasim-i Anwar, Mu'in Al-Din 'Ali Husayni Arabi Tabrizi (1335–1433)

Mu'in Al-Din 'Ali Husayni Arabi Tabrizi Kasim-i Anwar was an eminent mystic, Poet and leading Safawid *da'i*. He was born in the Sarab district of Tabriz in Adharbaydan in 757/1335. He became, at an early age, the disciple (*murid*) of the Shaikh of the Safawid tarika Sadr al-Din Musa who bestowed on him the *lakab* of *Kasim i-Anwar*, 'Distributor of Lights', as the result of a vision experienced by his disciple.

Mu'in al Din 'Ali saw himself standing in the Masjd-i Djami at Ardabil, holding in his

hand a great candle from which the members of the congregation lit their own candles, the light of which illumined the whole mosque (a fuller and variant version of the vision is contained in the *Madjalis al-'Ushshak*. Sadr al-Din Musa, who had recognised at an early stage the peculiar intensity of the devotional powers of Kasim-i Anwar, interpreted this vision to mean that his disciple was destined to distribute among the other novices the divine light with which he was endowed.

After the completion of his training at Ardabil, Kasim-i Anwar received from the hands of Shaikh Sadr al-Din Musa the *khirka* which entitled him to proselytise and give spiritual guidance (*irshad*). At some later stage, Kasim-i Anwar is said, by Djami and sources based on Djami, to have become the disciple of a certain Sadr al-Din 'Ali Yamani. After a period of missionary activity in Gilan, Kasim-i Anwar went to Khurasan. Opposition from the 'ulama' forced him to move from Nishapur to Herat, which became his base of operations for half a century. According to his own statement, Kasim-i Anwar was established at Herat by 779/1377–8 and he remained there until his expulsion from the city in 830/1426–7.

In that year, Kasim-i Anwar was implicated in the attempted assassination of the Timurid ruler, Shahrukh, by a Hurufi named Ahmad the Lur. Kasim-i Anwar was not, himself, a member of the heretical Hurufi sect in the present writer's view, his alleged complicity in the assassination plot was a convenient excuse for the Timurid political and religious authorities or rid themselves of a man whose missionary activities had become a source of embarrassment to them. The sources alternatively allege that Kasim-i Anwar was expelled from Herat because

- (a) Mirza Baysunkur b. Shahrukh bore him a personal grudge;
- (b) he did not show proper respect toward Shahrukh and his sons;
- (c) the majority of the young men of Herat had become his disciples and his popularity with these elements constituted a source of possible mischief.

(a) and (b) may be dismissed; (c) more probably goes to the heart of the matter (the charge of moral turpitude made against Kasim-i Anwar in connection with his association with these young men is unlikely to have been the sole reason for his expulsion). The Timurid authorities took action against Kasim-i Anwar because his activities as a da'i had been too successful; he had become too popular with admittedly heterodox elements and Shahrukh was fearful of a possible revolt.

There is no doubt that Kasim-i Anwar was closely associated at Herat with followers of the Khalwati tarika and the Khalwatis, together with the Ni'mat Allahis, Nakshbandis and other Sufi *tarikas*, played an important part (not yet adequately investigated) in preparing the ground for the Safawid revolution. There is evidence that Kasim-i Anwar's success as a proselytiser was not confined to the young men of Herat. Many notables of the city, and sons of Timurid amirs, are also said to have become his disciples; this, of course, would have given Shahrukh additional grounds for anxiety.

After his expulsion from Herat, Kasim-i Anwar resided at the court of Shahrukh's son, Lugh Beg al Sumatkand. Some years later, he returned to Khurasan, and died at Khandjird in Rabi' I, 887/Oct. Nov. 1433.

Kasim-i Anwar was the author of a number of mystical treatises and of a diwan comprising *ghazals*, *rubai's*, several *mathnawls*, and occasional pieces. Some of his poems are in Turki, and others in the local dialect of Gilan. E.G. Browne claimed to have found 'unmistakable' traces of Hurufi influence in one of his poems, but such a connection cannot be proved on the evidence of his poems.

The language of these is rather the conventional stock-in-trade of Sufis and the style reminds one of Djalal al-Din Rumi. Like Rumi he was more concerned with meaning than with elegance. Kasim-i Anwar normally used the *takhallus* (nom-de-plume) Kasim or Kasimi, but sometimes also the full form of his *laka*, Kasim i Anwar.

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R.M. SAVORY

Al-Kazwini, Nadjm Al-Din 'Abd-Ghaffar B. 'Abd Al-Karim (d. 1266)

Nadjm Al-Din 'Abd-Ghaffar B. 'Abd Al-Karim Al-Kazwini, a Shafi'i jurist and Sufi who died in Muharram 665/October 1266. The most important of his writings was a work known either as *al-Hawi fi 'l-furu'* or *al-Hawi fi 'l-fatawi*, or simply as *al-Hawi*, which became a widely used textbook of Shafi'i fiqh, and was the subject of numerous commentaries and glosses: seventeen are listed by Hadjdji Khalifa (*Kashf al-zunun*, ed. Yalrkaya and Bilge, i, cols. 625–7). A versified paraphrase of the work *al-Bahdjat al-wardiyya*, by Zayna al-Din 'Umar b. Muzaffar al-Wardi (d. 749/1348) became especially popular. Al-Kazwini also wrote *al-Lubab fi 'l-fikh*, a briefer work than *al-Hawi*, and himself composed a commentary on it, *al-'Idjab fi sharh al-lubab*; and a book on mathematics is also attributed to him.

In addition to his accomplishments as a jurist, he was celebrated as a Sufi possessed of wondrous powers. While travelling to Mecca for the *hadjj*, he was seen to be working on *al-Hawi* in the depth of the night, with the paper illumined by a mysterious light from his fingers. During this journey, he is related to have met Abu Hafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardi (d. 632/1234), founder of the Suhrawardi order or *tarika*, who encouraged him to complete the writing of *al-Hawi*. He spent most of his life in Kazwin, where he was celebrated for his luminous fingers as well as other *karamat*.

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H. ALGAR

Khalil Allah But-shikan (1374–1460)

Khalil Allah But-shikan was an Persian mystic. Sayyid Burhan al-Din Khalil Allah was born at Kubnan, in Kirman province of Persia, on Friday 11th Sha'ban 775/26th January 1374, and was the son and spiritual successor of the celebrated Shah Ni'mat Allah Wali of Kirman. He was widely respected as the chief exponent of the Sufi school founded by, and named after, his father. The contemporary Timurid princes Shah-Rukh Mirza and Baysunkur Mirza, who held him in great reverence, for some time played host to the Syiid in harat.

After his father's death in 834/1431, he migrated to the Deccan where the local dynasty of the Bahmanis were engaged in fierce wars against the neighbouring Hindu kingdoms. It is said that the Muslims came out victorious because of the saint's auspicious participation in one of those battles, and this event accounts for his sobriquet of *But-shikan* ("Iconoclast").

Thenceforth, he became the focal point of the socio-religious resurgence which his preachings created among the Muslims of South India. Two of his sons who had accompanied him to India married into the Bahmani royal family, and his eldest son, Sayyid Nur Allah, who had preceded him to the Deccan at the instance of Shah Ni'mat Allah himself, was received with particular marks of honour devoted disciple was no less a person than the Bahmani Sultan Ahmad Shah Wali (825–39/1422–36), who was also ordained as his spiritual vice-regent (*khalifa*).

Whether Sayyid Khalil Allah died whilst he was still in India or after he had returned to Persia has been a disputed point among the historians. Firishta, *Ta'rikh*, 634–5, while asserting that the Sayyid had returned to Mahan in Kirman, where he breathed his last and lies buried, refers to the opinion of some persons that he could not return to Persia and that he died in India.

Modern scholars such as Yazdani and Sherwani have said that he died in Bidar, the Bahmani capital, in 864/1460 and that his tomb is situated there in the domeless octagonal building called the *Cawkhandi*. This story however, was regarded as a myth by Sir Wolseley Haig, who considered the said tomb to be merely a cenotaph, and added that the saint's grave is in his father's beautiful shrine at Mahan.

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ABDUS SUBHAN

Kharakani, Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali b. Ahmad (d. 1033)

Kharakani, Abu 'l-Hasan 'Ali b. Ahmad, Persian mystic who died on the 10th Muharram

425/5th December 1033 at the age of 73. The *nisba* refers to the village of Kharakan situated in the mountains to the north of Bistam on the road to Astarabad (modern Gorgan). There are several variants for the vocalisation of this place-name even in the early sources for the life of this mystic. This confusion may very well be the result of this mystic. This confusion may very well be the result of the existence of other place names with the same consonant outline, such as Kharkan near Samarkand and Kharakan between Hamadan and Kazwin.

In the poems of 'Attar, the name of the mystic is consistently treated as a word with a closed first syllable (*Kh. rkahi*). The form preferred in this article is based on the explicit statement by Sam'ani, who seems to have had a first-hand knowledge of the area. Instead of the patronymic 'Ibn Ahmad', which is supported by all the early sources, 'Ibn Dja'far' is given by Djami and by many subsequent writers who were dependent on him.

The few details which are reported concerning the external life of Kharakani point to a humble origin. He is said to have been a donkey-driven at the time when he was called to the mystic path (Sam'ani). As a youngster, he tended the cattle for his parents. But even in his later years he lived very close to the peasants of his home country. He seems to have travelled very little. There are no reports about his formal education, and he claimed to be an illiterate (*ummi*) who was ignorant about the correct pronunciation of even the most commonly used Arabic formulae (Ansari, *Tabakat*, 510); some of his sayings show traces of a local dialect.

Kharakani described himself as a resident (*mukin*) *Shaikh* who only travelled in the spirit. The renown of his high spiritual rank, gained

after long years of extreme ascetism, attracted a great number of pilgrims to the hostel which was attached to his hermitage. Among his visitors were the most prominent representatives of Sufism in his time. The meeting between Abu Sa'id b. Abi 'l-Khayr and Kharakani in the latter's *khanakah* has been recorded with many details in the hagiographies of both *Shaikhs*.

'Abd 'Allâh al-Ansari al-Harawi, who was much impressed by Kharakani, regarded him as an adept (*muntahî*) and chose him as his spiritual guide. Other well-known visitors were Abu'l-Kasim al-Kushayri, and from outside the mystic circles, Abu 'Ali Ibn Sina and Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna. Whereas the genuineness of the reports about the last two visits is questionable, the attention paid to Kharakani by the great Sufis of his time is undoubtedly historical, and fits very well into the pattern of Khurasanian mysticism in the beginning of the 5th/11th century.

The learned Sufi *Shaikhs* of the larger cities, in particular of Nishapur, took a lively interest in the single-minded and uncompromising spirituality of local mystics who stayed within the geographically, as well as intellectually, much more restricted realm of the small towns and villages where they were born. Another mystic of this type was Abu'l-'Abbas al-Kassab of Amul, a butcher turned into a mystic, who enjoyed a similar reputation as Kharakani. He is reported as having predicted that his 'little bazar' (*bazarak*) would, after his death, be taken over by Kharakani (Ansari, *Tabakat*, 308).

There is no evidence, however, of a formal initiation in the form of the bestowal of a *khirka*, as Kassab did in the case of Abu Sa'id. Kharakani laid claim to a direct succession to

the spiritual essence (*ruhaniyyal*) of Abu Yazid Tayfur al-Bistami in spite of the great interval between his lifetime and that of his teacher. Abu Yazid is said to have announced the coming of Kharakani and to have initiated him in a dream after he had made a series of miraculous nightly visits to the tomb of Abu Yazid in Bistam.

A spiritual relationship of this kind, in which the normal requirement of personal contact between *pir* and *murid* is disregarded, is often designated as an 'Uwaysi' relationship. Its archetype is the influence exerted by the Prophet on the pious Yemeni Uways al-Karani in spite of the fact that they never actually met. The line of mystic tradition which runs through al Bistami and Kharakani was later in the same century attached to the classic *silsila* of Sufism by Abu 'Ali al-Farmadi (d. 477/1084).

In addition to his regular affiliation to Abu 'l-Kasim al-Gurgani (d. 469/1076-7), al-Farmad chose also Kharakani as his initiator, although it is hardly likely that both men ever met personally. In this way, Kharakani has become a spiritual ancestor of the *tarika* of the Khwadjagan out of which the Nakshbandiyya order developed in the 8th/14th century.

The interest of later generations in Kharakani's mysticism is also shown by the use of anecdotes about him in Sufi epic poetry, notably in the works of 'Attar and of Mawlana Djalal al-Din Rumi. Shihab al-Din Yahya al-Suhrawardi, the *Shaikh al-Ishraq* (d. 587/1191), inserted Kharakani after al-Halladj and Abu Yazid in the line of *Khusrawaniyyan* who transmitted ecstatic mysticism to him from a pre-Islamic Iranian sources.

It appears from some of the stories told about Kharakani's relationship to contemporary mystics that his claim to the spiritual succession

of Abu Yazid made him into a rival of the leading *shaikh* of the Tayfuriyya tradition in Bistam, Abu 'Abd 'Allāh Muhammad al-Dastani (d. 417/1026), who is often referred to as *Shaikh al-Mashayikh*.

According to his hagiographer, the *shaikh* expressed the wish to be buried in Bistam near the tomb of his teacher. In the 8th/14th century his grave was visited there by Ibn Battuta. But al-Kazwini (*Athar al-bilad*, ed. Wustenfeld, Gottingen, 1848, 243) asserts that his grave was to be found in Kharakan itself. Recently, a mausoleum of Kharakani has been discovered in the village of Kal'a-yi Naw, north-east of Bistam; it was not, it seems, erected earlier than the Mongol period.

Apart from the reflection of his personality in the accounts of his contemporaries, a considerable number of the sayings of Kharakani have been preserved. There is no question of a systematic exposition of a coherent mystic doctrine. These sayings contain the accounts of a direct mystic experience expressed in bold and terse statements which sometimes possess a great poetic force. The influence of the celebrated utterance of Abu Yazid is unmistakable. A sharp distinction is made between the profane or the 'created beings' (*khalk*) who remain attached to the created world, and the 'brave ones' (*djawannardan*) who venture out strive for a return to the world of the Command ('*alam al-amr*') to which they really belong. The path of the latter goes through severe ascetic training and should end with the total extinction of the self (*fana*) and the subsequent permanence in the will of God. The ascetic preparation has no value in itself.

The attainment of the goal is entirely an act of Divine Grace. This idea is linguistically

expressed by the use of passive verbal forms whenever there is a reference to the fulfillment of the mystic's aim. At that stage, the mystic ceases to be the actor of his own deeds and the speaker of his own words. The highest gift granted to the adept is gnostic knowledge (*ma'rifa*) which is to be distinguished from the positive knowledge ('*ilm*') of the theologians.

When the former kind of knowledge has been attained to its full extent, it appears to be identical, with the religious Law, Kharakani emphasizes that he would refuse to travel any path that would deviate from that of the Prophet. In spite of this adherence to Islamic orthodoxy, he dares to discourage other mystics to travel on to Mecca once they have 'crossed the deserts of Kharakani', i.e., after they have visited him and have accepted his teaching.

The way of Kharakani is a path of sorrow (*anduth*) and anxiety (*kabd*) which is contrasted to the joyfulness (*shadi*) and relaxation (*bast*) of mystics like Dastani and Abu Sa'id. Humility and self-glorification are curiously mixed in the utterances of Kharakani. He claims to be one of the rare true servants of God, and many of his sayings have the form of direct revelations from the Unseen. There are also some accounts of experiences in the higher world. One of his pupils recognises him as the *kutb* of his age. The superior status of the *shaikh* enables him to act as a mediator for other people before the Divine Judge.

On the other hand, Kharakani takes great pains to conceal the graces bestowed on him. Neither his ascetic merits nor his miraculous powers, which in the case of Kharakani consist in particular of the gift of foresight (*firasa*), should mislead the true mystic into false pretensions. It is therefore to be regarded as a special favour of God to His friends that He

helps them to conceal these graces from the eyes of the profane. The sayings of Kharakani have been collected by one of his followers in the *Kitab Nur al-'ulum*. Of this work, only an abstract seems to have survived in the so far unique manuscript British Museum Or. 249, dated 698/1299.

Considerably more of the contents of the original has been preserved in the long section on Kharakani in the Supplement to 'Attar's *Tadhkirat al-awliya'*, ii, ed. Nicholson, Leiden-London 1907, 201–55. The *Nur al-'ulum* was divided into ten chapters, the last of which contained hagiographic stories (*manakib*) about the *shaikh*. Another chapter was devoted to the prayers (*munadajat*) of Kharakani. A small separate collection of prayers is also known to exist. The attribution of the edition of the *Munadajat* of Abu Yazid al-Bistami to Kharakani needs to be verified. Two short *risalas* attributed to Kharakani have recently come to light in Pakistan. There are also a few quatrains attributed to him. A commentary to one of the sayings was written by Nadjm al-Din Daya. One of the divinely-inspired utterances (*shathiyyat*) of Kharakani has been studied by Ruzbihan Bakli.

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Al-Kharraz (d. 899)

Al-Kharraz, Abu Sa'id Ahmad. 'Isa, mystic of the school of Baghdad. Born in Baghdad probably early in the 3rd/9th century, he joined Nibadji, Abu 'Ubayd al-Busri, Sari al-Sakati, Bishr al-Hafi, Dhu'l-Nun al-Misri, Muhammad b. Mansur al-Tusi and other Sufi shaikhs. He travelled extensively from an early age, though only few details about his itineraries are known from his own statements.

His final departure from Baghdad may be connected with the wave of persecution of the Sufis instigated by the Hanbali Ghuam al-Khalil during the coregency of al-Muwaffals (257–78/871–91), for he is reported to have been accused of infidelity by a group of 'ulama' for some daring expressions in his *kitab al-sirr*. According to his own testimony, he visited al-Ramla, Jerusalem, and Savda and lived in Mecca for eleven years, regularly visiting Medina in order to perform the pilgrimage from there.

He was expelled from Mecca by the governor because of his teaching. During the last part of his life, and perhaps during an earlier period, he lived in Egypt. From there he travelled to al-Basra in order to meet the Sufi Abu Hatim al-'Attar, and he also visited Kayrawan. According to the best attested report, he died in 286/899. Like his contemporary al-Djunayd al-Kharraz strove to combine a

doctrine of ecstatic mysticism with orthodox support of the religious law. He affirmed that any esoteric (*hatin*) doctrine that contradicts the apparent meaning (*zahir*) of the law is false. Upholding the superiority of the prophets over the saints (*awliya'*), he argued that every prophet is a saint before becoming a prophet. He addressed a letter to a group of Sufis in Damascus, refuting their heretical view that they could see God with their hearts as the inhabitants of Paradise will see Him with their eyes.

In a book on proper conduct in the canonical prayer (*adab al-salat*), he described the significance of its rites for the Sufi. Al-Kharraz is credited by al-Sulami and others with having been the first one to speak about the states of annihilation (*fana'*) and subsistence (*baka'*). This is not literally correct, for these concepts had been used by earlier Sufis and were commonplace among his contemporaries. They appear, however, as fundamental in his doctrine and designate the highest stages of the mystic 'beyond which no created being can reach.

He defined *fana'* as 'annihilation of the consciousness of manhood' and *baka'* as 'subsistence in the contemplation of Godhead'. At the highest stage, so he stated in his *Kitab al-diya'*, the mystic loses his (human) attributes and attains the attributes of God, a doctrine disputed by al-Djunayd and expressly condemned as heretical by al-Sarradj.

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EB

Khayyam Omar (19th Century)

The quatrains of Omar, son of Abraham the Tentmaker, have been translated into almost every language in the world. Nothing in his reputed life as schoolfellow of the great Assassin, friend of Nizam the Great Vizier, courtier and epicure, is as unlikely as the adventures which have befallen him in translation. It has become a commonplace that the *Rubaiyat* translated by Fitz Gerald more faithfully represents the Irish poet than the Persian. Yet, this is itself a superficial assessment, because Omar represents not himself but a school of Sufi philosophy. It is necessary not only to know what Omar really said, but what he meant by it.

There is a further interest in the fact that in amalgamating ideas from several Sufi poets and putting them out in the name of Omar, Fitz Gerald unconsciously maintained a Sufic impact in English literature.

Let us start with Fitz Gerald's translating. In Quatrain 55, he makes Omar speak specifically against the Sufi:

The Vine had struck a Fibre; which about
If clings my Being—let the Sufi flout;
Of my Base Metal may be filed a Key,
That shall unlock the Door he howls without.

This seems to mean, if it means anything at all, that Omar is opposed to the Sufi. And that what the Sufi seeks may actually be found by Omar's method, not his own.

To any ordinary inquirer this poem would immediately dispose of the likelihood that Omar was a Sufi.

The Sufis believe that within mankind there is an element, activated by love, which provides the means of attaining to true reality, called mystical meaning.

If we turn to the original poem from which Quatrain 55 was translated, looking for flouting Sufis or not, this is the meaning which we find in Persian:

When the Original Cause determined my being
I was given the first lesson of love.
It was then that the fragment of my heart was made
The Key to the Treasury of Pearls of mystical meaning.
There is no Sufi, door, howl, flout, vine or fibber. But the words used are Sufi technical terms.

While it has been generally accepted that Khayyam was a poet without much honour in his own country until reintroduced by the esteem which Fitz Gerald's translation caused in the West, this again is not strictly accurate. Khayyam, it is true, was not as universally prized as Saadi, Hafiz, Rumi and other Sufi poets. The function of the collection of poems which passes under his name was slightly different. It is doubtful whether any Sufis were asked as to what they thought of Khayyam. And it must be admitted that even if they were asked,

few of them would care to discuss the matter with an outsider.

Immense and painstaking labour has been devoted to the task of assessing which quatrains from the many collections of Omari verse are original or genuine. From the Sufi point of view, since Omar was not the teacher of a school of mystics but a single teacher and the exemplar of a school, the question is void of importance. Much interest has been shown by literary researchers in the possible influence upon Omar of the blind poet Abu al.-Ali el-Maari. In the *Luzum*, written a generation before Khayyam, Maari published very similar poetry which is said to be reminiscent of Khayyam.

Maari wrote like Khayyam, and Khatyyam like Maari, a Sufi would say, because they were both writing from the point of view of the same school. Khayyam probably copied Maari just as much as two swimmers copy each other if they swim together, having learned, separately or together, from the same source.

This is the impasse which develops when one party (the literary) is looking at one facet of a work, and another party (the mystic) at the intention or influence within a certain context.

Khayyam is the Sufi voice, and the Sufi voice, to the Sufi, is timeless. In poetry it will not submit readily to time-centred theories. That Khayyam has been rediscovered in Persian through the fame of translations is correct—if we amend this to read:

"Khayyam was not well-known to non-Sufis until comparatively recently in Persia. However, through the efforts of Western scholars, his work has become known very widely to non-Sufis there."

Professor Cowell, who introduced Omar to Fitz Gerald, and taught him Persian, found

the Sufi content in Khayyam through talks with Indian scholars of Persian. Some later scholars have concluded that these people misled the professor. Some Western experts will have no Sufic content in Khayyam. The Reverend Dr. T.H. Weir, a lecturer in Arabic (Khayyam wrote in Persian), wrote a book about Omar in which he is quite clear about this. He says (in his *Omar Khayyam the Poet*):

"The truth is that one cannot read half a dozen lines of Omar without seeing that there is no mysticism here, any more than in Burns."

He does not tell us what kind of mysticism he is referring to, or how he would identify it.

Fitz Gerald himself was confused about Omar. Sometimes he thought that he was a Sufi thought. Heron-Allen, who made a most careful analysis, shows that material which people had thought was concocted by Fitz Gerald often came from other Persian poets. These authors were the ones which have since Chaucer most influenced English writers—the Sufis Attar, Hafiz, Saadi and Jami.

Perhaps, intentionally but probably accidentally, Fitz Gerald had become soaked in Sufic teachings from what are Persian basic texts. These matured in his mind until they emerged, mixed with Omar, to form the *Rubaiyat* in English. Had Fitz Gerald known about the special teaching technique used by Khayyam—following up a line of thought in order to imply its shallowness—he might have provided something even more effective in its impact.

The translator also missed the stress placed by Khayyam on the Sufic state of understanding which comes after 'inebriation,' contained in such passages as this:

I cannot live without wine,

Without the cup's draught I cannot carry my body.

I am the slave of that breath in which the Saki says

'Take one more cup'— and I cannot do so.

This is a clear reference to the condition attained under Sufi teachers when what was an ecstatic experience develops into a real perception of the hidden dimension beyond the metaphorical drunkenness.

Fitz Gerald's version of Khayyam has never been improved upon in English because, in order for Sufi ideas to be transmitted to any extent in any generation, there must be a certain measure of harmony between the ideas and the formulation of the time.

This is not to say that everyone could see this content in Omar. He captured Swinburne, Meredith and millions of people seeking a way of thinking outside the conventions within which they felt themselves imprisoned. But others sensed that this way in some way is a threat to convention. A celebrated doctor of divinity, Dr. Hastie, did not attempt to understand the depth in Khayyam.

He found the Fitz Gerald version "of the rudest wit and shallowest reflection, lean and flashy songs." FitzGerald himself had produced a 'new-patched Qmar;' exciting 'miserable, self-deluded, unhealthy fanatics of his Cult.' This 'cult' was 'a literary craze and delusion, infatuation and spurious idolatry.' Did the reverend gentleman feel his values threatened by one who was, after all, only a "tipsy toper, cowardly scamp, bankrupt, blustering purblind braggart?"

Omar was perhaps as often understood in the East as in the West. Perturbed because so many English-speaking Moslem students in

India were enthused over Khayyam in FitzGerald's translation, at least one orthodox Moslem divine circulated a warning. In *The Explanation of Khayyam* (Molvi Khanzada, Lahore, 1929), a widely circulated pamphlet, he did what he could to fit the problem into his own perspective. First he argues, not without reason, that FitzGerald did not know Persian really well. Secondly, he insists that Cowell did not know it well either ('both scrawled badly, like small children').

People who wanted to read Khayyam should study Persian first, not English. Even before Khayyam they would then be able to get a proper basis of Islam before passing on to complicated matters like Sufism. Finally, Khayyam is a generic term applied to a way of teaching which the Sufis have and which would in any case be misleading if taken on its own, out of books and without a master.

Khayyam was a great cult in England. His devotees formed clubs, planted roses from Nishapur on FitzGerald gave, sought to emulate him in their poetry. The literary cult multiplied, in spite of the fact that it was known that the oldest available manuscript was written three hundred and fifty years after its author's death—almost as if all we knew about St. John of the Cross was in a document written yesterday, and we had to base our assessment of him on that and very little else.

From the Sufi point of view, Khayyam's poetry has multiple functions. It may be read for its apparent content alone; it may be recited under certain conditions in order to provide special improvements in the range of consciousness; it may be 'decoded' to obtain material of use in Sufic studies. It is a part of the Sufi heritage, and as such performs a comprehensive role whose understanding is

itself a part of Sufi specialisation. It is reported of Khan Jan-Fishan Khan, chief of the Hindu-Kush Sufis and a great nineteenth-century master, that he used the quatrains of Omar in his teaching. A disciple reports:

Three new members came to the Khan. He received them, told them to go away and study Khayyam, then to report on him. In a week they reported, on his reception day. The first said that the effect of the poems had been to make him think and to think as he had not thought before. The second said that he thought Khayyam a heretic. The third felt that there was some deep mystery in Khayyam, which he hoped he would eventually be able to understand.

The first was kept on as a disciple. The second was sent to another teacher. The third was sent back to study Khayyam for another week. A disciple asked the Khan whether this was a method of assessing the potentialities of the would-be Sufis. "We already knew something about them, through intuitive means, said the master, but what you consider a test is partly a test and partly a fragment of their training. Further, it has the function of helping to train the watchers as well. This is Sufism—it is a composite, if you like, of study, feeling and the interaction of people and thought."

I was present one day, when an enthusiastic German follower of Omar read a complicated and wordy analysis of Khayyam and his sources to a Sufi master. Beginning with the contention that Omar was discovered by von Hammer almost forty years before Cowell and FitzGerald, he ended by showing to his own satisfaction that almost every type of philosophical theory was embodied in the *Rubaiyat*. The sage listened to him in complete silence. Then he told a story, and here it is.

A scholar went to a Sufi master and asked him about the seven Greek philosophers who fled to Persia from the tyranny of Justinian, who had closed their philosophical schools. "They were of our number," replied the Sufi.

Delighted, the scholar went away and wrote a treatise on the Greek origins of Sufic thought. One day, he met a travelling Sufi, who said: "The master Halimi and the great Rumi quote Jesus as a Sufi teacher." "Perhaps, he means that the Greek knowledge passed to the Christians and also to the Sufis," thought the scholar. He wrote this into his treatise.

The original master, on a pilgrimage, passed through the scholar's home-town one day. Meeting him, he said, "And the heretics, and thousands who do not know it, are of our number."

My friend, the Sufi, looked closely at the German scholastic. "Wine contains water, sugar, fruit, colour. Mix these together and you will not produce wine.

"We are sitting in a room. Suppose a man said, 'The Chinese have rooms. Therefore, all rooms are copied from them. There is a carpet here. This means Mongol influence. A servant just entered—this, surely is a Roman habit. Or is it a Pharaonic one? Now, through the window I see a bird. Research has shown that birds were almost certainly seen through windows by ancient Egyptians. What a wonderful amalgam of inherited customs this place is!' What would you think of such a man?"

Onar's so-called theory of transmigration was assessed by Professor Browne, one of the greatest British authorities on Persian literature and author of the standard *Literary History of Persia*, who quotes a traditional tale about the poet, supposed to prove that he believed in reincarnation.

The poet was one day about to pass an old college in Nishapur, accompanied by a group of his students. A string of donkeys, carrying bricks for the repair of the building, entered. One, however, refused to pass through the gates. Omar looked at the scene, smiled and went up to the donkey, reciting an extempore poem:

O one who has gone and returned,
Your name has been lost from among names.
Your nails are combined into hooves:
Your beard, a tail, now on the other end.

The ass now readily entered the college grounds. The disciples, puzzled, asked their teacher,

"Wise one, what does this mean? The spirit which is now within that ass was once inside the body of a teacher in this college. It was reluctant to go in as a donkey. Then, finding that it had been recognised by a fellow-teacher, it had to enter the precincts."

But Omar was not (as has been thought by externalists) indicating a possibility that some element of human entity might attach itself to another living form. Neither was he just taking an opportunity of tilting at the sterile scholasticism of his time. Nor was he showing that he could influence donkeys by means of verse.

If he was not showing off in front of his disciples, not playing a joke, not carrying out some private activity mysterious to the unenlightened onlooker, not preaching a form of reincarnation, not essentially versifying—what was he doing?

He was doing what all Sufi teachers do—applying a complex impact for the benefit of the students, allowing them to participate in the fact of accompanying a teacher through a

comprehensive experience. This is a form of demonstrative communication which is known only to those who have been through the rough-and-tumble of a Sufi school. The moment the process is split up by the inquiring mind, in an attempt to relate it to a single, even a double, rational meaning, the meaning itself drops away.

The disciple learns through this method things which cannot be conveyed by any other. Reproduce them in print, and unless you add a caution, trying to indicate their special character, the situation will appear to the most earnest inquirer as obscure at best.

The name which Omar chose for his own—Omar Khayyam—decodes by numerical cipher to *Ghaqi*—Squanderer of Goods; a name used for a man who does not care for the ordinary things of this world, when dissipation of attention upon them prevents his developing of meaningful perception of another dimension.

One of Omar's most telling poems against mechanical thinkers—academic or emotional—might still be used with every justification to reproach his later self-appointed critics and expounders: O ignorant ones—the Road is neither this nor that!

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EB

Kirmani, Awhad Al-Din Hamid B. (d. 1337/8)

Kirmani, Awhad Al-Din Hamid B. Abi 'l-Fakir was an eminent Iranian mystic (cf. Hamd Allah Mustawfi, *Ta'rikh-i guzida*, ed. 'Abd al-

Husayn-i Nawa'i, Tehran, 1339/1960, 667-8; Djami, *Nafahat al-uns*, ed. Mahdi-yi Tawhidi Pir, Tehran, 1331/1962, 588-92). He was a pupil of Rukn al-Din al-Sidjisi (Sindjani), of the affiliation of Kutb al-Din al-Abhari and Abu Nadjib al-Suhrawardi. On his numerous travels, he came to Damascus where he became acquainted with Muhyi 'l-Din b. al-'Arabi, who mentions him in his *Futuh al-makkiyya*, and was deeply influenced by his ideas. Awhad al-Din knew Shams al-Din Tabrizi, and probably met also Djalal al-Din Rumi, 'Utman Rumi, Sadr al-Din al-Kunwi and Fakhr al-Din al-'Iraki. He spent the last period of his life as a well-known mystical teacher in the neighbourhood of Baghdad and was honoured by the 'Abbasid caliph al-Mustansir in 632/1234-5. He died probably on 3 Sha'ban 635/21 March 1238.

Awhad al-Din belongs with Ahmad Ghazali and Fakhr al-Din al-'Iraki to the representatives of shahidbazi, the contemplation of the divine beauty in earthly forms, preferably are surat (outer form, image) and ma'na (inner meaning, essence), in conformity with Ibn 'Arabi's key terms *zahir* and *batin*. The famous mathnawi poem *Misbah al-arwah*, often attributed to him, was actually written by Shams al-Din Muhammad Bardasiri Kirmani. The poetical heritage of Awhad al-Din is marked by short forms (i.e. only some *tardji'* bands and a few ghazals, but a large number of *ruba'iyyat* which are grouped into 12 chapters), and is of a ghostic-mystical character.

The *ruba'iyyat*, which are sometimes influenced by 'Umar Khayyam are not always of the best literary quality, but they show a deep mystical thought and experience, (as is found in verses of Djalal al-Din Rumi, Ahmad Ghazali, 'Ayn al-Kudat al-Hamadani and Fakhr al-Din al-'Iraki).

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B.M. WEISCHER

Kubra, Shaikh Abu 'L-Djannab (1145-?)

Kubra, Shaikh Abu 'L-Djannab Ahmad B. 'Umar Nadjm Al-Din, was the eponymous founder of the Kubrawi Sufi order, one of the major orders of the Mongol period in Central Asia and Khurasan, from which stem numerous derivative initiated lines. The sobriquet of Kubra is an abbreviation of the Kur'anic expression *al-tammat al-kubra*, 'the major disaster', a nick-name Nadjm al-Din earned through his formidable talent in polemic and disputation.

Born in Khwarazm in 540/1145, he began his career as a scholar of hadith and kalam, travelling extensively in the cultivation of these disciplines. His interest in Sufism was awakened in Egypt, where he became a murid of Shaikh Ruzbihan al-Wazzan al-Misri, an initiate of the Suhrawardi order.

After a number of years in Egypt, he went to Tabriz to pursue his studies of kalam, but

came instead under the influence of a certain Baba Faradj Tabrizi, who persuaded him definitively to abandon his concern with the external religious sciences and to devote himself fully to the Sufi path. He then spent some time in the company of two other preceptors, 'Ammar b. Yasir al-Bidlisi and Isma'il al-Kasri, from both of whom he received the ritual *khirka*, before returning to Shaikh Ruzbihan in Egypt.

By then, Ruzbihan evidently regarded Kubra as fully mature, for in about 540/1145 he sent him back to Khwarazm with full authority to train and initiate disciples. Kubra swiftly gathered a large following, including a remarkable number of individuals who attained prominence in their own right as gnostics and writers on Sufism; he is, in fact, frequently designated as *wali-turash*, the 'manufacturer of saints'. Among his foremost disciples were Madjd al-Din Baghdadi (d. 616/1219), Nadjm al-Din Daya Razi (d. 654/1256), Sa'd al-Din Hamuya (d. 650/1252), Baba Kamal Djandi, Sayf al-Din Bakharzi (d. 658/1260) and Radi al-Din 'Ali Lala (d. 642/644).

Kubra died during the Mongol conquest of Khwarazm in 617/1220. According to the traditional accounts, he refused an invitation by the Mongols to leave the city before they proceeded with their massacre of the inhabitants, and died at the head of a band of followers while engaged in hand-to-hand combat. He is reputed to have been buried at the site of his *khanakah* outside the city, and his tomb, located in what subsequently became known as *Kohne-Urgenj*, became a centre of pious visitation, retaining this function even under Soviet rule.

Kubra left behind a number of brief but important works dominated by a concern with

the analysis of the visionary experience. He discussed in them, for example, the various significances of dreams and visions; the degrees of luminous epiphany that are manifested to the mystic; the different classes of concept and image (*khawatir*) that engage his attention; and the nature and inter-relations of man's 'subtle centres' (*lata'if*). Most important of Kubra's treatises are *Fawa'ih al-djamal wa-fawatih al-djalal* (edited with an exhaustive introduction on the life and work of Kubra by F. Meier, Wiesbaden, 1957), *al-Usul al-ashara* and *Risalat al-kha'if al-ha'im min lawmat al-la'im* (edited, together with other lesser treatises, by M. Mole under the title of *Traites mineurs*, in *Annales Islamologiques* (Cairo), iv [1963], 1-78). In addition to these short works on the path, Kubra also embarked on a Sufi commentary on the *Kur'an* that he was unable to complete but was continued after his death first by his murid *Nadjm al-Din Razi* and then by another *Kubrawi*, 'Ala' al-Din *Simnani*.

In October 1365, Alexandria was temporarily occupied, but the commercial interests of Venice and Genoa stopped any further confrontation with Mamluk power. These two merchant republics were to dominate Cyprus's politics in the last century of its independent existence. At first, it was Genoa which gained the upper hand in the competition with Venice. In 1372, the Genoese *Podesta* (in *Famagusta*) defeated the Venetian *Bailo*, whose party received support from the Greek Cypriots. A Genoese force invaded *Famagusta* and *Nicosia*.

In October 1374, a treaty was concluded which assured Genoa complete economic hegemony on Cyprus for 90 years. The *Maona Cypri* was the private mercantile organisation of Genoese bankers established at *Famagusta*. The King of Cyprus had to cede the town as a

guarantee for the payment of reparations amounting to 2,146,400 florins and the yearly tribute to Genoa of 40,000 florins.

The next blow to Cyprus's independence was an invasion by the Mamluk Sultan *Barsbay*. On 7 July 1426, King *Janus* (1398/1432) and his army were defeated near *Khirokitia* and *Nicosia* was plundered. The King was set free on the condition of becoming a vassal, paying 200,000 florins' ransom and a yearly tribute of 8,000 florins. After this invasion, the island's economy began to decline. Social unrest within the Greek population worsened the situation. In 1448, *Gorhigos* fell under control of the *Karaman* emirate. Cyprus lost her last continental interest.

When in 1458, *Charlotte*, the daughter of King *John II*, came to the throne, her half-brother *James the Bastard* (1440-73) disputed the succession. He applied to the Mamluk sultan for support. In 1460, with the aid of Mamluk auxiliaries, *James II* defeated the legitimist opposition and took the last strong-hold of the Queen, *Kyrenia* and the Genoese held *Famagusta* in 1464. To defend himself against a Genoese counter-attack, *James II* enlisted Venice as an ally and chose a Venetian subject, *Caterina Cornaro* (d. 1510) as his Queen in 1472; after his death (1473), she was to rule as the last monarch of independent Cyprus till 1489. During her reign.

Venice installed a virtual protectorate. A Venetian garrison and two Venetian counsellors to the Queen were not considered enough by the Venetian government to safe-guard the island from the Ottoman Turks' expansion. In 1488, an Ottoman fleet appeared before *Famagusta*. On 26 February 1489, Queen *Caterina* abdicated in *Famagusta* and the Venetian *Capitan Generale da Mar*, *Francesco Priuli*, took over the government of the Island.

Thus, it was Christian Venice that ended the last of the Crusader states in the East. The Signory of Venice duly notified and offered justification of the take-over to the Sultan Ka'it Bay in Cairo and the envoy carried with him presents and 16,000 ducats, being the tribute for 2 years. The Sultan thereupon agreed to the transfer of the Kingdom of Cyprus to Venice (February 1490).

Venetian rule (1489-1571): With the acquisition of Cyprus, the commercial 'colonial' empire of Venice reached its greatest dimensions. The new possession was re-organised. The centralised government, the Rettori, consisted of the Luogotenente and two counsellors. Venetian nobles elected for a two years' tenure, controlled the finances and administration, and resided at Nicosia. A quadrennial census was instituted, the first reliable population data of Cyprus's history.

The governor of Famagusta, the Capitan del Regno di Cipro, acted as commander-in-chief of the army and the fortresses in peacetime, and had a share in the civil administration. In time of war or menace, a provveditor-general was elected for two years to command. From the period of the Lusignan rule, two offices were retained only, the viscounties of Famagusta and Nicosia being reserved for Cypriots. A Great Council replaced the Haute Cour, but did not leave any real power to the Frankish baronage, by now a commingling of military adventurers from all over the Mediterranean world.

On the whole, Venetian administration was inefficient and corrupt. It estranged the local Latin ruling class and did not manage to gain the loyalty of the Greek population. The island remained a colony and a military base only for the Venetians, and one inadequately manned at

that. The economy continued its decline, aggravated by natural disasters in the course of the century. The burden of the tribute to the Mamluk sultans remained till 1517, when it became payable to the Ottoman sultan at Istanbul. The monopolistic exploitation of the island's resources did not encourage local enterprise. Apart from salt and grain, cotton, cultivated since the early 14th century, now became the major source of revenue, replacing sugarcane.

Various forms of taxation pressed hard upon the labouring population. A conspiracy against Venice in 1562, led by a Greek, one Jacob Diassorin, was suppressed. Its dangerous aspect was that the rebels had made contact with the Ottomans. The Venetians now modernised the island's defences, and three fortresses, those of Kyrenia, Nicosia and Famagusta, were to be the sole defensible places; old fortifications like St. Hilarion, Buffavento and Kantara were dismantled by 1567.

The Ottoman threat hovered over Cyprus during the rule of Venice and in the years following the Ottoman-Venetian peace treaty of 1540 (cf. text ed. by Bonelli, Lehmann and Bombaci), pressure increased. The admiral Piyale Pasha promoted the continuation of a naval policy aimed at annexing the Latin-held islands in the Levant seas on the routes of Ottoman communications; Chios and Cyprus, the principal among them, were both already tributary to the Porte. Sokollu Mehmed Pasha's, gave in to the war party and the attack on Cyprus was decided for the early spring 1570. Joseph Nasi, alias Don Juan Micas, seems to have been implicated here plicated here.

Selim II (1566-74) issued his orders for war in 1568. A fetwa by the sheykh ul-Islam

provided a justification for breaking the peace. Preparations continued during 1569. On 28 March 1570, the Ottoman envoy Kubad formally handed to the Senate and the Doge Sultan Selim II's demand for the cession of Cyprus, which was refused. In the meantime, Lala Mustafa Pasha, the fifth vizier was appointed serdar, and Piyale Pasha, the third vizier, was made commander of a fleet of 80 galleys and 30 galliots, followed by 'Ali Pasha with troops, munitions and materials for the land campaign.

On 3 July 1570, the Ottoman fleet appeared before Larnaca (Les Salines). A Holy League created by Pope Pius V, Spain and Venice failed to organise a timely counter-attack. The Venetian commander, the Luogotenente Nicosia began and ended on 9 September when the city was taken by storm. Kyrenia capitulated without a fight 5 days later.

The line of Kubra was perpetuated by several of his disciples. Sayf al-Din Bakharzi established a well-endowed khanakah in Bukhara. It was there that Brake Khan, fifth ruler of the Golden Horde, proclaimed his acceptance of Islam. Badr al-Din Samarkandi, a murid of Bakharzi, travelled to India and established there a branch of the Kubrawiyya that came to be known as the Firdawsiyya; its most important figure was Ahmad Yahya Maneri (d. 772/1371), author of widely-read *Maktubat* (publ. Lucknow, 1911).

Sa'd al-Din Hamuya established a khanakah at Barabad in Khurasan, the direction of which was assumed by his son, Sadr al-Din Ibrahim, who in 694/1295 presided over the conversion to Islam of Ghazan Khan, the Ilkhanid ruler of Iran. Another murid of Sa'd al-Din Hamuya was 'Aziz al-Din Nasafi (d. 661/1263), author of several important treatises

(published by Mole under the title *Kitab al-Insan al-kamil*, Tehran and Paris 1962).

The most long-lived and prolific line serving from Nadjm al-Din Kubra was probably that descending by way of Radi al-Din 'Ali Lala and two further links of the chain to 'Ala' al-Dawla Sinnani. Simmani further elaborated the analysis of the *lata'if* and also formulated a critique of Ibn 'Arabi's doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* that was to have much influence on Indian Nakshbandi circles. 'Ali Hamadani, a murid successively of two of Simmani's followers, Taki al-Din Akhi and Mahmud Mazdakani, introduced the Kubrawi order to Badakhshan and Kashmir.

He died in 786/1385, and is variously reputed to have been buried in Khuttalan (present-day Kulab, Tadzhik SSR) and Srinagar. He designated himself as a 'second 'Ali' and although the branch of the Kubrawi order he introduced to Kashmir remains purely Sunni to the present day, it is not surprising that various descendants of Hamadani came to adopt Shi'ism.

Ishak al-Khuttalani, successor of 'Ali Hamadani, was murdered by emissaries of the Timurid ruler Shahrukh in about 826/1423, but before dying appointed as his successor Muhammad Nurbakhsh. The majority of Khuttalani's followers accepted Nurbakhsh, but a minority gave their loyalty to 'Abd Allah Barzishabadi instead. This schism gave rise to two separate derivatives of the Kubrawiyya each with its own name, but having in common an adoption of Shi'ism. One was the Nurbakhshiyya, that survived in Iran into the Safawid period; the other came to acquire, at a date and in a fashion unknown, the designation of Dhahabbiyya, and has survived down to the present in Iran, where its chief centre is Shiraz.

The latter history of the Kubrawiyya in its Central Asian home-land is not well-known. It is probable that it was almost universally displaced, even in Khwarazm, by the Nakshbandiyya from the early 9th/15th century onwards. The small town of Saktari near Bukhara remained, however, an active centre of the Kubrawiyya until at least the early 11th/17th century (for a list of works produced by the shaikhs of Saktari; and at some point the Kubrawiyya spread eastwards from Central Asia into the Muslim regions of China.

Finally, there are traces of the Kubrawiyya in Turkey—a Kubrawi shaikh by the name of Mustafa Dede is recorded to have fought in the ranks of the army that conquered Istanbul—but no lasting implantation of the order appears to have taken place either in Turkey or the Arab lands. Only a nominal existence of the Kubrawiyya persisted in the western Islamic world as one of the multiple secondary affiliations professed by Nakshbandis of the Mudjaddidi-Khalidi line.

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H. ALGAR

Al-Kurani, Ibrahim B. Al-Shahrazuri Al-Hasan Sharan Al-Madani (1615–1690)

Ibrahim Al-Kurani (1023–1101/1615–90), scholar and mystic born in Shahrazur in the Mountains of Kurdistan of the frontiers of Persia. He studied first in Turkey, then in Persia, 'Irak, Syria and Egypt before settling in Medina. In one of his works, *Masalik al-abrar ila hadith al-nabi al-mukhtar*, he refers to a period of 3 months at the Azhar in 1061/1650, where he studied with Shaikh Nur al-Din 'Ali b. 'Ali al-Shabramallisc, Imam of the Azhar until 1087/1677, the whole *Taysir fi'l-kira'a al-sab'* attributed to al-Kurtubi, and with Shaikh 'Abd al-Rahman Shihadha al-Yamani the *Tayibat al-nashr i 'l-kira'at al-'ashr* of al-Djazari up to Sura IV, 41, *fa-kayft idha dji'na min kulli ummatin bi-shahidi*, after which he travelled to Baghdad where he spent a year and a half. He was a member of several *furuk*, he most important among them being the *Nakshbaniyya*. In Medina, he was a student of al-Kushashi and succeeded him as head of his *farika* on the former's death in 1071/1661.

He was a prolific author in various of the Islamic disciplines and wrote on *fikh*, *tawhid* and *tastawwuf*. He was one of the last great exponents of the school of Ibn 'Arabi and is of particular interest because of his use of the techniques of scholastic theology in his *Ithaf al-dhaki bi-sharh al-tukfa al-mursala ila l-nabi* (edition in preparation) in order to explain and defend the monastic tradition of Ibn 'Arabi.

Yet, despite his commitment to the Ibn 'Arabi traditions, he was by nature a conciliator, arguing that it was preferable to reconcile two opposing points of view than to choose one of them or the other. This did not save him from

condemnation by the followers at al-Sanusi in Fas for his Kadariyya learnings on the question of *kasb* and for Mu'tazili influence in his views on the faith of Pharaoh, and his assertion of the historicity of and explanation of the so-called 'Satanic verses' allegedly interpolated into Kur'an LIII, 21.

Other Moroccans, however, thought highly of him and of his humility and learning. He was esteemed by foreign students in the Hijaz and was well-known among Indian scholars. He had an important influence on the development of Islam in the region now known as Indonesia because of his special relationship with the Achehnese 'Abd al-Ra'uf of Singhel and with succeeding generations of Javan students referred to in the *Fawa'id al-irthihal wasnata'idi al-safar* of Mustafa al-Hamwi. His association with 'Abd al-Rauf was particularly close. They were friends in Medina, they corresponded across the Indian Ocean for thirty years after 'Abd al-Rauf returned to Aceh in 1071/1661, and 'Abd al-Rauf made renderings of some of his works in Malay.

The number of works attributed to him ranges from forty-two (Brockelmann) to over a hundred, only two of which have been published, sc. al. Lum'a al-saniya and al-Amam li-ikaz al-himam. The former is a brief treatise on the 'Satanic verses', for which some of the Moroccans condemned him; the latter is a most interesting and important work, setting out in detail his intellectual credentials as a teacher.

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Lami'i, Shaikh Mahmud B. 'Othman B. 'Ali Al-Nakkash B. Ilyas (1472/3–1531/2)

Shaikh Mahmud Lami'i was a celebrated Ottoman Sufi writer and poet of the first half of the 10th/16th century. He was born in 877/1472–3 at Bursa, where he spent all his life. His grandfather, Nakkash 'Ali Pasha, teacher of Fawri and one of the great painter-carvers (*nakkash*) of his time, had in his youth been taken by Timur to Samarkand, where he perfected his art; after his return, he contributed masterly decorations to the Yeshil Djami' and the Yeshil Turbe in Bursa.

As the son of 'Othman Celebi, the *defterdar* of Sultan Bayzzid II's treasury, Lami'i learnt Arabic and Persian, and received an excellent *madrasa* education from the mollahs Akhawayn and Muhammad b. Hadjdji Hasan-zade. He aspired to the career of a jurist and theologian, but his father's death created difficulties. He seems to have written worldly poetry and prose, until he became aware of his preference for the mystic path, *fariqa*, and took as his spiritual guide the Nakshbandi Shaikh Amir Ahmad al-Bukhari, who exerted a decisive influence on his life.

Lami's success as a writer began when two of his works attracted the attention of Sultan Selim I, who awarded him a pension of 35 *akces* a day, and bestowed on him the revenues from a village. Sultan Suleyman, whose accession he celebrated in a chronogram, kept up this patronage; to his Grand Vizier Ibrahim Pasha who showed him the greatest favour, Lami'i dedicated several of his *mathnawis* as a mark of gratitude. Already in 918/1512 Lami'i was able to found a *wakf* of 4,000 *akces*.

Occasional complaints over lack of money did not go unanswered: Ibrahim Pasha awarded him a stipend of 20 *akces* daily which Lami'i needed for the education of his children. He had married early and had three sons and one daughter; among his descendants, his son Derwish Mehmed Celebi, known as Lem'i, a *mudarris* and author of a work on prosody, and a grandson known as Lami'i-zade, are mentioned.

In his private life, Lami'i was described as outspoken, persistent in his opinions, witty and fond of literary jests. he died in 938/1531–2, and was buried in the graveyard of the (no longer extant) mosque built by his grandfather on the Citadel of Bursa.

The fact that Lami'i, who never went to court, owed his livelihood to Ottoman sultans and one Grand Vizier, allows us to surmise that he conformed to the expectations of his patrons. Their declared aim was to blend the refinement of Persian poetry with the vigour of the Turkish style cultivated in Anatolia, while welcoming the best of Eastern Turkish poetry.

Significantly, Lami'i took as his models two great near-contemporary poets of Timurid Herat, the Persian Djami and his Turkish friend, the minister Mir 'Ali Shir Nawa'i both Nakshbandis like himself.

In a literary age which restricted any poet, Turkish or Persian, to conventional forms (allegory being the prevailing fashion), Lami'i was encouraged by his Ottoman patrons to turn his efforts at originality in the direction of the themes. Passing by such wellworn stories as Layla and Madjnun or Yusuf and Zulaykha, Lami'i concentrated his talent in introducing into Turkish literature fresh themes such as *Sham'u parwana*, *Salaman u Absal* and *Hafi paykar*, incidentally preserving two themes that had virtually sunk into oblivion in Persian literature: *Wis u Ramin*, for which one of the rare Gurgani manuscripts could only be found after a long search, and *Wamik u 'Adhra'*, of which the Persian original by 'Unsuri is now lost.

Lami'i's "reason for writing", *sabab-i ta'lif*, and additions to his translations, are worth a special study; this would reveal the independent and lively intellect of this writer, whose originality was achieved not by breaking out along new lines but by fusing new themes with the traditional conventions. About thirty of his works are known. He wrote eight *mathnawis* and a great deal of other poetry, but is better known for his prose works. Viewed

chronologically, his major works are as follows:

- (1) The *Lata'if-nama*, a collection of facetious and partly scandalous stories in prose, probably written from the time of his youth and continued over the years; the unfinished book, which contains valuable information such as that on the old poet Shayyad Hamza was completed in 988/1580-1 by his son Lem'i;
- (2) *Sharh-i dibadja-yi Gulistan* (according to the *Farhadnama*, Lami'i commented on the whole *Gulistan*, A.S. Levend, *op.cit.*), a commentary on the preface to Sa'di's "Rose garden", complete in 910/1504;
- (3) *Husn u dil*, ("Beauty and the heart"), a translation in prose of Fattahi's allegorical work, dedicated to Sultan Selim I, studied by R. Dvorak, *Husn u dil persische Allegorie von Fattahi aus Nisapur*, Vienna 1889;
- (4) *Shawahid al-nubuwwa* ("Distinctive signs of prophecy"), an expanded and commented prose translation of the treatise of Djami, completed in 915/1509-10, printed 1293/1876 Istanbul, ed. 1958 Muzaffer Ozak;
- (5) *Guy u cavghan*, ("Ball and bat"), Lami'i's first *mathnawi*, for which, inspired by a religious dream, he made use of which, inspired by a religious dream, he made use of 'Arifi's (d. 853/1449) allegorical poem, studied by N. Tezcan, *Lami'i' nin Guy u Cevgan mesnevisi*, in Omer Asim Aksoy *armagani*, Ankara 1978, 201-25;
- (6) *Farhad-nama* or *Farhad u Shirin*: interestingly enough, Lami'i used for his second *mathnawi*, written in honour of Mehmed Shah, who had just acquired a *Khamse* by Nawa'i, claimed only to have

- altered the style (*uslub*), but he made also alterations in the story (A.S. Levend, *op.cit.*, 88, 110 f.). tr. von Hammer, Stuttgart 1812;
- (7) *Absal u Salaman*, his third *mathnawi*, dedicated to Selim I, is the first Turkish treatment of Djami's allegorical work with considerable additions;
- (8) *Futuh al-mudjahidin li-tarwih kulb al-mushahidin* ("Conquests of the champions of Islam giving rest to the hearts of the spectators"), better known as *Tardjama-yi Nafhat al-uns* ("Translation of the Breath of divine intimacy"), a translation of Djami's Sufi biographies with important additions on more than thirty Anatolian Sufis, in prose, begun in 917/1512 and finished in Radjab 927/April 1521, on the eve of Suleyman's Belgrade campaign; the book was printed in Istanbul 1270/1853-4 and 1289/1872;
- (9) *Sham'u parwana* ("The taper and the moth"), his fourth *mathnawi*, written in honour of Suleyman after the conquest of Rhodes 929/1522, but sent to him later; it seems that Lami'i used for this allegorical poem not the accepted Persian version of Ahli-yi Shirazi, composed in 894/1488-9, but that of a certain Niyazi ('Abd Allah Shabustari; G.K. Alpay, *Lami'i Chelebi and his works*, [see Bibl], 88ff.), a second-rate author whom he need not mention in his preface; —
- (10) *Wamik u 'A dhra'*, his fifth *mathnawi*, translated at the request of sultan Suleyman from the no-longer-extant Persian version of 'Unsuri; parts were very freely tr. by J. von Hammer, *Wamik und Asra, das ist der Gulhende und die Bluhende*, Vienna 1833;
- (11) *Maktel-i Husayn* ("Martyrdom of the Imam Husayn"), his sixth *mathnawi*, for which no specific source is named; Lami'i reacted here against the warnings of some 'Ulama' concerning the recital of these martyrdom narratives in public; illustrated copies have survived;
- (12) *Shahrangiz*, a poem in praise of Bursa in expectation of a visit of Sultan Suleyman, published at Bursa 1288/1871-2, tr. A. Pfizmaier, *Die Verherrlichung der Stadt Bursa*, Vienna 1839;
- (13) *Munazara-yi bahar u shita'* ("Controversy between spring and winter"), an extensive poem using Bursa and the Keshish Daghi as a stage-setting, Istanbul 1290/1873;
- (14) *Munsha'at-i makatib* or *Nisab al-balagha*, Lami'i's work, in *Vis u Ramin, a Parthian romance*, in BSOAS, xii [1947], 31-2);
- (19) His *Diwan* of about 10,000 verses, compiled in 936/1529;
- (20) A work on the *mathnawi Haft kaykar* ("The seven effigies") based on Hatifi's *Haft manzar*, was interrupted by Lami'i's death and completed by his son-in-law, Rusheni-zade.
- Lami'i developed the *munazara* genre and experimented, as had become customary for poets, with Caghatay Turkish. It was Lami'i's diversity and originality, and not only his renderings of works by Jami, which earned him the honorific epithet "the Jami of Rum".

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B. FLEMMING

M

al-Madani, Haznia Zafir (1847–1903)

Madaniyya, a branch of the Shadhiliyya Sufi order named after Muhammad b. Hasan b. Hamza Zâfir al-Madani (1194–Djumada I 1263/1780 -April-May 1847), who was originally a *mukaddam* of Mawlay Abu Ahmad al-'Arbi al-Darkawi. From 1240/1824–5 al-Madani presented himself as independent head of a *tarika* in his own right, while retaining the essentials of Shadhili teaching and liturgical practice. By that time, he had settled in the Tripolitanian town of Misrata, where he died and where his shrine may be visited today.

Under his son and successor Muhammad, the order spread in Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, Fazzan, Tunisia, Egypt (Alexandria, Cairo and Suez) and the Hijaz (Zaki, 239). In 1289, Muhammad went to Istanbul upon the request of Mahmud Nadim Pasha the former *wali* of Tripoli who had then become Grand Vizier. In this city al-Madani was introduced to the future Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid, who was initiated by him into his *tarika*. Later from 1293/1876 onwards al-Madani took up permanent residence in Istanbul.

For a period of about thirty years he acted as an adviser to Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid II, whose

accession to the throne he had correctly predicted and who believed strongly in his magical powers and skills. The Sultan built al-Madani a *tekke* in Beshiktash where he himself occasionally attended *dhikr* sessions. In this *tekke*, al-Madani was buried following his death in 1903.

On the Sultan's behalf, he communicated with Ahmad 'Urabi during the events leading up to the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. In 1898, he was instrumental in the appointment of Khayr al-Din Pasha to the office of Grand Vizier. His closeness to the Sultan seems to have been envied by another advisor of the Sultan, the head of the Rifa'iyya order, Abu 'l-Huda al-Sayyadi. According to this *shaikh*, who sought to discredit al-Madani, whenever the occasion presented itself, al-Madani's father had been the son of a renegade Jew from Thessaloniki.

The Sultan seems to have supported the Madaniyya in the presumption that it would reverse the growth of the Sansusiyya order as well as counter European influence in North Africa. Here a major role was played by Muhammad's brother Hamza, who, from Tripolitania and with Ottoman support, directed agitation against the French in Tunisia.

After Muhammad Zafir's death, a dispute about the succession as head of the order arose between his brother Hamza and his son Ibrahim, who had already been acting as his father's deputy for several years. The dispute was settled when, following intervention by the Sultan, Ibrahim was duly installed as his father's *khalifa*. By then, however, several branches of the Madaniyya had emerged in Egypt (al-Hashimiyya, al-Marzukiyya al-Shadhiliyya, and al-Kadiriyya al-Madaniyya) and in the Middle East (al-Yashrutiyya, and al-Fasiyya). These had reduced the order's membership, while the *zawiyas* in Tunisia and Algeria had become completely autonomous.

In addition, Ibrahim lost control over the *zawiyas* in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in consequences of the Italian occupation of Libya in 1912. In these territories, Muhammad b. Muhammad Zafir (d. 1917), who was Ibrahim's brother, was subsequently recognised as the local head of the Madaniyya. This left Ibrahim with control over the *tekke* in Istanbul and the Hidaz only. From the last decade of the 19th century, the number of Madaniyya *zawiyas* steadily declined: in Tripolitania, e.g., the number of *zawiyas* decreased from more than 12 in the 1880s to about 9 in 1918 and to 7, all in the town of Misrata, in 1925.

Today, the original Madaniyya seems to be limited to Egypt, where it is under the direction of a grandson of the order's founder. Its followers are encountered mainly in the coastal area between Sidi al-Barrani, where this grandson lives, and Alexandria. Active lodges existed (in 1981) in both of these towns, in the towns of Marsa Matruh and Burdj al-Arab, and in the oasis of Siwa.

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F. DE JONG

Makhrama, Abu (15th–16th Centuries)

Abu Makhrama belonged to South Arabian Himyarite clan of Shafi'i jurists and Sufis who lived in Hadramawt and Aden in the 9th/15th and 10th/16th centuries. Prominent members of it were the following:

1. 'Afif al-Din Abu 'I-Tayyib 'Abd Allāh b. Ahmad b. 'Ali b. Ibrahim Ba Makhrama al-Himyarī al-Shaybani (or al-Saybani?) al-Hadjarani al-Hadrami al-'Adani, b. 833/1430 in Hadjarayn, d. 903/1497 in Aden, where he was appointed *kadi* by the sultan 'Ali b. Tahir but resigned after four months, without losing his popularity. His writings include remarks (*nukat*) on *Djami' al-mukhtasar* by al-Nasa'i (Brockelmann, II, 199/254) and the *Alfiyya* of Ibn Malik, a commentary on the *Mulha* of al-Hariri, an abstract of Ibn al-Ha'im's commentary on the *Urdjuza al-Yasaminiyya rasa'il* and *fatawi*.
2. Abu Muhammad Al-Tayyib b. 'Abd Allāh b. Ahmad.... al-'Adani (son of 1.), b. 870/1465, d. 947/1540, jurist and s of wide learning, teaching *fikh*, *tafwir*, *hadith nahw* and *lugha*. He had studied under his father, Muhammad Ba Fadl and Muhammad al-Kammāt (both d. 903/1497) and shared his reputation as a *fakih* with Muhammad b. 'Umar Ba Kaddam (d. 9951/15440 belonging to another branch of the Makhrama family. Sickness evidently prevented him, from finishing his two main works: the "Chronicle of Aden" *Ta'rikh, Thaghr 'Adan* (ed. Lofgren 1936–50) and *Kiladat al-Nahr fi wafayat a'yan al-dahr* (*tabakat* work, with historical supplement ed. Schuman 1960). He also wrote
3. 'Umar B. 'Abd Allāh b. Ahmad, b. 884/1479 in Hadjaran, d. 952/1545 in Saywun (a residential town in Wadi Hadramawt between Tarim and Shibam), famous Sufi scholar and poet. Having completed his juridico-theological training in Aden under his father, the local saint Abu Bakr al-'Aydarus and Muhammad b. 'Ali Djirfil al-Daw'ani (d. 903/1497–8), he met with the Sufi Abd al-Rahman b. 'umar Ba Hurmuz, was converted to mysticism and became a local spiritual leader residing in Saywun, where he collected numerous disciples and was buried in a mausoleum close to that of the kathiri sultans. He was a productive poet in classical as well as indigenous (*humayni*) metre; his *Diwan* was collected in several volumes by al-Hudayli Sahib al-Kara. Specimens of it are given in *al-nur al-safir*, 33–7, and *Ta'rikh al-Shu'ara al-Hadramiyyin*, i, 134 ff. Two verseas on *ma'iyya* written shortly before his death were treated by 'Abd al-Rahman al-'Aydarus under three titles, *Irshad dhawi 'l-lawdha'iyya 'ala baytay al-Ma'iyya*, *Ithaf dhawi 'l-alma'iyya fi tahkik ma'na 'l-ma'iyya*, and *al-Nafha al-ilahiyya fi tahkik ma'na 'l-ma'iyya*. Other writings by him include *al-Warid al-kudsi fi sharh ayat al-kursi*, *Sharh Asma' Allāh al-husna*, *al-Matlab al-yasir min al-salik al-fakir*.

4. 'Afif al-Din 'Abd Allâh B. 'Umar b. 'Abd Allâh (son of 3.), b. 907/1501 in Shihr, d. 972/1565 in Aden, where he finished his legal career as *mufti* and was buried at the side of his father and his uncle al-Tayyib close to the mausoleum of the Sufi Djawhar al-'Adani (6th/12th century). Having studied under his father, his uncle and 'Abd Allâh b. Ahmad Ba Surumi al-Shihri (d. 943/1536–7 he was *kadi* in Shihr twice, became a great authority ('*umda*) on *fikh*, and was consulted from all parts of the Yaman and Hadramawt. As will be seen from the list of his writings, he was not only a *fakih* and theologian, but pursued a special interest of astronomy and chronology. He also wrote some poetry (*aradjiz*).

His writings include *Dhayl Tabakat al-Shafi'iyya* by al-Asnawi, *Nukat* on Ibn Hadjar al-Haythami's commentary on al-Nawawi's *Minhadi*, 2 vols., *Fatawi*, *al-Durra al-zahiriyya fi sharh [al-Urdjuza] al-Rahbiyya*, *Hakikat al-tawhid (radd 'ala ta'ifat Ibn 'Arabi)*, *al-Misbah fi sharh al-'Udda wa 'l-silah* (il-mutawalli 'ukud al-nikah, by Muhammad b. Ahmad Ba Fadl, d. 903/1497–8); astronomy-chronology; *al-Djadawil al-muhakkaaka al-muharrara fi 'ilm al-hay'a*, *al-Lum'a fi ilm al-falak* (Rabat 2023), *al-Shamil fi dala'il al-kibla*, etc., *rasa'il* on *ikhtilaf al-matali' wa-ttifakiha*, *al-rub' al-mudjayyab*, *samt al-kibla*, *zill al-istiwa'*.

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O. LOFGREN

Al-Makki, Abu Talid (d. 996)

The tenth century produced another eminent Sufi scholar, *Abu Talib al-Makki* (A.D. 996). He influenced later theologians and Sufis like Ghazali and Jalaluddin Rumi by his mystical philosophy, elaborated in his famous work '*Qut al-qulub*' (The Food of Hearts). His doctrines of 'sabr' (patience), 'mahabbat' (love) and 'ma'rifa' (gnosis) were followed and interpreted by a number of writers of Sufism.

'Sabr', for Makki, has a high place on the Sufi Path because in this state the soul rejoices in spiritual bliss and kinship with God. Regarding patience, he followed the Prophet of Islam who considered it as a true means for reaching God. This is a stage when the seeker of God heartily welcomes affections which appear on the way to Him and experiences satisfaction (*rida*). He shows an attitude of patience in his turning towards God, living a life of renunciation and love towards God. Makki says:

"Patience has three stages: first, it means that the servant ceases to complain and this is the stage of repentance; second, he becomes satisfied with what is decreed and this is the rank of the ascetics; third, he comes to love whatever his Lord does with him and this is the stage of the true friends of God."

Like the early ascetics, Makki believed in the revelation of Divine knowledge by God. Pure love of God illuminates the soul of the devotee and the mysteries of Godhead are revealed by God when the Vision of the Beloved is contemplated.

"Love leads to knowledge of the Divine mysteries and those who love abide in God and look to Him only and He is nearer to them than all else and to them is given a vision of Him unveiled and they see Him with the eye of certainty. Gnosis, truly, is a light which God casts into the heart."

True knowledge of God is gained when the lover comes in contact with the Beloved through secret communion with Him. It is the saint's 'love of God' rather than the Muslim's 'faith in God' which leads to the truth of the Unity of God.

"The servant does not attain to assurance of the light of certainty. Gnosis means the Vision of God, for when the eye of the soul is stripped of all the veils which hindered it from seeing God, then it beholds the reality of the Divine Attributes by its own inner light, which goes far beyond the light which is given to perfect faith, for gnosis belongs to a sphere quite other than that of faith".

Hence, there is no distinction between love of God and knowledge of God. In an admirable prayer Al-Makki says to God:

"O God ! give me light in my heart and light in my tomb and light in my hearing and light in my sight and light in my feeling and light in all my body and light before me and light behind me. Give me I pray Thee, light on my right hand and light on my left hand and light above me and light beneath me. O Lord, increase light within me and give me light and illuminate me. These are the lights which the Prophet asked for: verily to possess such light

means to be contemplated by the Light of Light”.

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EB

Merkez, Shaikh Muslih Al-Din b. Mustafa (16th Century)

Shaikh Muslih al-Din b. Mustafa Merkez, was the head of an Ottoman Sufi order and saint. He belonged to the village of Sari Mahmudlu in the Anatolian district of Ladhikiyya. He was at first a pupil of the Molla Ahmad Pasha, son of Khidr Beg and later of the famous Khalwati Shaikh Sunbul Sinan Efendi, founder of the Sunbuliyya, a branch of the Khalwatiyya, head of the monastery of Kodja Mustafa Pasha in Istanbul.

When the latter died in 936/1529, Merkez Efendi succeeded him in the dignity of Pir. He held the office of head of a monastery for 23 years and died in the odour of sanctity in 959/1552, aged nearly 90. He was buried in Istanbul in the mosque which bears his name before the Yeni Kapu. At the tomb of Merkez Efendi there is a much-visited holy well, an *ayazma*, to which one descends by steps. Its reddish water is said to have the miraculous power of healing those sick of a fever. Beside it is the cell (*zawiya*) of Merkez Efendi, of which miraculous stories still circulate among the people. He had many pupils, including his son Ahmad, famous as the translator of the *Kamus*, his son-in-law Muslih al-Din, the poet Ramadan Efendi, called Bihishti, and many others.

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Al-Muhasibi, Abu 'Abd Allāh Al-Harith (781–857)

Al-Muhasibi is the one whose contemplation is the most psychological, it is marked by attachment to moral values, and not by a more or less extreme theological system. In this sense, L. Massignon has legitimately described his mystical doctrine as "more circumspect" (*Passion*, I, 120). He proceeds from introspection and confines himself to analysing and developing it in its relations with the circumstances of life.

It is no doubt this which explains his cognomen of *muhasibi*, signifying "he who calculates his actions", in other words, one who

practises examination of conscience; many Sufis considered this practice dangerous, in that it tends to make the man the judge of his actions, a role which belongs only to God. Al-Muhasibi was furthermore reproached for this practice by Ibn Hanbal. It will be observed below how he avoids this danger and this criticism.

It should also be noted that he does not confine himself to subjective descriptions of states of conscience, but that he examines them with his reason and with a "concern for precise philosophical definitions", as noted by L. Massignon; furthermore, he always relies on intellectual meditation on texts of the Kur'an and the prophetic tradition. Included among his works is an epistle concerning the quiddity and meaning of intelligence (*Risalat mahiyyat al-'akl wa-ma'nah*). Thus his thought has evolved into a "science of hearts". It is in this sense that he is opposed to the excessively abstract rationalism of the Mu'tazilis, affirming the uncreated simplicity of the divine Word while teaching that the letters of the Kur'an are created.

Born in Basra, al-Muhasibi came at a very early stage to Baghdad, where he spent the greater part of his life and where he died. Nothing is known of his life other than that he devoted it to teaching. But from 232/846 onward, he was obliged to abandon his teaching, confronted by the blind reaction of the Sunnis who did not understand his use of dialectic in opposing the Mu'tazila. It was at this point that Ibn Hanbal began to attack him.

Among his numerous works, listed by L. Massignon in his *Essai* (243–4), there are two which have been edited and which deserve particular attention.

"The book of observance of the rights of God" (*K. al-Ri'aya li-hukuk Allāh*) has been

edited by Margaret Smith (London 1941) who writes in her introduction that this book "is his masterpiece, by far the greatest, as it is the longest and most comprehensive of his writings. It is written in the form of counsels, given to a disciple in reply to his questions, to enable believers to find the way of life in which they could render to God the service which is his due".

Al-Muhasibi reveals what the soul of a believer should be, to conform with what God wills it to be. It will be noted in particular that he speaks of pious fear (*takwa*) and of repentance (*tawba*). He examines, for example, fear at the level of the members of the body, in order to avoid the offences which they are capable of committing, and fear at the level of the conscience (*fi 'l-damir*), and he shows that fear engenders *wara'*, which consists in avoiding all that is displeasing to God.

The study of the "repentant ones" (*al-tawwabun*) is very detailed. In this context, al-Muhasibi distinguishes three degrees in human conduct. First there is the young man who has been brought up well, who inevitably makes some mistakes, but who returns at once to the purity of his heart which God protects because He loves him, since the one who loves (*al-habib*) is unwilling to lose the one whom he loves (*al-mahbub*). Then there is the case of the man who, from his ignorance, returns to God.

God gives him the resolution (*al-'azm*) to observe His Commandments in the future. But the soul which tends towards evil continues in its efforts. Then God helps the man who persists in his wrong-doing (*al-musirr fi dhanbih*); the awareness that he has of the promises of Paradise and the threat of Hell is insufficient to detach him from worldly pleasures. He is in

need of something "which unties in his heart the knots of persistence in evil, in such a way that he may return to his Lord in repentance of his offence". This result is to be achieved by fear (*khawf*) and by hope (*radja*), which are evidently to be understood here as gifts and blessings of God.

Al-Muhasibi wrote a particularly fine book, the *Kitab al-Tawahhum*, which Andre Roman has translated and which he presents as a 'vision of the last things'. It could be said that it is a *Dies Irae* which ends up in an *In Paradisum*.

In his *Essai*, Massignon has translated or summarised several passages drawn from manuscripts of al-Muhasibi. In a kind of autobiography, al-Muhasibi shows himself troubled by the divisions which rend the Muslim community. He insists that salvation can only be attained through pious fear, the observation of canonical obligations and *wara'*: abstaining from that which God forbids, acting in all things only for God and taking the Prophet as a model. L. Massignon also quotes the opening passage of *al-Fasl fi 'l-mahabba*, on Love, where al-Muhasibi shows that all initiative comes from God through a kind of anticipatory grace, and this constitutes a response to the criticisms applied to examination of conscience. It is not a man who judges himself but it is God who, in His love, enlightens the hearts of those who love Him and enables them to see their faults and their omissions.

Comprehension of the thought of al-Muhasibi is difficult if taken as a whole. J. va. Ess has studied the intellectual climate in which al-Muhasibi lived, revealing in particular his relations with *kalam*. Here there is an important point of view which should serve as a starting-point in any effort to evaluate what is

represented by the mystical doctrine of al-Muhasibi.

He wielded an immense influence, which Massignon has analysed in detail in his *Essai* (254). Despite persistent attacks, his 'powerful personality' ensured the survival of his prestige. Al-Sari al-Sakati, the maternal uncle of Djunayd, was his pupil, and, through him, his teaching affected the nephew. The great mystic al-Ghazali willingly acknowledged the authority of al-Muhasibi.

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R. ARNALDEZ

Munedjdjim Bashi, Derwish Ahmed Dede b. Lutf Allâh (d. 1702)

Derwish Ahmed Dede b. Lutf Allâh Munedjdjim Bashi was Turkish scholar, Sufi poet and above all, historian, being the author

of a celebrated and important general history in Arabic, the *Djami' al-duwal*.

His father Lutf Allâh was a native of Eregli near Konya. He was born in Selanik, in the first half of the 12th/18th century, received a scholarly education and served in his youth for fifteen years in the Mewlewi khane of Kasim Pasha under Shaikh Khalil Dede. Afterwards he studied astronomy and astrology and became court astrologer (*munedjdjim bashi*) in 1078/1667-8. In 1086/1675-6 he was admitted to the intimate circle of Sultan Mehmed IV as *musahif-İpadishahi*.

He was dismissed in Muharram 1099/November 1687 and banished to Egypt. From here he went some years later to Mecca, where he became *shaikh* of the Mewlewi-khane. In 1105/1693-4 he was obliged to move to Medina, where he lived for seven years. Soon after his return to Mecca he died there on 29 Ramadan 1113/27 February 1702 and was buried near the tomb of Khadij.

Besides writing his historical work, Munedjdjim Bashi displayed a considerable literary activity. Of his works are mentioned a *hashiya* on the Kur'an commentary of al-Baydawi, a commentary on the 'Aka'id al-'Adudiyya of al-Idji, a *Lata'if name*, a translation of the anecdotes of 'Ubayd-i Zakani, and a number of treatise on geometry, mysticism and music. His Turkish *diwan* also gives him a place in the ranks of Turkish mystical poets; his *takhallus* was 'Ashik.

The general history was written in Arabic under the title *Djami' al-duwal*, but although several manuscripts of the still unpublished Arabic original exist in the libraries of e.g., Istabnûl, Edirne, and Kayseri, it was formerly better known in the epitomised Turkish

translation made by the poet Ahmed Nedim in the 12th/18th century under the title *Sahā'if al-akhtar* (printed in three volumes. Istanbul 1285).

It is a world history, arranged, after the fashion of similar Arabic works, according to dynasties, with a main division into three parts; the first treating of the history of Muhammad, the second the non-Islamic dynasties and the third the Islamic dynasties. In the introductory chapters the author cites his numerous sources not a few of which are lost in the original.

Therefore, the work has a special value for the knowledge of many smaller dynasties and for this reason it was especially used by E. Sachau for in *Verzeichnis muhammedanischer Dynastien*, in *SBEPr. Ak. W.* (Berlin 1923).

The last dynasty treated is that of the Ottoman sultans; it is proportionately longer and more detailed than the history of the other Islamic dynasties and based on several imperfectly known sources; the last part, which ends in 1089/1678, gives contemporary history. The Turkish translation of Nedim is very readable and not composed in the highflown literary style that prevailed in his period. For this reason it was especially praised and represented in Ebuzziya Tewfik's *Numune-i edebiyyat-i 'othmaniyye*, Istanbul 1330.

Among the now lost sources used by Munedjdjim Bashi, and apparently epitomised by him in the *Djami' al-duwal*, was a history of Darband, the *Tarikh Bab al-Abwab*, valuable for the history of the Muslim dynasties of eastern Transcaucasia. Arran and Adharbaydan.

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Mu'nis Dede Derwish (d. 1732–3)

Dede Derwish Mu'nis was an eminent Ottoman Sufi poet of Edirne in the early 12th/18th century. His birth date is unknown, but he was a Mewlewi *murid* at that order's Muradiyya convent in Edirne, where he received his instruction from the famous *shaikh* Enis Redjeb Dede (d. 1147/1734–5).

He himself died of plague in Edirne in 1145/1732–3 and was buried in the convent. His *diwan* of poetry was praised by early authorities as being good, but has not survived.

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M. CAVID BAYSUN, (ED.)

Musa Al-Kazim, Imam (d. 810)

It is well-known that the Imams from the *Ahl al-Bayt* enjoyed, both during their life-time and posthumously, the respect and veneration of many within the Islamic community who were not, in the strict sense, their followers.

This was no doubt a principal reason for the persecution and confinement to which the Imams were repeatedly exposed. Prominent among those who did not belong to the Shi'ah faith but nonetheless held the Imams in high esteem were those ascetics and Sufis who came to believe, like the Shi'ah, in the initiatic transmission of a special body of knowledge and, seeing in the Imams exemplars of the spiritual virtues, included them among their spiritual teachers and forebears.

Thus, al-Kalabadhi (d. 385/995) begins his listing of 'those who spoke concerning the sciences of the Sufis' with a mention of the first six Imams: Hujwiri (d.ca. 465/1071) lists them immediately after the *Rashidun* Caliphs as "the *imams* of the Sufis"; and Farid al-Din 'Attar opens his celebrated compendium, the *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'*, with a detailed mention of Ja'far al-Sadiq and closes it with a similar account of Muhammad al-Baqir, thus symbolically including the numerous Sufis whose lives he describes between these two Imams from the Household of the Prophet.

It is indisputable that the early Sufis drew inspiration, in a general sense, from certain dicta and teachings of the Imams. In addition, however, wide-spread traditions—repeated down to the present—associate each of the first eight of the Twelve Imams personally with one or more of the well-known Sufis. These traditions have not yet been evaluated in any systematic way and it is possible that at least in some cases their foundation in historical fact may be weak.

Nonetheless, the very existence of these traditions, together with their persistence, demonstrates how the Imams have served as poles of the spiritual world for many Muslims, even after the Sunni-Shi'i division crystallised

in more or less sectarian form. We propose to examine here the accounts that link to Imam Musa al-Kazim the names of Shaiq Balkhi (d. 194/810), Bishr al-Hafi (d. 227/841) and Ma'ruf Karkhi (d. 200/815) and to suggest in what additional ways the Imam played a role in the shaping of Sufi tradition.

All who have written of Imam Musa al-Kazim are unanimous in ascribing to him high spiritual virtues. In addition to *al-Kazim* ('the one who vanquishes anger'; *al-Qur'an*, III: 134), he was known to his contemporaries as *al-'abd al-salih* ('the righteous servant of God') and was celebrated for his asceticism, piety, mildness of demeanor and trust-worthiness in transmitting *Hadith*. He was much given to prolonged prostration and to supplicatory prayer, declaring of the latter that it was able to repel even that which had been predetermined.

Some of the prayers, he composed have been preserved in both Shi'i and Sufi manuals of devotion. Among his predecessors in the line of Imams, he has been well-compared with Imam 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin for gentleness of character and asceticism of nature. All this suggests that in both Madinah and Baghdad he must have served as a pole of attraction for those who sought to cultivate the spiritual life and shun what was perceived as the corruption of the day.

In a sense, he continued to fulfil this function after his death in 183/799, for his tomb in Baghdad became a favoured place of pilgrimage where prayers were thought likely to be accepted; among the people of the city, it was known as *bab al-Hawa'ij* ('the gate to the fulfilment of needs'). None other than Imam Shafi'i is reported to have said that his tomb was 'a well-proven antidote' (*tarya'q mujarrab*).

Shaiq Balkhi is the Sufi whose name is most commonly linked to that of Imam Musa al-Kazim. According to the conventional accounts, Shaiq was deflected from a life of worldly neglect by a series of encounters and incidents experienced during his travels as a merchant, becoming thereafter a pupil of the well-known ascetic, Ibrahim b. Ad'ham (d.c. 165/782). He is said to have been martyred at Khuttalan in Transoxiana in 194/810. The dicta attributed to him relate mostly to *tawakkul* and his principal disciple was Hatam al-Asamm.

There is, however, a lengthy story, not found in the earliest Sufi compendia, that associates Shaiq with Imam Musa al-Kazim. It is said that while on his way to the Hajj in the year 149/766, Shaiq notices among his fellow-travellers, during a pause at Qadisiyah, a young man of striking appearance—handsome, slender and dark brown in complexion. Telling himself that the young man must be a mendicant Sufi, intent on exploiting the charity of the pilgrims, Shaiq went up to him with the intention of reproaching him. But before he had a chance to utter a word, the young man said:

"O Shaiq, 'avoid excessive suspicion, for some suspicion is sinful'.

Overcome with remorse, Shaiq tried to follow him in order to ask him to pray for the forgiveness of his sins, but he lost sight of him in the crowd. Somewhat later, he glimpsed him again, now standing in prayer. 'with his aims trembling and his tears flowing down.' When he had completed his prayers, he turned to Shaiq and said:

"O Shaiq, recite this saying of the Almighty: Certainly I am oft-forgiving to those who repent, believe and do right and who are ready to accept true guidance".

Thus, the young man had again divined what Shaiq had intended to say, leaving him with the conviction that he must be one of the *abdāl*. After a further interval, Shaiq noticed him preparing to fill his water-skin. Hiding in a nearby well, Shaiq saw the water rise up miraculously to fill the water-skin. The young man then made his ablutions with the water and filled the skin with sand. He shook the skin, turning the sand into water, which he then drank. Shaiq now made his presence known and begged to be allowed to drink of the water that had been miraculously transmuted from sand. The young man consented, saying:

"O Shaiq, the bounties of God reach us unceasingly, both apparent and hidden, so view your Lord with favour."

Shaiq drank from the water-skin and, according to some version of the story, found it to contain a substance akin to *sawiq*, a kind of mash made from corn and dates. Thereafter, he felt neither hunger nor thirst for several days. It was not until reaching Makkah that Shaiq finally discovered the identity of the mysterious young man. Seeing him surrounded by hundreds of devotees as he circumambulated the Ka'bah, Shaiq asked a by-stander who it was that had aroused such fervour and he was told that it was Imam Musa al-Kazim.

Absent not only from the standard sufi biographical dictionaries but also from early authoritative accounts of the lives of the Imams, such as the *Kitab al-Irshad* of Shaikh al-Mufid (d. 413/1022), this narrative is to be found in a wide variety of later works, of both Sunni and Shi'i authorship. It is worth stressing, however, that the story makes its first appearance in Sunni sources. The earliest author to record it seems to have been abu Muhammad al-Hasan b. 'Abd al-Rahman b. Khilad Ramhurmuzi (d.ca. 360/

970), a *qadi* of Khuzistan better known to posterity as a *Hadith* Scholar than as a biographer of Sufis. Ramhurmuzi's *Karamat al-Awliya'*, a work now apparently lost, is cited by many later authors as one of their principal sources for the story of Shaiq's encounter with Imam Musa al-Kazim.

Next come two words of the celebrated Hanbali *faqih*, *muhaddith* and historian, Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200), *Sifat al-Safwah*, critical digest of Abu Nuyaym Isfahani's *Hilyat al-Awliya'*; and a still unpublished work referred to by various titles of which the most correct appears to be *Muthir al-Gharam al-Sakin fi Fada'il-Biqat wa'l-Amakin*. The Istanbul manuscript of *Sifat al-Safwah* cites as authority for the story Khushnam b. Hatam al-Asamm, who heard it from his father, who heard it from Shaiq and the Imam was al-Hafiz Abu Muhammad 'Abd al-'Aziz b. al-Akhtar al-Junabadhi (d. 611/1214-15), a Hanbali *faqih* of Baghdad originally from Nishapur. His still unpublished *Ma'alin al-Itrat al-Nabawiyah* is cited as authority for the story by a number of later writers.

A full *sanad* is given by the historian al-Sibt ibn al-Jawzi (d. 654/1256) for his telling of the story in *Tadkirat al-Khawass*; it contains eight names, the last of which is again Khushnam, the son of Hatam al-Asamm. Contemporary with al-Sibt ibn al-Jawzi was a certain Kamal al-Din Muhammad b. Talhah al-Halabi (d. 652/1254), a Shafi's *muhaddith* who taught in Aleppo and Damascus. He tells the story of Shaiq's encounter with Imam Musa al-Kazim in his *Matalib al-Su'ul fi Manaqib al-Rasul*, giving precisely the same *sanad* as al-Sibt ibn al-Jawzi.

Two further Sunni compendia on the lives of the Imams content themselves with a re-

telling of the story as found in earlier sources (notably Ramhurmuzi, ibn al-Jawzi and al-Junabadhi) without supplying any *sanad*. These are the *Kashf al-Ghummah fi Ma'orofat al-A'imma* by Abu'l-Hasan 'Ali b. 'Isa al-Irbili (d. 692/1293) and *al-Fusul al-Muhimmah fi Ma'rifat al-A'imma* by Nural-Din 'Ali b. Muhammad (d. 885/1451), known as Ibn al-Sabbagh, a Maliki *faqih* resident in Makkah. Finally, we may cite the well-known anti-Shi'i polemic, *al-Sawa'iq al-Muhriqah*, of the Shafi'i *muhaddith* and *faqih*, Ibn Hajar al-Haythami (d. 973/565); he quotes as his sources for the encounter of Shaqiq with Imam Musa al-Kazim Ibn al-Jawzi and Ramhurmuzi.

It is noted that in none of these sources is there any indication of further contact having taken place between Shaqiq Balkhi and Imam Musa al-Kazim, or of the three-fold encounter on the road to Makkah having served as an initiatic experience for Shaqiq. The same is true of the first two Shi'i sources to speak of an encounter between Shaqiq and Imam Musa al-Kazim: the *Manaqib al-Abi Talib* of Ibn Shahrashub (d. 588/1192) and the *Minhaj al-Karamah* of 'Allamah Hilli (d. 726/1325).

The account given by Ibn Shahrashub is the second (or possibly the third) oldest of all telling of the story, whether in Sunni or Shi'i sources, but it seems hardly ever to have been quoted, even in later Shi'i worlds. For his part, Ibn Shahrashub cites as his source a work unmentioned elsewhere, the *Amthal al-Salihin* of an unnamed author. 'Allamah Hilli recounts the story as told by Ibn al-Jawzi in *Sifat al-Safwah*, without adding any comment of his own.

By contrast, near-contemporary of 'allamah Hilli asserts flatly that Shaqiq Balkhi was the *murid* of Imam Musa al-Kazim, while

dispensing with all anecdotal evidence. This is Sayyid Haydar Amuli, the Shi'i gnostic of the eighth/fourteenth century who maintained true Sufism to be identical with true Shi'ism. Describing in the *Jami' al-Asrar wa Manba' al-Anwar* the alleged transmission of esoteric knowledge by the Imams to certain among the Sufis and ascetics, he asserts that one line of transmission went from Imam Musa al-Kazim to Shaqiq Balkhi and 'from him to his students and disciples.' Amuli was followed some hundred years later by Ibn Abi Jumhur al-Ahsa'i (d. post 901/1496) who similarly stated in his *Kitab al-Mujli* that Shaqiq was the disciple of (*akhandha an*) Imam Musa al-Kazim.

A further element was added to Shaqiq's association with the Imam by Qadi Nur-Allah Shushtari (d. 1019/1610), who claimed in his *Majalis al-Mu'minin* that Shaqiq was in fact, a Shi'i and was even martyred for his beliefs in Transoxiana (*ba tuhmat-i rafid shahid shud*). This identification of Shaqiq as a Shi'i was not widely followed by later Shi'i authorities. Muhammad Baqir Majlisi (d. 1111/1700), for example, contents himself with a re-telling of the story as found in the works of Ibn al-Jawzi, al-Irbili and Ibn al-Sabbagh, not even making of Shaqiq a disciple of Imam Musa al-Kazim. Muhammad Baqir Khwansari (d. 1313/1895), author of a well-known biographical dictionary of Shi'i notables, *Rawdat al-Jannat fi Ahwal al-'Ulama' wa 'l-Sadat*, records non-committally of Imam Musa al-Kazim that he has been related to be the master (*ustadh*) of Shaqiq Balkhi, without classing Shaqiq as a Shi'i. Finally, Muhammad Ma'sum Shirazi, known as Ma'sum 'Ali Shah (d. 1344/1926), draws together in the encyclopaedic work on Sufism the evidence of both Sunni and Shi'i sources and concludes that Shaqiq Balkhi was invested with a cloak (*khirqah*) by Imam Musa al-Kazim,

making him a *murid* of the Imam but not an adherent of the Shi'ah.

The second Sufi whose name has been linked to that a Imam Musa al-Kazim is Abu Nasr Bishr b. al-Harith al-Hafi, usually referred to as Bishr al-Hafi. According to the standard Sufi biographies, he was redeemed from a life of dissipation and drunkenness by the simple act of cleansing and perfuming a scrap of paper bearing the divine name that he found on the road.

Other sources, however, attribute his salvation to Imam Musa al-Kazim and relate the following story. One day, the Imam was passing in front of Bishr's house in Baghdad and was distressed to hear echoing from it the sound of music and frivolous rejoicing. A maid-servant emerged from the house and the Imam asked her whether the owner of the house was a freeman or a slave. She replied that he was a freeman, where upon the Imam observed that must indeed be the case, for if he were a slave, he would engage in acts of servitude (i.e., worship of God). When the maid-servant returned inside, Bishr asked her what had delayed her. She recounted what Imam Musa al-Kazim had said and Bishr was overwhelmed with remorse. Barefooted, he rushed out of the house and catching up with the Imam fell penitently at his feet.

It appears again to have been Ibn al-Jawzi who first related this story. Muhammad Baqir Khwansari writes in his *Rawdat al-Jannat* that he had seen the autograph copy of a work by Zayn al-Din al-'Amili al-Shahid al-Thani (d. 966/1588) citing the *kitab al-mud'jhish* of Ibn al-Jawzi as authority for this narrative of Bishr's repentance. In the telling of the story, however, the Imam in question is 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin, not Musa al-Kazim, a gross chronological error

that it is difficult to attribute either to Ibn al-Jawzi or to al-Shahid al-Shahid al-Thani. It is also worth-noting that Ibn al-Jawzi makes no mention of encounter between Bishr and Imam Musa al-Kazim in the section he devotes to the former in the *Sifat al-Safwah*.

It nonetheless seems probable that the story entered circulation sometime before the seventh/thirteenth century, for it is taken up by 'Allamah Hilli in *Minhaj al-Karamah*. Hilli is cited in turn by Qadi Nur-Allah Shushtari in *Majalis l-Mu'minin* and by Ma'sum 'Ali Shah in *Tara'iq al-Haq'iq*. However, the story never came to enjoy the same wide-spread circulation as that relating to Shaiq Balkhi and it is completely absent from the well-known Sunni works on the lives of the Imams.

The third and last Sufi said to be connected with Imam Musa al-Kazim—if we ignore the manifestly a historical claim made by the *Khaksar derwishes* of Iran that the Imam nominated Hallaj as the *qutb* of the age—was Ma'ruf Karkhi. For more commonly, Karkhi b. Musa al-Rida, who is said to have presided over his conversion to Islam. However, Shah Ni'mat-Allah Wali (d. 834/1437), founder of the Ni'matullahi order of *derwishes* and one of the principal figures in the history of Shi'i Sufism, attributes the conversion of Karkhi to Imam Musa al-Kazim and states that he acted as the Imam's gatekeeper for ten years.

The same view was expressed by that author of *Usul al-Fusul*, who added that Karkhi kept his position as gatekeeper during the Imanate of 'Ali b. Musa al-Rida. Ma'sum 'Ali Shah—himself, of course an affiliate of the Ni'matullahi order—regards this as possible and suggests even that Karkhi may have enjoyed the company of Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq. By contrast, another relatively modern Shi'i-Sufi

author, Ihsan-Allah Istakhri of the Dhahabi order, rejects any association of Ma'ruf Karkhi with the Shi'i Imams before the time of 'Ali b. Musa al-Rida.

The accuracy of these various accounts linking Sufis with Imam Musa al-Kazim must now be assessed. The fact that they are not included in the earliest Sufi and Shi'i sources counts, no doubt, as an argument against their authenticity. In his attempted refutation of Hilli's *Minhaj al-Karamah*, Ibn Taymiyah (d. 728/1328) dismisses, with his customary acerbity, the Shi'i scholar's telling of the stories concerning Shaiq Balkhi and Bishr al-Hafi as mere 'lies'.

The modern Iraqi scholar, Mustafa al-Shibi, has written a detailed and fully documented study of the historical relations between Sufism and Shi'ism, casts doubt on the historicity of the traditions in question, suggesting that they are a by-product of the Sufi claim to initiatic descent from Ali b. Abi Talib. From a somewhat different perspective, the Lebanese writer Hashim Ma'ruf al-Hasani, determined to prove what he calls 'the great gap between Sufism and Shi'ism, denies any of the Imams and any of the Sufis.

It may be argued, on the other hand, that although we are in the habit of calling Sufi *tadhkirahs* biographical dictionaries, works such as 'Attar's *Tadhkirat al-Awliya'* are in fact remarkably sparse in strictly biographical information; far more attention is given in them to the dicta of the Sufis in question than to the details of their travels and encounters.

It is therefore conceivable, in principle, that Shaiq Balkhi and Bishr al-Hafi should have had initiatic encounters with Imam Musa al-Kazim that went unnoticed by the earliest Sufi

writers. That Musa al-Kazim had contacts beyond the immediate circle of his followers is suggested by the occurrence of *hadith* narrated by him in such Sunni books of tradition as the *Musnad* of Ibn Hanbal, the *Sunan* of al-Tirmidhi and the *Sunan* of Ibn Majah.

In the case of Shaiq Balkhi, it is true, as Ibn Taymiyah points out, that in 149/766—the year of the alleged encounter with Imam Musa al-Kazim while *en route* to the Hajj—the Imam was still resident in Madihan; his father, Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq, had died the previous year and it was not until the caliphate of al-Mahdi began, some ten years, later, that Imam Musa al-Kazim was taken to Baghdad. This does not exclude, however, the possibility of the Imam having undertaken himself an earlier journey to Baghdad and in any event not every telling of the story supplies a year for the encounter.

Most sources place it, in fact, after the release of Imam Musa al-Kazim from confinement in Baghdad by the Caliph al-Mahdi. The *sanad* given by al-Sibt ibn al-Jawzi and Muhammad b. Tallah al-Halabi must count as an argument in favour of the authenticity of the story and it seems unwise to dismiss it out of hand. The most judicious conclusion in that of Ma'sum 'Ali Shah, who suggests that while Shaiq Balkhi counts primarily as a disciple of Ibrahim b. Ad'ham, he also received the spiritual grave (*qayd*) of Imam Musa al-Kazim. The Indian hagiographer Gulam Sarwar Luhuri enforces this conclusion with the statement that Shaiq Balkhi kept the company of both Imam Musa al-Kazim and Ibrahim b. Ad'ham.

As for Bishr al-Hafi, the story of his repentance at the hands of Imam Musa al-Kazim occurs in relatively few sources and in none of them is a *sanad* cited. The argument of Ibn Taymiyah that Imam Musa al-Kazim was

unlikely to be walking through the popular quarters of Baghdad and thus chance on the house of Bishr clearly deserves attention. The story may nonetheless be taken as indicating a certain attachment to the Imam on the part of Bishr, for Qushayri reports a dream in which Bishr saw the Prophet and was told by him that his spiritual attainments were due, in part, to his love of the *Ahl al-bayt*.

By contrast, the tradition linking Ma'ruf Karkhi to Imam Musa al-Kazim lacks all plausibility, given the greater weight of those traditions that associate him with Imam 'Ali b. Musa al-Rida. If Ma'ruf was indeed converted to Islam by the eighth Imam, it is hard to see on what basis he could have been associated with his predecessor.

In short, the historicity of the narratives linking these three Sufis to Imam Musa al-Kazim is unproven; only the story of Shaiq Balkhi's encounter with him can be regarded as fully plausible. The traditions in question nonetheless have their historical and even spiritual significance. First occurring in almost exclusively Sunni sources of the fourth/tenth to seventh/thirteenth centuries, they demonstrate how pro-'Alid segments of Sunni opinion gave shape and substance to the veneration of the Imams as part of the spiritual patrimony of all Muslims. That Sufis were chosen to figure as associates of Imam Musa al-Kazim (as well as of other Imams) suggests, too, that a particular affinity was seen to exist between the Sufi and Imamite traditions.

The place of Imam Musa al-Kazim in Sufi traditions is not limited to the stories—apocryphal or otherwise—that link him to individual Sufis. Insofar as he is the predecessor of Imam 'Ali al-Rida, who is regarded in turn as the preceptor of Ma'ruf Karkhi he belongs

to the ancestry of all those numerous Sufi lineages that claim descent from Ma'ruf Karkhi. In other words, he forms the penultimate link in what is known as the Golden Chain (*silsilat al-dhahab*), i.e., the initiatic line connecting the Sufis through the first eight of the Twelve Imams with the Messenger and with the source of Revelation.

Remarkable, too, is the number of Sufis who claim physical descent from Imam Musa al-Kazim (or on whose behalf such descent is claimed). Earliest among them is Junayd Baghdadi (d. 298/910), separated—according to the *Tiryaq al-Muhibbin* of Taqi al-Din al-Wasiti (d. 774/1373)—from the Imam by five generations of descent. This genealogy appears difficult to reconcile with the predominant view that Junayd was of Iranian ancestry. By contrast, the Musawi genealogy of Sayyid Ahmad al-Rifa'i (d. 578/1183), eponym of the Rifa'i order, seems to be universally agreed on; fourteen generations of descent connect Ahmad al-Rifa'i with Imam Musa al-Kazim.

Real or pretended descendants of Imam Musa al-Kazim came to play an important role in the eastern Islamic lands in general and Iran in particular during the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries, a period of intense interaction between Sufism and Shi'ism. Many Sufis gave new prominence to their traditional devotion to the Family of the Prophet, re-emphasising the role of the Imams as a fountain-head of spiritual traditions. While at the same time, some Shi'is experimented with the organisational forms of Sufism. It is thus, not surprising that a number of Sufi movements with Shi'i or proto-Shi'i colouring came into being, at least four of which were founded by persons regarded as the descendants of Imam Musa al-Kazim.

First among them was Hajji Bektash (Haci Baktas), said to have been born in Nishapur sometime during the seventh/thirteenth century and to have migrated by way of Makkah and Najaf to Anatolia, where he established the beginnings of the order that came to bear his name. The Bektashi order certainly cannot be designated as Shi'i in any real sense of the term, given its general disregard for the *Shari'ah*, nonetheless it professed loyalty to the Twelve Imams. Hence, it was claimed on behalf of Haji Bektash that he was the son of Muhammad b. Musa, a great-grandson of Imam Musa al-Kazim.

This is clearly impossible for chronological reasons, but the possibility remains that Hajji Bektash was indeed born to a family of Musawi *Sayyids* in Nishapur and that the full genealogical records was lost somewhere between Khurasan and Anatolia. By contrast, the Musawi lineage with which the Safavid family sought to adorn itself in the course of its transformation from Sufi order to ruling dynasty is now generally recognised as spurious, the outcome of an attempt made not later than the reign of Shah Tahmasp (930/1524—984/1676) to efface the humble Kurdish origins of the Safavids.

Nonetheless, the choice of Imam Musa al-Kazim as the ancestor is a further illustration of the prestige that attached to Musawi descent. Another claimant to Musawi lineage active in the ninth/fifteenth century was Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh (d. 869/1464), founder of the Nurbakhshi order that branched off from the Kubrawiyah and survived in various regions of Iran until the mid-Safavid period. Finally, mention may be made of Sayyid Haydar Tunī (d. 830/1426), sometimes regarded as the ultimate ancestor of the infamous Haydari gangs that plagued numerous Iranian cities in the

Safavid and Qajar periods. This Sufi claimed both physical and spiritual descent from Imam Musa al-Kazim, his initiatic chain going back through five generations to a certain Sayyid Ibrahim Khwarazmi, described as a 'devoted follower' of the Imam.

It might be thought that this prominence of claimants to descent from Imam Musa al-Kazim in various Shi'i-Sufi movements simply reflected the numerical predominance of Musawi *Sayyids* in Iran. After all, Imam Musa al-Kazim fathered no fewer than thirty-seven children, more than any other of the Imams, and many of them had lived and died in Iran. The shrines built over their tombs came indeed to function as some of the principal sites of pilgrimage in Iran, even in pre-Safavid times. Notable examples are the shrine of Husayn b. Musa in Qazvin (known popularly as Shahzadah Husayn), that of Ahmad, b. Musa in Shiraz (designated locally as Shah Chiragh), that of Hadrat Fatimah bint Musa in Qum and above all, of course that of the eighth Imam, 'Ali b. Musa al-Rida in Mashhad. These shrines certainly helped to anchor the lineage of Imam Musa al-Kazim in the pious awareness and the religious consciousness of Iran and to establish real or alleged descent from him as a title to honour and pious repute. It seems unwise, therefore, to attribute the popularity of a Musawi lineage among the founders of Sufi-Shi'i movements to mere statistical chance.

In short, Imam Musa al-Kazim in his own life-time a reputation for piety, asceticism and spiritual virtue that transcended the boundaries of the Shi'ah. The accounts linking various Sufis to him, even if not of proven historical authenticity, serve to illustrate the posthumous echo of the appeal he exerted. It is noteworthy that these accounts first occur almost

exclusively in Sunni sources and were taken up by Shi'i authorities only after a considerable interval.

Aspects of Al-Mubarrads Linguistic Thought of the Glorious Qur'an: The birth and scholastic work of al-Mubarrad in the city of Basra shows the rise of an Arab grammarian and philologist who left his mark on the whole Arab and Islamic thought in general and in the field of *Qur'anic* linguistics in particular. In Basra, al-Mubarrad was taught by well-known scholars of his time such as Abu 'Umar al-Jarmi, Abu 'Uthman al-Mazini and Abu Hatim al-Sijistani, the pupil of Asma'i.

When al-Mubarrad went to Baghdad, he became 'a very busy teacher' and the 'Imam of the Arabic language.' Moreover, he led seminars devoted to the study of Sibawayh's *al-Kitab* after he 'had mastered it at the hands of his Basrite masters who, in turn, allowed him to teach *al-Kitab* at a young age'.

Al-Mubarrad's works are numerous and are mentioned in many sources. However, one of them, namely *Kitab Ma'tafaqa Lafzuhu wa Khtalafa Ma'nahu* (On Words Which Have the Same Utterance but Different Meanings) seems not to have received enough attention.

A careful examination of the long list of al-Mubarrad's works reveals that he probed many fields: linguistics, prose, poetry, rhetoric, prosody, grammar and *Qur'anic* semantics and sciences. In order to thoroughly understand and appreciate his book, *Kitab Ma'tafaqa Lafzuhu wa' Khtalafa Ma'nahu*, it is important to examine similar works by other authors.

We first examine Sulayman al-Balkhi's book entitled *al-Ashbah wa'l Naza'ir fi'l-Qur'an al-Karim*. This book is considered the first of its kind to appear in that very field of

study. It would seem that because of al-Balkhi's pioneering effort, some writers later on benefited from it. In fact, after a careful examination of al-Balkhi's *al-Ashbah wa'l-Naza'ir fi'l-Qur'an al-Karim* and Yahya b. Sallam's *al-Tasarif*, we find that both books share essentially the same approach as well as the same issues.

In addition to the book of *al-Tasarif* by Yahya b. Sallam (A.H. 200) there are other works which fit the topic under discussion, such as *Tahsil Naza'ir al-Qur'an* by al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (A.H. 320) *al-Wujuh wa'l-Nasa'ir* by al-Damighani (A.H. 478) and *Nuzhat al-'Ayun al-Nawazir fi 'ilm al-Wujuh wa'l-Naza'ir* by Ibn al-Jawzi (A.H. 597).

With the exception of al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi's book, which has its own approach, all the afore-mentioned works are concerned with *al-ashbah wa'l-naza'ir* and all reflect the following observations:

1. They tend to interpret the *Qur'an* through the meaning and the sense of the word as well as its place in the verse. Therefore, words such as *al-iman* (faith), *al-tayyibat* (peasant things), *al-fasad* (corruption), *al-islah* (reform), or *al-khalq* (creation), as well as other words which could bear several aspects and meanings are dealt within the context of the verses in which each word occurs. Moreover, these books are also concerned with the clarification as well as the interpretation of all the probable meanings of all such words in their positions in the verse.
2. Al-Balkhi's book *al-Ashbah wa'l-Naza'ir fi'l-Qur'an al-Karim* is considered the first of its kind in the field although it includes the same information as the other books.

3. The meanings of one word vary, ranging from two to sixteen aspects much as the word *al-huda* and sometimes seventeen aspects. However, a careful examination of both al-Damighani (*al-Wujuh wa'l-Naza'ir*) and Ibn al-Jawzi (*Nuzhat al-A'yur*), shows that both works share the following features:
 - (a) Both follow the old tradition in the discussion of *al-wujuh wa'l-naza'ir* in terms of the linguistic meaning and the science of interpretation.
 - (b) Both are concerned with the causes of *nuzul* (the revelation of certain reverses and why they were revealed) and linguistic issues as well, i.e., the circumstances in which a certain in the *Qur'an* may be interpreted.
 - (c) Both follow the same system of arrangement, i.e., alphabetical.
 - (d) In their interpretation of unusual words (*gharib*) in the *Qur'an*, they rely on the word's form and case in the verse regardless of its origin (*asl*) and the extra letters added to such origin or not. However, the two writers differ in certain aspects:
 - (i) While Ibn al-Jawzi elaborates in his detailed discussion and explanation, al-Damighani tends to be brief and general. This is why Ibn al-Jawzi's book is considered the most comprehensive in the field of *al-wujuh wa'l-nazar'ir*.
 - (ii) In addition to the lexical arrangement, of Ibn al-Jawzi's book, he also observes the internal arrangement of the single word as well as arranging its consonants according to the numerous derivations from the word. Al-Damighani's book lacks such a system.
4. Al-Tirmidhi's work in this field differs from the rest of the books. For example, he denies the several aspects of a single word as well as the commonness of the utterance (*al-mushtarak al-lafzi*). Consequently, he followed a unique linguistic approach, namely, that a word has only one meaning.
5. Compared with the afore-mentioned books, al-Mubarrad's work is relatively small and brief, or, in terms of the field of *wujuh* and *naza'ir*, a short study. In his introduction, he presents the synonyms and 'the common utterance.' Then, he moves to the words which agree in their utterance but differ in meaning in the *Qur'an* providing the reader with a simple example and supporting his argument by citing the *Qur'an*, the Arabic language and sometimes the *Hadith*.

Moreover, al-Mubarrad discusses the *majaz* (metaphor) in the Glorious *Qur'an* and its use in a relationship or evidence. His approach may be summarised as follows:

 - (a) The difference in utterances and meanings, as in verbs: *dhahaba*, 'to go'; *ja'a*, 'to come', *qama*, 'to rise'; and *Qa'ad*, 'to sit'; nouns: *yadd*, 'hand', *rijl*, 'leg', *rajul*, 'man'; *faras* 'horse'
 - (b) Two different utterances and one meaning, as in verbs: *zanantu* and *hasibtu* = to think (that) *qa'adtu* and *j alastu* = to sit nouns: *dhira'* abd *sa'ia'* = arm *anf* and *mirsan* = nose

- (c) The same utterances but different meaning: *wajada*, 'to find'; *wajada* derived from *mawjida*, (feeling, passion, anger, grudge); and *wajada* meaning 'to know.' *Daraba* has three different meanings: *Darabtu Zaydan*, 'I hit Zayd'. *Darabtu mathalan*, 'I gave an example'; and *Darabtu'—arda*, 'I roamed the earth'.

He also cites another example of names such as the word '*ayn*' with its different meanings: *al-'ayn*, 'truth', the present wealth', 'the visual organ', 'the scale', the clouds coming from the *qibla* direction' and 'the water spring'.

Then al-Mubarrad discusses the words which have the same utterances but convey opposite meanings, e.g., *jadal*, which provides two opposite meanings: 'inferior' (*haqir*) and "great" (*azim*). For the first meaning, 'inferior', he cites the following verses:

Kullu shay' in ma khala-llahu Jalal
(All things, are inferior except God)
wa'ara Arbada qad faraqani
(And I find out that Arbad had left me)
wa mina 'rruz'i kabirum wa-jalla
(For calamity can be 'great' or small)

In both verses the word *jadal* means small or inferior. For the second meaning, "great", al-Mubarrad cites the following verse:

rasmi darin waqafu fi talalihi
(In a mansion's ruins I stood)
Kidttu aqdi'l-hayata min jalalihi
(Almost spent my life viewing its greatness)

However, he also cites the word *jawn* as having opposite meanings: 'black' and 'white'. However, al-Mubarrad's use of these words was derived from classical Arabic poetry as well as Arab rhetoric, such as that of al-Hajjaj b. Yusuf al-Thaqafi.

Thus far, al-Mubarrad seems to have presented the above terms as an introduction to the words actually occurring in the Glorious *Qur'an* from which he cites the following examples:

1. *al-muqwi*, to mean both 'the weak' and 'the strong'. For the first meaning, 'the weak', the following verse is cited: *wamata'an li'l-muqwin*. For the second meaning, 'the strong', he cites a general Arabic expression: *aktharu min fulan fa' innahu muqwin*. (Know well so and so because he is powerful).
2. The word *zann* means both 'doubt' (*shakk*) and 'certainty' (*yaqin*). To express doubt, al-Mubarrad cites the following verse: "...Who know not the Book, but (see there in their own) desires and they do nothing but conjecture". For 'certainty', he cites this verse: "I did really understand that my account would (one day) reach me."

In this book al-Mubarrad is careful to mention certain words in the Glorious *Qur'an* which are repeated twice in the verse where the meaning of the first differs from the second. Some of the examples he cites are:

1. "The recompense for an injury is an injury equal thereto (in degree)". The second word of *sayya'ah* (injury) is an 'offense' or 'misdeed' against the person, but similar in reprehension because he is judged by the second.
2. They say, "We are really with you: we (were) only jesting. God will throw back the mockery on them. The word *mustahzi'un* (jesting) is a kind of disobedience, but God's *istihza'* (throw back their mockery) in His 'punishment' of them.

3. 'They plot and plan and God also plans.'
Again, *yamkurun* is a sin as far as man is concerned but for God it means 'torture' and 'to punish severely'.

In many places in his book al-Mubarrad deals with linguistic and grammatical, as well as rhetorical issues in order to convey the intended meanings, of the *Qur'anic* terms to the reader. In this respect, he exploits certain linguistic features of the *Qur'anic* verses e.g., omission (*haflif*) and summarisation (*ikhtisar*), as well as Arabic speech, to explain certain words in the Glorious *Qur'an*. For example, when al-Mubarrad discusses the *Qur'anic* style of the verses, "and what will make thee realize what the sure reality is," he says, (There is) no explanation of this, but for those who have insight, the predicate (the answer to the question), was omitted since the addressed person is known". This is done for a certain purpose, namely, to magnify or glorified the matter, as when one says, "If one sees someone holding a sword in his hand," which would have a certain impression on the person who hears such a statement and which would normally be labelled as 'exaggeration' (*tahwil*).

However, al-Mubarrad goes further and discusses not only words of different utterances with the same meanings, but also the styles which have the same utterances and various rhetoric aspects contextually.

He cites the interrogative style as an example.

Ma'adraka? and ma yudrika?

The Almighty said, "And what will explain to thee what this is?"

Then the Almighty continues:

narun hamiyah (It is a fire blazing fiercely).

In another place:

"And what will explain to thee what the Day of Judgement is?... (It will be) the Day when no soul shall have power (to do) aught for another".

Moreover,

wa ma adraka ma'l-qari'ah...

"And what will explain to thee what the (Day) of Noise and Clamor is? (It is) a day where on men will be like moths....."

Also, He said:

wa ma adraka ma'k-hutamah...

"And what will explain to thee that which breaks to pieces? (It is) the fire of (the wrath of) God kindled (to a balze)".

A careful examination of these verses reveals that after each verse a 'clarification' (*bayan*) is given. The interrogative style therefore, refers to glorification (*ta'zim*) and determination (*taqrir*).

At the same time, al-Mubarrad cites other examples from the *Qur'an* of the same style but with no "clarification", as in the following example:

"And what will explain to thee what Hell-fire is? Naught doth it permit to endure and naught doth it leave alone".

Al-Mubarrad explains the omission of 'clarification' as an indication of glorification and determination. This justification is based on other *surahs*, such as:

"If there were a *Qur'an* with which mountains were moved, or the earth were cloven asunder, or the dead were made to speak truly, the Command is with God in all things".

The response is not given because the addressed person, persons, knows it through the

expected response of the conditional 'if' (*laww*), i.e., 'this *Qur'an* would have been it'.

Finally, al-Mubarrad writes about *al-majaz* in the *Qur'an* through certain statements or words which are used differently from what they mean linguistically to indicate a relationship of factual evidence. This occurs as a result of contraction or abbreviation, one of the common styles used by Arabs. In the respect, al-Mubarrad cites an example from the Glorious *Qur'an*:

"Ask at the town where we have been and the caravan in which we returned."

Obviously, the 'town' (*al-qaryah*) is an inanimate object and so is the 'caravan' (*al-ir*). Consequently, they cannot be 'asked' nor can they 'respond' to any question. Therefore, the actual meaning is omitted although it is understood to mean 'the town people' and the 'caravan owners.'

Al-Mubarrad continues his discussion of abbreviations in the *Qur'anic majaz* (metaphor), buttressing his arguments with Arab verses or statements as well as the *Hadith*.

Last, but not least, al-Mubarrad discussed another linguistic phenomenon, namely, *al-tahwil*. In this respect, al-Mubarrad's use of a modern linguistic idiom deserves serious attention. He cites the verse:

"Such were the treasures we had bestowed on him, that their very keys would have been a burden."

In the verse, the '*usbah* (bundle of keys) have been burdened by the keys, instead of 'their very keys have been a burden.' Here, al-Mubarrad indicates the linguistic phenomenon of diversion in *Qur'anic* verses as well as in the speech of the Arabs when they say, 'The

posterior (or buttocks) would have been a burden on the woman,' actually meaning that the woman has been burdened by her posteriors.

This linguistic style becomes clearer in certain Arabic expressions cited by al-Mubarrad such as:

'I put the hood in my head'.

The real meaning is obvious, namely, 'I put the hood on my hand.' the same occurs with another expression:

'I put the slipper in my foot'.

The actual meaning is, 'I put my foot in the slipper,' i.e. 'I put on my slipper.'

It was also in Sunni Sufism that descent Imam Musa al-Kazim first came to be regarded as spiritually prestigious before emerging as a prominent factor in the crystallisation of Shi'i forms of Sufism in the eighth/fourteenth and ninth/fifteenth centuries.

The memory of Imam Musa al-Kazim thus played a role in the evolution of Sufism. This can be taken as a mirror illustration of the way in which the Twelve Imams of the *Ahl al-Bayt* have formed part of the spiritual patrimony of the Muslims community as a whole.

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EB

Muzaffar Shams Balkhi (1320–1381)

Muzaffar Shams Balkhi was born of a family from Balkh in Afghanistan, the date of his birth is unknown, but may have been in the decade of the 720s/1320s. After an education in Delhi, he joined his father in Bihar Sharif. His intellectual disposition led him to become a disciple of Sharaf al-Din Ahmad Maneri (d. 783/1381) instead of Ahmad Carpush, his father's poetically-inclined but less well-educated guide. Muzaffar was sent back to Delhi again for further studies, and then the Tughlukid Sultan Firuz Shah appointed him lecturer in the royal *madrasa*.

After a conversion experience, he returned to Bihar, where Sharaf al-Din Maneri continued his spiritual formation. He reached the stage

when he felt liberated from all worldly attachments, except from his wife, but exclaimed to his guide that he would divorce her. Approving of the sentiment, but not of the idea, Sharaf al-Din announced that his training was complete.

Muzaffar was incapable of staying in one place. He journeyed far and wide, spending time in Mecca and eventually dying at Aden in 803/1400. He received more than 200 letters from his spiritual guide Sharaf al-Din, of which only 28 are extant. There is an extant, though unpublished collection of Muzaffar's own letters (ms. Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna, Pers. no. 2619, and Acc. no. 1859/2 (181 letters in each ms.); a third ms. in the private library of Balkhi Sahib, Patna) and a small *diwan* (ed. Patna, 1959).

His compendious commentary on Radi al-Din Sanghani's *Masharik al-anwar* has not come to light. Although he was the chief successor to Sharaf al-Din Maneri, he is more remembered as an intellectual than as a spiritual guide. He was succeeded in this latter role by his nephew Husayn.

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N

Nakshband, Khwadia Baha Al-Din Muhammad (1318–1389)

Khwadia Baha Al-Din Muhammad Nakshband was a founder of the Nakshbandiyya, a still active Sufi order that has been second in the extent of its diffusion only to the Kadiriyya (with which it has often been intertwined, especially in India and Kurdistan). The epithet Nakshband is sometimes understood in connection with the craft of embroidering, and Baha al-Din is said, in fact, to have assisted his father in weaving the embroidered Bukharan cloaks known as *kimkha* (Abu'l-Hasan Muhammad Bakir b. Muhammad 'Ali, *Makamat-i Shah-i Nakshband*).

More commonly, however, it is taken to refer to the fixing, in the purified tablet of the heart, of the imprint of the divine name *Allāh* by means of silent and permanent *dhikr*. To the people of Bukhara, whose patron saint he became, Baha' al-Din was known posthumously as *khwadja-yi bala-gardan* ("the averter of disaster"), with reference to protective powers bestowed on him during his novitiate. Elsewhere, especially in Turkey, he is popularly called *Shahi Nakshband*.

Descent from the Imam Dja'far al-Sadik has been attributed to Baha' al-Din Nakshband,

but although the Imam does always appear in his initiatic *silsila*, contemporary and near-contemporary sources make no mention of *sayyid* ancestry. They stress rather the position of Baha' al-Din as the seventh in a series of Central Asian masters (*khwadjagan*) of Sufism which was inaugurated by Abu Yusuf Hamadani (d. 534/1140 in Marw).

Soon after his birth in Muharram 718/ March 1318 in the Bukharan hamlet of Kasr-i Hinduwan (later renamed Kasr-i 'Arifan, out of deference to him), Baha' al-Din was adopted as the spiritual son (*farzand*) of Khwadja Muhammad Sammasi, the fifth descendant of Hamadani. Sammasi immediately assigned the infant's future spiritual training to his own principal *murid*, Khwadja Amir Kulal. Kulal counts as Baha al-Din's immediate predecessor in the *silsila*, for it was he who transmitted to him the essentials of the Path: the link of companionship (*nisbat-i suhbat*), instruction in the customs of the Path (*ta'lim-i adab-i adab-i tarikat*), and the inculcation of *dhikr* (*talkin-i dhikr*) ('Abd al-Rahman Djami, *Nafahat al-uns*, 381).

Nonetheless, as befitted the founder of a new order, Baha' al-Din kept the company of a wide variety of spiritual instructors. Early during his association with Amir Kulal, he had a vision

in which he saw his six predecessors in the *silsila*, beginning with Khwadja 'Abd al-Khalik Ghidjuwani (d. 617/1220), a successor of Hamadani. This vision amounted to a second initiation, for Ghidjuwani enjoined on Baha' al-Din—among other things—the exclusive practice of silent *dhikr*, as opposed to the vocal *dhikr* in which Amir Kulal and his circle customarily engaged. Once back in the world of external reality, Baha' al-Din began to comply with this command, but Amir Kulal continued to hold him in high esteem. He ultimately pronounced his preceptorial duties to be at an end and freed Baha' al-Din to seek out other *shaikhs*, “both Turk and Tadjik”.

The ethnic and linguistic differentiation between Turk and Tadjik was reflected, in 8th/14th century Transoxianan Sufism, in a dichotomy between the Yasawi order (founded by Khwadja Ahmad Yasawi (d. 562/1167, another disciple of Hamadani), which flourished among Turkic speakers, and the Persian-speaking *khwadjagan* and their adherents. Since the Nakshbandiyya was destined to spread to almost every region of the Turkish world in the space of a few generations, it was appropriate that Baha' al-Din should spend part of his apprenticeship with the Yasawi masters who were known to their contemporaries as the “Turkish *shaikhs*” (*mashayikh-i turk*).

First, however, Baha' al-Din spent seven months in the company of another Tadjik *shaikh*, Mawlana 'Arif Dikgarani, perfecting under his guidance the practice of the silent *dhikr*. He next spent two or three months with Kutham Shaikh, a Yasawi master resident in Nakhshab, before joining the following of a second Yasawi *shaikh*, Khalil Ata, for a full twelve years.

The chronological problems posed by the sources (works of hagiography, the Timurid

chronicles, and the *Rihla* of Ibn Battuta) are impossible to resolve, but it seems certain that Khalil Ata is identical with Kadan/Ghazan Khan, a singularly ferocious individual who ruled over the Caghatayid khanate for roughly a decade. It is tempting to see in Baha' al-Din's association with Khalil Ata the origin of the penchant of several later Nakshbandis for establishing ascendancy over rulers, but such an interpretation is excluded by a careful reading of the sources.

After the overthrow of Khalil Ata, Baha' al-Din retired to his birthplace to begin training his own disciples, most of who came from Bukhara and its environs. He left the region himself only three times, twice to perform the *hadjdj* and once to visit Herat. There he met with the ruler, Mu'izz al-Din Husayn, and explained to him the principles of his path.

He died on 3 Rabi 1 791/2 March 1389, and was buried at Kasr-i 'Arifan. Surrounded by a continually expanding complex of buildings, the tomb became a place of pilgrimage for Muslims from all over Asia as well as the site, for Bukharans, of spring festivities known as '*id-i gul-i surkh*' (“red rose festival”).

Baha' al-Din's principal successors were Khwadja 'Ala' al-Din 'Attar (d. 802/1393), whom he had honoured with marriage to his daughter; Khwadja Muhammad parasa (d. 822/1419), a prolific author who counts as founder of the learned traditions of the Nakshbandi order; and Mawlana Ya'kub Carkhi (d. 851/1447), who originated in the region of Ghazni. 'Attar was the leading figure among these three, but it was Carkhi who proved the most important for the continuation of the Nakshbandi line; he was the preceptor of Khwadja 'Ubayd Allâh Ahrar (d. 896/1490,

under whose auspices the Nakshbandiyya both established its supremacy in Central Asia and began its expansion in the wider Muslim world. Bha' al-Din left behind no writings (with the possible exception of the litany named after him, *Awrad-i Baha'iyya*), and he even discouraged his disciples from recording his sayings. The precise outlines of his teachings are, then, hard to discern, not because of the profusion of hagiographic legend that enshrouds so many Sufis, but because of the exiguous and sometimes elliptic nature of the sources.

It is particularly difficult to establish why he should have become an eponymous figure, the central link in the *silsla* of which he is a part, instead of, for example, Ghidjduwani. The eight principles of spiritual conduct (*kalimat-i kudsiyya*) first enunciated by Ghidjduwani have, after all, been reiterated in Nakshbandi handbooks down to the present; precisely the fact that Baha' al-Din added three further principles to the eight would seem to reinforce the primacy of Ghidjduwani. These three were: *wukuf-i zamani* ("temporal awareness"), the constant examination of one's spiritual state during *dhikr*; *wukuf-i 'adadi* ("numerical awareness"), the enumeration of the times *dhikr* is performed in order to discourage the intrusion of distracting thoughts; and *wukuf-i kalbi* ("awareness of the heart"), the direction of attention to the physical heart in order to make it participate in the work of *dhikr*.

All three principles relate, then, to *dhikr*; combined with the fact that Baha' al-Din set himself apart from the other disciples of Amir Kulal through insistence on silent *dhikr*, this suggests that the question of *dhikr* was crucial for the early coalescence of the Nakshbandi order.

Other features of early Nakshbandi practice were also linked to the concern for sobriety and anonymity implied by the choice of silent *dhikr*. Among them are the repudiation of music and dance (*sama'*); the deprecation of charismatic feats (*karamat*); the avoidance of retreats in favour of the keeping of pious company (*suhbat*); and the shunning of distinctive forms of dress. All these features are highly reminiscent of the Malamati movement of Nishapur, and it may be suggested that Baha' al-Din Nakshband was the heir to the traditions of the Malamatiyya although not in a formal, initiatic sense.

Other recurrent features of the Nakshbandi path, such as fidelity to the *shari'a* in the political and social spheres as well as in devotional life, and a marked hostility to Shi'i Islam, were established in later periods; they cannot be traced directly to Baha al-Din. Similarly, the mildly critical attitude to Ibn 'Arabi adopted by some Nakshbandis of the Mudjaddidi line cannot be attributed retroactively to Baha al-Din and his circle. Although there is no trace of acquaintance with the concepts of Ibn 'Arabi in the dicta of Baha al-Din, both 'Attar and Parsa were enthusiastic exponents of his work.

Nakshbandiyya order

In Persia: It is a paradox of Nakshbandi history that although this Sufi order first arose among Persian-speakers and virtually all its classical texts are written in the Persian language, its impact on Persia has been relatively slight. This statement requires qualification only for the period of the genesis of the Nakshbandiyya when, it might be argued, Transoxania and the eastern reaches of Khurasan still counted as parts of the Persian world.

The rise of the Nakshbandiyya to supremacy in Transoxiana appears to have begun already in the time of Khwadjā Baha' al-Din Nakshband himself, although the nascent order did not yet exercise political influence and in the Kubrawiyya it faced a still formidable competitor. Khwadjā Muhammad Parsa (d. 822/1419), sole adherent of Baha al-Din among the '*ulama*' of Bukhara, had to endure the hostility of his colleagues for a number of reasons, not least being his enthusiasm for the works and concepts of Ibn 'Arabi.

However, it was also in connection with Parsa that the Timurids established their links with the Nakshbandi order, when Mirza Shahrukh secured the return of Parsa to Bukhara after a period of banishment. Those links, important for the ascendancy of the order, were consolidated in the time of Khwadjā 'Ubayd Allāh Ahrar (d. 896/1490), who several times intervened decisively in the political sphere (according both to the chronicles and to the hagiographic sources) and through his numerous disciples made the Nakshbandiyya supreme in most regions of Transoxiana.

The influence of the Nakshbandiyya spread during the same period southward to Harat, partly through the influence of Ahrar and partly through that of Sa'd al-Din Kashghari (d. 860/1456), a third-generation descendant of Khwadjā Baha al-Din Nakshband. Together with the Zayni order, with which it came to enjoy fraternal relations in Istanbul as well as Harat, the Nakshbandiyya dominated the religious and cultural life of late Timurid Harat. The principal initiate of Kashghari was the great poet and mystic 'Abd al-Rahman Djami (d. 898/1492), whose rich and varied opus contains a treatise devoted to the Nakshbandiyya as well as many references to the order and its personalities scattered throughout his work.

The closeness of Djami to his Nakshbandi preceptor may be measured by that the two men lie buried in a single enclosure in the Khiyaban district of Harat. Averse by temperament to the formal training of *muris*, Djami nonetheless initiated at least two persons into his line of the Nakshbandi order: 'Abd al-Ghafur Lari (d. 912/1507) and one of his own sons, Diya al-Din Yusuf (d. 919/1513). He also brought above the adherence to the order of the well-known litterateur and statesman Mir 'Ali Shir Nawa'i and inclined Sultan Husayn Mirza Baykara to look favourably upon it.

The presence of the Nakshbandiyya in Transoxiana and Harat has proved permanent. By contrast, the implantation of the Nakshbandiyya in north-western Persia that took place in the late 9th/15th century was relatively short-lived. The Nakshbandiyya was brought to Kazwin by a *murid* of Ahrar, Shaikh 'Ali Kurdi. Originally from 'Amadiyya, he spent a number of years serving Ahrar as tutor of his children before settling in Kazwin. He was put to death by the Safawids in 925/1519. At least one of his six *khalifas* suffered the same fate, while several others fled before the Safawid onslaught.

However, Nakshbandi influence remained strong in Kazwin for several decades and may have been one of the reasons for the relatively long resistance put up by the people of the city against the imposition of Shi'ism. Tabriz, the first Safawid capital, was also a centre of Nakshbandi activity, stemming from the presence there of Sun Allāh Kuzakunani (d. 929/1523), a disciple of 'Ala al-Din Maktabdar (d. 892/1486), one of the *khalifas* of Sa'd al-Din Kashghari in Harat.

He enjoyed some influence at the Ak Koyunlu court and evidently managed to survive the Safawid conquest. His son, known

as Abu Sa'id-i Thani, was imprisoned and tortured by the Safawids, but was able to escape and ultimately to migrate to Istanbul, where he found favour with Sultan Suleyman. Another successor of Kuzakunani, 'Ali-djan Badamyari, established himself in the village of Badamyar near Tabriz, where his initiatic line continued for two more generations.

There are also traces of the Nakshbandiyya in Sawa and Hamadan in the immediate pre-Safawid and early Safawid period. In general, however, the rise of the Safawid state sounded the knell for the Nakshbandi order in northern and western Persia, for with their strong loyalty to Sunnism the Nakshbandis became a special target of persecution. Mirza Makhdum Sharifi, a Sunni scholar who took refuge with the Ottomans, writes that whenever anyone was seen engaging in *dhikr* or *murakaba*, it would be said, "This is a Nakshbandi; he must be killed". The Nakshbandiyya probably survived for a time in Urumiyya and possibly in other Kurdish-inhabited areas of Persia. Otherwise, the order was so thoroughly extirpated that Mulla Muhammad Bakir Madjlist (d. 1110/1699) felt safe in declaring, towards the end of the Safawid period, that the names of the Nakshbandi masters listed by Djami in *Nafahat al-uns* were unknown to all but "the ignorant Uzbeks" (*uzbakan-i nadan*; quoted in Rusul Dja'fariyan, *Ruyaru'i yi fakihan va sufiyan dar asr-i Safawiyyan*, in *Kayhan-i Andishah*, xxiii [Adhar-Day 1369/November-December 1990], 123).

When in the 13th/19th century Nakshbandis again became visible in Persia, it was exclusively in the Sunni-inhabited regions on the fringes of the country. Harati resistance to Persian attempts at establishing control over the city were led by a certain Sufi Islam, a

Nakshbandi dervish from Bukhara; although he died in battle in 1222/1807, the branch of the order he founded at Karrukh outside Harat continued to exercise an influence across the frontier among the Hanafis of Persian Khurasan. Six years after the death of Sufi Islam, Khwadia Yusuf Kashghari, a Nakshbandi *shaikh* from Eastern Turkistan, led an unsuccessful uprising of the Yomut and Goklan Turkumans against Kadjar rule. A similar Nakshbandi-led Turkuman revolt was quashed in Astarabad in 1257/1841. It was also in the first half of the century that Khwadia Muhammad Yusuf Djami established a still active centre of the Mudjaddidi branch of the order at Turbat-i Djham near the Afghan border.

Infinitely more important than all these developments in the east was the rise of the Khalidi branch of the Nakshbandi order, established by Mawlana Khalid Baghdadi (d. 1243/1827), a Kurd from Shahrazur. The Khalidiyya supplanted almost entirely all other branches of the Nakshbandiyya in the Middle East, and in Kurdistan it wrested supremacy from the Kadiriyya to become the chief order of the region.

Although the principal Kurdish *khalifas* of Mawlana Khalid all resided in Ottoman territory, their influence was considerable among the Kurds of Persia, not least during the great Kurdish uprising of 1880 which, led by Shaikh 'Ubayd Allâh of Shamdinan, engulfed much of Adharbaydjan as well as most of Kurdistan. In addition, the Khalidiyya expanded from Kurdistan to Talish, the Shafi'i enclave on the shores of the Caspian: Shaikh 'Uthman Siradj al-Din of Tawela—a *khalifa* of Mawlana Khalid—initiated into the order a certain Mulla 'Abd al-Hakk Kizidji from the village of 'Anbaran in central Talish and

instructed him to spread the order in his homeland, which he did with great success. Most Shafi'is in Talish retain to this day and allegiance to the Khalidi Nakshbandi order.

In 1958, after the overthrow of the 'Iraki monarchy a namesake of 'Uthman Siradj al-Din quit Biyara to establish himself at the village of Duru on the Persian side of the frontier. With the active encouragement of the Pahlawi court, he sought to bring under his sway all three areas of Nakshbandi presence in Persia—Kurdistan, Talish and Turkuman Sahra. In this he had some success, but his activities were brought to an end by the Islamic Revolution of 1978–9. Shaikh 'Uthman organised an army to combat the revolutionary government, but it was soon defeated and he withdrew to 'Irak. Despite this removal of Shaikh 'Uthman, the Nakshbandi order remains strong among the Kurds of Persia (particularly in the region of Mahabad and in Talish (especially Hashtpar and its surroundings). By contrast, it is now moribund among the Turkumans.

In Turkey: The first implanatation of the Nakshbandiyya among the western Turks took place in the 9th/15th century, less than a hundred years after the death of its eponym. This was an important part of the general expansion of the Nakshbandiyya outside its Transoxianan homeland, for the order was well placed to gain the loyalty of the Ottoman Turks with its emphatically Sunni identity and insistence on sober respect for the *shari'a*.

The first Ottoman Nakshbandi was Molla 'Abd Allāh Ilahi of Simav, who travelled to Samarkand where he became a disciple of Khwadja 'Ubayd Allāh. After his training was complete, he returned to his birthplace for a number of years before reluctantly accepting

an invitation to settle in Istanbul. There, at the Zeyrek mosque, he established the first Nakshbandi centre in Turkey and found himself surrounded by a large number of devotees. Preferring, however, a life of seclusion and scholarship, he left Istanbul for Vardar Yenicesi in Thrace, where he died in 895/1490.

Ilahi's principal successor was Amir Ahmad Bukhari (d. 922/1516), who had accompanied him back from Samarkand. Under Bukhari's auspices, three Nakshbandi hospices were established in Istanbul and the order attracted numerous scholars and litterateurs, the most famous of whom was the poet Mahmud Lami'i Celebi (d. 933/1532) of Bursa. Although the hospices founded by Bukhari continued functioning into the early 20th century, the initiatic line he inaugurated appears to have died out in the space of a few generations.

Considerably younger than Ilahi, but like him a *murid* of Ahrar, was Baba Haydar Samarkandi (d. 957/1550), for whom Sultan Sulayman Kanuni founded a *tekke* at Eyyub. This served as a hostel for Nakshbandis coming from Central Asia until it was destroyed by fire in 1912.

Nakshbandis continued to migrate from Central Asia to Istanbul and other points in Turkey for several centuries, as is indicated by the names of certain *tekkes* such as Bukhara, Kashghar and Ozbekkler. Among them were men of distinction such as Khazini, a dervish of triple Nakshbandi, Yasawi and Kubrawi affiliation, who arrived from Bukhara during the reign of Sultan Murad III, and 'Abd Allāh Nida'i, an 11th/17th century migrant from Kashghar who established a *tekke* near Eyyub.

In general, however, the history of the order in Turkey came to reflect the developments it underwent in India, which was

its principal intellectual centre from the time of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi the *Mudjaddid* (d. 1034/1624). The Mudjaddidi branch of the order established by Sirhindi was first transmitted to Turkey by Shaikh Muhammad Murad Bukhari (d. 1141/1729), a *murid* of Khwaja Muhammad Murad Ma'sum, Sirhindi's son and principal successor.

Muhammad Murad spent about five years in the Ottoman capital towards the end of the 11th/17th century, during which time he gained numerous '*ulama*', including the *Shaikh al-Islam* Feyd Allāh Efendi, as his followers. The next thirty years were spent primarily in 'Damascus, but he returned to Istanbul in 1141/1729, dying shortly thereafter. The *tekke* that was established next to the tomb of Muhammad Murad Bukhari in the Nishandji Pasha district became a fountainhead for the Mudjaddidiyya, not only in Istanbul but also in Anatolia and the Balkans.

A second transmission of the Mudjaddidiyya to Turkey came by way of Mecca, which remained until the late 19th century an important centre for the diffusion of the Nakshbandiyya among pilgrims coming from Turkey as well as many other regions. The representative of Khwaja Muhammad Ma'sum in the Holy City was Shaikh Ahmad Djuryani Yakdast, who initiated into the Mudjaddidiyya Shaikh Muhammad Amin of Tokat (d. 1158/1745).

When Muhammad Amin returned to Istanbul in 1129/1717, he took up residence at one of the hospices founded by Amir Ahmad Bukhari and began initiating members of the Ottoman bureaucracy. Particularly noteworthy among the *murids* of Shaikh Muhammad Amin was the polymath Sulayman Sa'd al-Din Mustakim-zade (d. 1202/1787), who translated

the letters of both Sirhindi and Khwaja Muhammad Ma'sum into Ottoman Turkish. The letters of Sirhindi have remained popular reading material among Turkish Nakshbandis down to the present, although it is now more commonly an Arabic translation that it used.

Several of the early Turkish Mudjaddidis also had Mewlewi affiliations, among them being Pertew Pasha and Halet Efendi both of whom exerted considerable political influence during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II.

An entirely new era in the history of the Nakshbandiyya in Turkey begins with the rise of the Khalidi branch in the first quarter of the 19th century. Before the emergence of the Khalidiyya, the Nakshbandis were certainly prominent and respected, both in Istanbul and elsewhere, but they never came close to enjoying the near-monopoly on Sufi activity that they exercised in Central Asia. The Khalidis, however, made the Nakshbandiyya and paramount order in Turkey, a position it has retained even after the official dissolution of the orders.

Mawlana Khalid Baghdadi (d. 1242/1827) was a Kurd from Shahrazur who obtained initiation into the Nakshbandiyya in Dihli at the hands of Ghulam 'Ali Dihlawi (d. 1240/1824), a *shaikh* of the Mudjaddidi line. Although Mawlana Khalid was hostile to the local *amirs*, in Kurdistan and acted there as an advocate of Ottoman power, the first appearance of the Khalidiyya in the Ottoman capital was greeted with suspicion. Mawlana Khalid's first representative there, Muhammad Salih, made matters worse by attempting to exclude non-initiates from public mosques during the performance of Khalidi rituals.

The next representative, 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Susi, was, however, able to make inroads

among the Ottoman elite. Like other key figures in the history of the order in Turkey, he recruited numerous '*ulama*', bureaucrats and men of letters; mention may be made of Mekki-zade Mustafa Asim, several times *Shaikh al-Islam*; Gurdju Nedjib Pasha and Musa Safweti Pasha; and Kecddji-zade Izzet Molla, *kadi* of Istanbul. It was suggested to Sultan Mahmud II by Halet Efendi, the Mudaddidi-Mewlewi, that this swift expansion of the Khalidiyya posed a danger to the state, and in 1828 all prominent Khalidis were in fact banned from the city. This period of disfavour was temporary, for in 1833 Mekki-zade was reappointed *Shaikh al-Islam*.

Much of the impetus behind the early propagation of the Khalidiyya in the Ottoman lands had been political; it was the wish of Mawlana Khalid to reinforce the allegiance of the Ottoman state to the *shari'a* and thus to make of it a viable focus for Muslim strength and unity. This aim gradually slipped beyond reach, and even in the period of Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid II, the *shaikh* of other orders were more intimately associated with the sovereign than were the Nakshbandis.

Nonetheless, the Khalidi branch of the Nakshbandiyya possessed a wide popular appeal; it struck root throughout Anatolia, and even in Konya, the hallowed ground of the Mewlewi order, the Khalidis were suprem. By the close of the 19th century, they had more *tekkes* in Istanbul than any other order.

Among the *shaikhs* of the second half of the century, Shaikh Diya' al-Din Gumushkhanewi (d. 1894) may be singled out for mention both because of the size and nature of his following and because of the prolongation of his initiatic line down to the present. His *tekke* in the Caghaloghlu district of Istanbul was probably the most frequented of all Sufi

meeting places in the city, being visited not only by members of the Ottoman elite but also by many Muslims from abroad.

In addition, Gumushkhanewi wrote extensively, in both Arabic and Turkish, and by compiling a collection of *hadith*, *Ramuz al-ahadith*, he inaugurated a tradition of *hadith* study still continued by his initiatic descendants in present-day Turkey.

Gumushkhanewi further distinguished himself by fighting, together with his followers, in the Russo-Turkish War of 1877. This example of military engagement was followed by several other Nakshbandi *shaikhs* who fought on various fronts during the First World War and the Turkish War of Independence. Nonetheless, the Nakshbandis found themselves denied all legitimacy under the dispensation brought in by the Turkish Republic when all the Sufi orders were proscribed in September 1925.

The immediate pretext for the ban was furnished by the uprising led in the same year by Shaikh Sa'id of Palu, a Khalidi *shaikh* of eastern Anatolia. However, the rebellion was more an expression of Kurdish grievances and aspirations than it was of fidelity to the traditional political ideals of the Khalidiyya. Frequently cited as another exemplar of militant Nakshbandi opposition to the Turkish Republic is Shaikh Muhammad As'ad (Mehmed Esad, d. 1931).

Originally from Irbil, a physical as well as spiritual descendant of Mawlana Khalid, he took up residence at the Kelami *tekke* in Istanbul in 1888 before being banished to his native city by Sultan 'Abd al-Hamid. He returned in 1908 to take his place among the leading *shaikh* of the Ottoman capital.

In 1931, he was arrested on charges of complicity with those responsible for the notorious Menemen incident. Although the evidence of his involvement was exceedingly slight, his son was executed and he himself died in prison hospital.

Initiatic descendants of Mehmed Esad as well as other Khalidi *shaikhs* continue to be active in Turkey; among those who have died in recent times we may mention Sami Ramazanoglu (d. 1984) and Mehmed Zahid Kotku (d. 1980). Arrests of Nakshbandis and other forms of harassment have remained common, but the subversive potential and aspirations often ascribed to the Nakshbandis in contemporary Turkey are, at best, grossly exaggerated.

It can even be said that certain Nakshbandis have integrated themselves into the political structure of Turkey by their involvement in ventures such as the National Salvation Party (Milli Selamet Partisi) and its successor, the Prosperity Party (Refah Partisi). The present-day significance of the Nakshbandis in Turkey is to be sought not so much in their political activity as in the support they provide for traditional religiosity, a support greatly weakened by the debilitating trends of more than half a century.

In India: Introduced into India by Khwaja Baki Bi'llah (972–1012/1564–1603) during the closing years of the 10th/16th century, the Nakshbandiyya order became an influential factor in Indo-Muslim life and for about two centuries it was the principal spiritual order in India. Though some saints of the *silsila* had visited India during the time of Babur (*Babur-nama*, tr. Beveridge, ii, 631) and Humayun (Shattari, *Gulzar-i abrar*, ms.), the credit of

establishing the first Nakshbandi *khankah* in India goes to Khwaja Baki Bi'llah who came to Dihli from Kabul and, in his own words, “planted the *silsila* in India”.

The Khwaja died at the age of only forty, but he made deep impact on the lives of the people by his unassuming ways and deep humanitarian spirit. He attracted both religious and political figures to his fold. A believer in pantheism, he gave expression to his cosmic emotions in spirited verses (*'Irfaniyyat-i Baki*, Dihli 1970). Among his disciples, two persons were pre-eminent:

- (i) Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624), generally known as *Mudjaddid-i alf-i thani* (“Reformer of the second millennium”), who expanded the order so successfully that, according to Djahangir, his disciples reached every town and city of India.
- (ii) Shaikh 'Abd al-Hakk of Dihli (d. 1642), who came to be known as *muhaddith* on account of his contribution to the popularisation of *Hadith* studies in India.

Shaikh Ahmad gave to the Nakshbandi *silsila* a distinct ideology, a motive power and an effective organisation. He broke away from the earlier mystic tradition in India by rejecting pantheism (*wahdat al-wujud*) and propounded his theory of *wahdat al-shuhud* (unity of the phenomenal world). He raised his voice against the innovations (*bid'at*) introduced by the Sufis, the Emperor Akbar and the '*ulama*'-i *su*' (the worldly '*ulama*').

He opposed Akbar's experiments to work out a synthesis of Hindu and Muslims religious attitudes, and declared “Muslims should follow their religion, and non-Muslims their ways, as the Kur'an enjoins ‘for you yours and for me my religion’” (*Maktubat*). As Ibn 'Arabi's

approach had sustained these religious trends, Shaikh Ahmad criticised his views trenchantly.

He did not believe in keeping away from the state and the ruler. He struggled hard to bring about a change in the outlook of the ruling classes and carried on a brisk correspondence with Mughal nobles like 'Abd al-Rahim Khan-i Khanan, Mirza 'Aziz Koka Farid Bukhari and others, and won them over to his point of view. When Jahangir ascended the throne, Farid Bukhari obtained a promise from him that he would not do anything against the *shari'a* (*Akbar and the Jesuits*, 204; *Jahangir and the Jesuits*, 3).

However, in 1619, acting on the mischievous reports of his opponents (Dara Shukoh, *Safinat al-awliya'*, 197-8), Jahangir imprisoned him in the Gwalior fortress. He was set free after a year but remained with the Emperor for some time. He spoke in the court on themes like prophethood, the Day of Judgements and the instability of reason. Shaikh Ahmad's work was zealously carried forward by his sons and descendants.

Aurangzeb came under the influence of Nakshbandi saints and showed deep respect to Khwaja Ma'sum (whose collections of letters contain several letters addressed to him) and Khwaja Sayf al-Din, Khwaja Muhammad Nakshband and others. In the ideological shift of the Mughal state as typified in the differing approaches of Akbar and Aurangzeb, the Nakshbandi saints played an important role.

The Nakshbandi mystic ideology differed from other mystic *silsilas* in several respects:

(a) It developed a dynamic, active and assertive outlook as opposed to the quiet, unobtrusive and cosmic approach of the *Cishtis*. Even their litanies and practices were coloured by this approach.

- (b) It closed the channels of ideological contact with other religions by rejecting Ibn 'Arabi's thinking. Bernier found the country in the grip of a bitter controversy between the supporters and the opponents of the pantheistic approach. The *Ma'aridj al-walayat* gives the text of a *fatwa* issued against Sirhindi's views.
- (c) Its belief in the need for providing guidance to the state created a new situation which bridged the gulf between the Sufis and the state on one side but gave birth to new problems on the other.
- (d) While other *silsilas* had propagated by teachings through *mafiyat* [q.v. in Suppl.] (utterances of *shaikhs*), the Nakshbandi saints communicated their views through *maktubat* (letters). The Nakshbandi mystical thought may, therefore, be studied in the compilations of letters left by Shaikh Ahmad, Khwaja Ma'sum, Khwaja Nakshband. Shah Ghulam 'Ali and others.
- (e) While the earlier saints had propounded the idea of *walayat* (spiritual territories assigned by the mystic master), the Nakshbandis propounded the concept of *Kayyumiyyat* (a type of spiritual axis on whom the world depended for its functioning). This concept, instead of strengthening the *silsila*, honeycombed its structure and diffused its activities. The *Rawdat al-kayyuma* reveals the anarchy of thought caused by this concept.

In the 12th/19th century, two Nakshbandi saints made significant contributions to the *silsila* by restating some of its basic ideological postures. Shah Wali Allāh (d. 1762) sought to bring about a reconciliation between the conflicting approaches of Ibn 'Arabi and Shaikh Ahmad and declared that difference between

their approaches was one of simile and metaphor. Mirza Mazhar Djan-i Dhanan (d. 1782) adopted a broad and catholic attitude towards Hinduism and accepted the Vedas as a revealed book. Shah Wali Allāh played an important role in revitalising the religious sciences, particularly *Hadith*, and by translating the Kur'an into Persian, particularly for soldiers, artisans, etc., as he himself says in the Preface to *Fath al-Rahman*.

He developed a new '*Ilm-i kalam* (scholasticism) which aimed at a fresh interpretation of Islamic teachings in the light of the new problems of the age. He played a significant role in the political developments of the period. His political letters addressed to Ahmad Shah Abdali, Muhammad Shah, Nizam al-Mulk and others reveal a clear understanding of the contemporary political situation (*Shah Wali Allāh kay siyasi maktubai*, ed. Nizami, Delhi 1969).

Kadi Thana Allāh Panipat (d. 1810), a disciple of Mirza Mazhar, made significant contribution to religious literature. His book on *fikh*, *Ma la budd min* ('Alawi Press, Shahpur (1270 A.H.) and his exegetical study of the Kur'an (*Tafsir-i Mazhari*, Nadwat al-Musannifin, Dihli (1962–70) came to be widely appreciated. His treatise *Irshad al-talibin* (Mudjtaba'i Press Dihli 1915) contains an exposition of Nakshbandi mystic principles. Other spiritual descendants of Mirza Djan-i Dhanan, like Shah Ghulam 'Ali, Shah Abu Sa'id (author of *Hidayat al-talibin*, Mudjtaba'i Press, Dihli n.d.), and Shah Ahmad Sa'id (author of *al-Fawa'id al-dabia fi ithbat al-rabita*, Meerut 1331 A.H.) played an important part in propagating the Nakshbandi ideology. The descendants of Shah Ghulam 'Ali resented British occupation of the country and supported anti-British attitudes and activities.

Of the mystic orders that have flourished in India, the Nakshbandi-Mudjaddidi *silsila* alone attracted the attention of the people of Afghanistan, Turkey and Syria. The *khankah* of Shah Ghulam 'Ali (d. 1824) had, according to Sir Syed, thousands of visitors from different Asian and African countries (*Athar al-sanudid*, Karachi 1966, 209). His disciple Khalid Kurdi established the order in Damascus and made it a significant factor in the life of the people.

Khwadja Mir Nasir (d.1758), though associated with the Mudjaddidi-Nakshbandi *silsila*, founded a new order called *Tarika-yi Muhammadi*. His son Khwadja Mir Dard (d. 1776) wrote '*Ilm al-Kitab* (Ansari Press, Dihli 1308 A.H.), a work characterised by deep insight in mystical thought, and gave a new orientation to the Nakshbandiyya discipline. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid of Rae Bareilly (d.1831) also originally belonged to the Mudjaddidi order, but set up a new method, the *Tarika-yi Nubuwwat*, broadly within the framework of the Nakshbandiyya.

An important aspect of the Nakshbandiyya order was its virility of thought and capacity to differ from its elders. Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi differed from his mentor on the question of pantheism; Mirza Mazhar Djan-i Dhanan disagreed with his elders on their approach to Hinduism, and Shah Ghulam 'Ali differed from him on this point. Sayyid Ahmad Shahid disagreed with Shah 'Abd al-Aziz (d. 1823) on the concept of *tasawwur-i shaikh* (visualising the spiritual mentor in spiritual practices). Thus the main characteristic of the Nakshbandiyya *silsila* in India has been its rejection of innovations (*bid'at*) and its involvement in political struggles.

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Nasafi, Aziz ibn Muhammad (13th Century)

'Aziz ibn Muhammad al-Nasafi was born in the beginning of the thirteenth century in Nasaf, a town that was situated some four days' travelling distance from Bukhara. This was the era for seeking knowledge, and the city of Bukhara was the centre of learning for it had achieved the reputation of being one of the great cities not only of the region, but of the Islamic world. Juwayni, a contemporary historian, described Bukhara as:

"...the cupola of Islam and is in those regions like unto the City of Peace. Its environs are adorned with the brightness of the light of doctors and jurists and its surroundings embellished with the rarest of high attainments. Since ancient times it has in every age been the place of assembly of the great savants of every religion. Now, the derivation of Bukhara is from 'bukhar' which in the language of the Magians signifies centre of learning."

Whether Nasafi was in Nasaf or Bukhara or even in Khwarazm among the circle of Najm al-Din Kubra in 1220 when the Mongols appeared is not known, but since his date of birth probably occurred around 1200, he would certainly have been old enough and aware of the events that were to follow.

In 1220, the security and civilised environment of Central Asia and Iran was shattered. One contemporary historian commented:

"Who would find it easy to describe the ruin of Islam and the Muslims? If anyone were to say that at no time since the creation of man by the great God had the world experienced anything like it, he would only be telling the truth."

In February 1220, the Mongol hordes descended upon Bukhara, and from the pulpit of the Friday mosque, Chingiz Khan declared:

"O people! Know that you have committed great sins and that great ones among you have committed these sins. If you ask me what proof I have for these words, I say it is because I am the punishment of God. If you had not committed great sins, God would not have sent a punishment like me upon you."

One survivor of the destruction described what had happened:

"They came, they sacked, they burned, they slew, they plundered, they departed. Juwayni believed that Bukhara had escaped lightly, Chingiz Khan being satisfied with slaughter and looting only once, but not going to the extreme of a general massacre."

Having captured the major cities of Transoxania, Chingiz Khan rested during the summer just outside of Nasafi's birth-place on the plains of Nasaf. His forces then proceeded to conquer all the major cities including Khwarazm which was taken in 1221. Najm al-Din Kubra refused to flee the advancing Mongol armies and was killed in the vain defence of the city. Those cities that surrendered escaped with little damage, but those which resisted suffered a terrible retribution.

The case of Nishapur is perhaps, the most horrific, for the command was given to destroy the town completely and kill all life including cats and dogs. A daughter of Chingiz Khan had lost her husband during a preliminary skirmish at Nishapur, and once she entered the town with her escort, she had all the survivors slain (save four hundred artisans who were valued for their crafts, and who were carried off to Turkestan). They severed the heads from the slain and proceeded to construct three huge mountains of skulls; one for men, another for women, and one for the children. It was estimated that 1,747,000 people were killed in the massacre at Nishapur, and although this is an exaggeration, at least one can begin to see the proportion of the destruction and terror that the Mongol invasion left in its wake.

Chingiz Khan's hordes were diverted by other issues and departed from the Middle East, however, the Mongols returned to Transoxania in 1254 under Hulegu. Hulegu Khan was the younger brother of Kubilai Khan and he entered Central Asia and Iran to crush the Isma'ilis. Having achieved this, he advanced to Baghdad, the capital of the decaying Abbasid Caliphate. The city was sacked and looted and the Caliph was taken prisoner but his ambassadors warned Hulegu that should the deputy of God's messenger be killed,

"...the whole world will be disorganised, the Sun will hide its face, the rain will cease to fall and the plants will no longer grow."

In addition, they predicted that

"...if Hulegu spills the blood of the Caliph on the ground, he and his infidel Mongols will be swallowed up by the earth."

Describing the Mongols' predicament, the Muslims said:

"the accursed Hulegu feared that if he let the Caliph live, the Muslims would rise up in revolt, and that if he slew him and his blood was spilled on the ground, there would be an earthquake."

Hulegu settled the matter by having the Caliph rolled up in a carpet and trampled to death.

The second Mongol invasion in fact turned into an occupation, Hulegu being the first of the Il-Khan dynasty. Of course, this had important consequences for Muslims since Chingiz Khan and the Mongols had no special respect for Islam (indeed, during the sacking of Bukhara, the Mongols had used *Koranic* stands in the Friday Mosque as mangers for their horses, and worse still, for devout Muslims was that leaves of the *Koran* were trodden underfoot). Yet, the Mongols were generally tolerant of all religions, and Chingiz Khan had decreed the freedom of religion:

"Kubilai pursued the traditional Mongol policy of toleration for all creeds, whose priests, imams and bonzes continued to be exempt from taxation, and he allowed but two partial exceptions, by suppressing the literature of Taoists and banning the propaganda of the Muslims, and this policy was generally followed by subsequent rulers".

However, the establishment of all religions on a level par with Islam, coupled with the murder of the Caliph, must have thrown Muslims into paroxysms of fear that the end of the world was drawing nigh. It was the first time that Muslims were to suffer the indignity of sharing the same status as Christians and Jews which also meant that non-Muslims were no longer obliged to pay the *jizya* tax. Moreover, Muslims must have felt greater indignation and humiliation since their religion was reduced by the Mongols to the same degree as idol-worshipping Buddhism and Shamanism.

The Mongol rulers themselves embraced a mixture of Buddhism and Shamanism, for example, at Hulegu's death, several beautiful young women were chosen as "his be fellows" for the journey to the next world which may have been an old Mongol religious custom. Abaqa (Hulegu's son and second Il-Khan) "followed the path of the Buddhists" and at the same time remained attached to native Mongol beliefs, as he is known to have enjoyed the company of a magician named Baraq. Shaman influence remained under the fourth Il-Khan, Arghun (1284–91), who practised an exorcism of purification by fire which involved walking by two fires while those around him recited incantations and sprinkled water.

It was also suggested by some Mongol advisors to the Il-Khan Oljeitu (1304–1316) that he undertake this ceremony (although it is not known if it was performed). In fact, Arghun combined Shamanism with his interest in Buddhism, for it is known that he had priests brought from India to conduct Buddhist ceremonies. An interesting account by the famed Kubrawi Sufi, 'Ala' al-Dawla Simani (d. 1336) reveals the nature of religious interaction during Arghun's reign. Simnani was a member of the Mongol court but had a vision which made him embrace Sufism. After attempting an escape from the court, he was captured and brought back by the Mongols to the city of Sultaniyya.

"There, he [Arghun] had assembled Buddhist priests from India, Kashmir, Tibet and Ighur, along with the ascetics and the religious leaders of the idolaters around him, to engage in disputation with me. So I discussed and disputed with them. But God Almighty lent me strength, and I was able to refute all of them, and to disgrace and humiliate them."

Arghun was delighted and begged Simnani to stay with him, permitting him to remain in his dervish clothing. Nevertheless, the true extent of Buddhist influence cannot be evaluated, although as Bausani has commented:

"Iran must have been full of Buddhist temples—we hear of them only when they were destroyed in 1295–6."

One interesting point concerning religion under the Mongols is their favourable attitude towards Nestorian Christians. This position may well have been a result of the political dynamics of the time, for Hulegu suffered a defeat at the hands of the Mamluks at 'Ayn Jalut in 1260, and subsequently the Il-Khans found themselves facing enemies on several fronts; the Mamluks to the west, the Golden Horde in the north and the Chagatai Mongols in the east. Therefore, the well-disposed attitude towards Christianity on the part of the Il-Khans may have been directed at the Byzantine Emperor who was a rival of the Mamluks in the Mediterranean. The extent to which Christianity had penetrated into the Il-Khan court is illustrated by the fact that both Hulegu and his son Aqaba had Christian wives (Aqaba's wife being none less than the daughter of the Byzantine Emperor).

Indeed, a Christian named Rabban Sauma was Aqaba's envoy to Rome and at the Vatican he claimed that many Mongols had converted to Christianity. Rabban Sauma's disciple, named Mark, became the supreme head of all Nestorians in Asia (under the protection of Abaqa) and later he was to baptise Arghun's son as Nicholas (in honour of Pope Nicholas IV). It is also during this period that the Gospels were translated into Persian, but the extent to which the Sufis and Muslims were aware of Christian doctrine is unclear. Although some mystics including Nasafi quoted passages which

bear striking resemblance to those in the Gospels, these may have been little more than idioms that were popular at the time.

The displacement of Islam as the official religion of Iran and central Asia lasted until the reign of the Il-Khan Teguder, (1282—1284) who converted to Islam and adopted the name Ahmad. Although his reign was brief and this changing of religion did little to affect the lot of the Muslim, it is perhaps, indicative of the influence that Islam, the belief of the populace, was having upon the Il-Khan court. Islam finally regained its predominant position in the region when the Il-Khan Ghazan (1295—1304) accepted Islam. His conversion is of particular interest because the ceremony was performed by Sadr al-Din Ibrahim Hammuya (1246—1322) who was the son of Sa'd al-Din Hammuya (Nasafi's Sufi master). In addition, it appears that Ghazan was initiated into Sufism in this ceremony.

Ironically, the religious policy of the early Il-Khans may have contributed to the strengthening of Islam, in particular of Sufism, in the whole region of Central Asia and Iran. Fear of the Mongols and the difficulties of life subsequent to the Mongol invasions may have directed people towards hope in the next world and not in this world. Such a perspective is so pervasive in Nasafi's works:

Oh dervish! Know for sure that we are travellers and certainly we pass the time hour by hour. If there is wealth it will pass, and if there is affliction it will pass. If you have wealth do not put your trust in it because it is unclear what will happen in the next hour. If you have affliction, do not be excessively sad because it is not clear what will occur in the next hour. You should try not to cause harm to anyone and as far as possible you should try to bring comfort.

Sufism provided a relief for the general Islamic populace, and in all probability, many individuals found solace in meetings at the *khanaqah*, and in *dhikr* and *sama'* gatherings. Whole communities were affiliated to particular Sufi shaikh:

"At the beginning of the thirties of the thirteenth century, the majority of the population in Balkh were *murids* (followers) of Shaikh Baha' al-Din Walad."

This factor, aided by the Mongol tolerance of religion may help explain why Sufism flourished during the Il-Khan period, to which the mystical works of 'Aziz Nasafi, Sa'd al-Din Hammuya (d. 1252), Najm al-Din Razi (d. 1256), Sayf al-Din Bakharzi (d. 1261), 'Ala' al-Dawla Simnani and Awhad al-Din Balyani (d. 1288) all testify. Moreover, the region of Central Asia and Iran under the Il-Khan's was still free and open enough to receive the intellectual and spiritual inheritance of great mystics such as Ibn 'Arabi and Jalal al-Din Rumi who lived outside of the Mongol regions.

Aside from the religious policies of the Mongols, life in Central Asia and Iran was affected in a whole number of ways. Mongol influence was felt predominantly in the north, for Abaqa had fixed the capital at Tabriz. Concerning the influence of the Mongols in the north, one scholar commented:

"under the system set up by Hulegu and his immediate successors, Mongol rule was direct only in Khurasan and elsewhere in northern Iran, except in Gilan and in parts of Iraq. Fars, Kirman and Shabakara, with Hurmuz and Qais on the Persian Gulf in the south, Luristan in the west and Hirat in the east, [were] all contained within the Mongol frame-work under the native ruling families, who suffered little interference and in some cases outlasted the Il-Khans."

By all accounts, the Mongols in the north were rapacious in extorting and appropriating everything and anything from the native peoples who had survived. Finding any source of income must have been difficult enough, and as a result of the destruction of two invasions it was estimated that in 1295, five out of every ten houses in the sacked cities of Iran were uninhabited. Tax collecting was arbitrary and the Mongols imposed new, more severe taxes upon the native population. For example, the "*tamgha*" was a tax of 10% of the value of each commercial transaction which replaced the Muslim *zakat* of 2.5%.

The *jizya* tax was abolished for non-Muslim early in the Il-Khan period (to be re-established by Ghazan) and was replaced with a general poll tax. In Transoxania, the highest rate for this tax was fifteen dinars and in 1253, when Arghun was in control of that region, he began to levy seventy dinars from every ten men, turning the maximum into an average.

"By extracting taxes greater than the people could pay, and having them reduced to poverty, they began to torment and afflict them. Those who tried to hide were caught and put to death. From those who could not pay they took away their children."

The Iranian economy suffered tremendous losses during the early Il-Khan period. It has been estimated that in their desire for wealth and to finance their campaigns, the Mongols levied taxes twenty to thirty times each year:

"the Mongol grenades were the principle culprits; a conquered territory in their opinion existed only to be mulcted, and the terror of their name unlawfully exacted vast sums from the peasants, artisans and merchants."

This resulted in the peasants abandoning their land, and nine-tenths of cultivable land

went to waste. It has been shown that in one region of Fars, 700,000 ass-loads of grain were yielded annually between 949–983, and in the aftermath of the Mongol invasion and its consequences, this total was reduced to 300,000 ass-loads in 1260.

To say that Nasafi lived during the best of times and the worst of times may not be too much of an exaggeration. The thirteenth century was a century of extremes; on the one hand, it developed a tradition of knowledge whose legacy is still regarded as a treasure by millions not only in the Middle East but all around the world, and on the other hand it suffered the devastation and dread of the Mongol invasions and occupation. Nasafi's life spans the whole course of this era, for he was born in Nasaf around the very beginning of the thirteenth century and died towards its end. This is clear because in *Maqсад-i aqsa*, Nasafi commented that he was eighty years of age, and this work was compiled some time before 1281.

Of his youth and early adulthood nothing at all is known, indeed, only fragments of information concerning his life emerge from his works. The first of these is his association with an affiliate of the Kubrawi order, Shaikh Sa'd al-Din Hammuya, who Nasafi served in Khurasan. Nasafi also received guidance from an un-named shaikh in Bukhara, and if this shaikh was Hammuya, then Nasafi's association with him must have occurred some time during the 1240s and before 1252. When Hammuya died. (Prior to this period, Hammuya was seeking knowledge further west in the Islamic world). One famous Sufi writer, the great Persian poet and theosopher Jami (1414–1492) believed this un-named shaikh was indeed Hammuya. A recent work, however, has suggested that this un-named shaikh (referred

to by Nasafi as "Our shaikh") could have been Sayf al-Din Bakharzi.

That Nasafi enjoyed companionship with Hammuya during the 1240s means that we are still left with a huge gap of perhaps, forty years, from Nasafi's birth until his meeting with Hammuya. A portion of this may have been taken up with Nasafi's study of medicine, which lasted several years, and although it is not clear when he commenced this study, one can speculate that it was before the encounter with Hammuya, for Nasafi was probably too old in the 1240s to commence such a difficult field of learning. A knowledge of medicine was one that was, however, fairly typical of the Sufis of the Kubrawi order for Najm al-Din Kubra and his associates Farid al-Din 'Attar (d. 1220) and Majd al-Din Baghdadi (d. 1219) all spent some time in this occupation.

Aside from enjoying the companionship of Sa'd-Din Hammuya, Nasafi may have been spiritually inspired by a son of one of the commanders of Sultan Jalal al-Din of Bukhara. In a sixteenth century text, Nasafi is called a lover ('*ashiq*) and intoxicated (*mast*) with reference to this youth. This was a relatively common phenomena in medieval Persian Sufism, for one finds similar accounts of Jalal al-Din Rumi who witnessed beauty in the character traits of Shams-i Tabrizi (d. 1284), Salah al-Din Zarkub (d. 1258) and Husam al-Din Chalabi (d. 1284).

By 1260, Nasafi had acquired his own circle of novices who wished to learn from him. His first work appears to be *Kitab-i tanzil* which was composed at the request of his followers. The first six chapters were written in Nasaf. By 1261, Nasafi had moved back to Bukhara where he continued his work on *Kitab-i tanzil*. From this period until 1273, nothing is known,

perhaps, Nasafi continued to teach his theosophy to his circle of dervishes. However, his life-style was to change dramatically following the events of 22 January 1273:

"In that year the infidel armies came to Transoxania and they destroyed the province, and at that time this helpless one was in the city of Bukhara with the community of dervishes. At dawn on Friday, at the beginning of the month of Rajab, we left the city—or should I say, that they forced us to make an exit—and we passed the waters of Khurasan and arrived at the cities of Khursan. From that time onwards, each day we were in one location and each night at another, having no security anywhere".

The infidel armies belonged to the Il-Khan Abaqa, whose rivalry and dispute with the Chagatai Mongols was a result of the division of Chingiz Khan's empire. Bukhara was situated on the border between the Il-Khan and Chagatai areas, and friction between the two sides frequently lead to demonstrations of force. The attack of 1273 was brutal and Nasafi was most likely very lucky to escape with his life. The religious schools and books were burdened and as many as 50,000 people were killed. It was said that no living creature appeared in Bukhara for seven years after the massacre.

It was impossible for Nasafi to return to Bukhara, so he made his way westwards into northern Iran to visit the tomb of his shaikh, Sa'd al-Din Hammuya, which was situated in Bahrabad, near Juwayn. Perhaps, the Il-Khan control here was strong, because Nasafi moved southwards, and he composed works at Kirman, Shiraz, Isfahan and Abarquh. The date of Nasafi's death is not known, but M. Mole has mentioned one of Nasafi's manuscripts which bears the date of 1291. However, his death could have happened anytime between 1281 and

1300. It was on the night of 27 August 1281 that Nasafi was in Abarquh and had a dream in which the Prophet Muhammad told him not to reveal the remaining chapters of *Kahf al-haq'a'iq* until seven hundred years had elapsed since the hegira (i.e. 1300 A.D.). Nasafi had already composed the first seven of ten chapters for the dervishes, and in all remaining manuscripts of this work, only these seven chapters appear. This suggests that Nasafi passed away before the deadline in the year 1300.

Thus, very little is known about Nasafi's personal life, which perhaps, is not so surprising since his works were of a didactic nature. In his treatises, the advice to seek knowledge is predominant and perhaps, Nasafi was speaking of himself when he commented:

"The People of Gnosis... have spent many years in the service of Shaikhs in religious effort and spiritual discipline, and they have actualised knowledge of form and knowledge of meaning, and they supposed that they had reached and recognised God. Then after seventy years they understood that they knew nothing, and everything which they had understood was all imagination and fancy; and they saw themselves as ignorant, incapable and helpless."

"The People of Gnosis... have spent periods among the 'Ulama', periods among the Philosophers, periods among the Transmigrations, periods among the Sufis and periods among the People of Unity. Each group said, "The truth is with us and falsity is with the others."

The People of Gnosis thought to themselves that if each one opposes the others then they cannot all be true because the truth is only one. So they knew for sure that the truth was not with any of them.

One last factor which appears in Nasafi's works is fear and the danger in expressing the esoteric dimension of Islam. This aspect of Nasafi's life is evident in his dream in which the Prophet warned him not to reveal the remaining chapters of *Kashf al-haq'a'iq*:

"Know that in 1281, I was in the province of Fars in the city of Abarquh. It was midnight on the 27 August and this helpless one had sat down and placed a lamp nearby and was writing something. Then sleep overcame me and I saw my father enter by the door. I stood up and greeted him, and he returned the greeting and said, "The Prophet Muhammad is sitting with Shaikh Abu 'Abdullah Khafif and Shaikh Sa'd al-Din Hammuya in the Friday Mosque of Abarquh and they are waiting for you." I went with my father to the mosque. I saw the Prophet sitting with them and I greeted them all and they returned the greeting and each one of them embraced me. I sat down and the Prophet said, "Today Shaikh Sa'd al-Din Hammuya has spoken much about you and he is worried and concerned about your circumstances. He said that all the meanings that he assembled in four hundred books 'Aziz has assembled in ten chapters and although he attempted to write them in an obscure and secretive fashion, 'Aziz has attempted to explain clearly and he fears that some bad fortune or harm comes to you."

Another indication of the conditions that prevailed when Nasafi was compiling his works is found in *Maqсад-i aqsa*:

Now I myself do not give my own opinions so that I cannot be accused of infidelity; I report and I say that the People of Unity explain in this way and the Sufis say in that way. O dervish, accept the discourse of this helpless one and recognise which I have set out, and know for sure where the Truth lies.

Nasafi's reluctance to reveal his own views is not surprising, given the turbulent times in

which he lived. In the generation after Nasafi, the mere possession of Ibn 'Arabi's works was prohibited in Egypt, and such works were confiscated and burnt if found. Moreover, the 'Ulama' confirmed that any person advocating the ideas of Ibn 'Arabi would be executed.

Nasafi's Works: There are many features in Nasafi's treatises which enable scholars to identify his works (although one cannot exclude the possibility of someone else using his name and copying his style and content). The first distinctive aspect in Nasafi's works is the simple but lucid, non-verbose Persian style. His predominant aim is that the reader understands his message and in order to achieve this Nasafi presents each topic from several perspectives, adding at the end of each explanation:

"I known you have not fully understood so I will explain in another way."

This non-condescending style, his direct manner of calling the reader 'Dervish' or 'Dear Friend,' the sections of 'advice' at the end of each chapter (in some of his works) in which he offers comfort and encouragement to the Sufi novice and his humility and self-rebuking nature endear Nasafi to the reader and one is soon drawn into a warm, intimate relationship with him. The fact that Nasafi used Persian (except for Arabic quotations from the *Koran*, *hadith* and other sayings) is also of some importance because he can be regarded as among the first of Ibn 'Arabi's commentators who wrote in Persian, thus spreading the message among the non-Arabic speaking population of Central Asia and Iran.

Secondly, Nasafi's commentaries are both forth-right and simple in revealing the non-manifest (*batin*) dimension of Islam. He speaks directly to his readers, advising them to pass

over from the formal dimension of Islam to the esoteric and indicative of this is Nasafi's dream in which Sa'd al-Din Hammuya states that he had written over four hundred treatises in an obscure and secretive fashion, whereas Nasafi has revealed all of these non-manifest secrets in just ten chapters.

One of the most striking of all of the features in Nasafi's works is the way in which he presents the arguments of each group, that is, he lets each group speak for itself. His chapters frequently begin by:

"The People of the Holy Law say that...or The Philosophers say... or The People of Unity say.... If not employing such labels, Nasafi refers to the People of the Holy Law as the People of Imitation and the Philosophers are called the People of definite proof and certain demonstration, and the People of Unity are the People of Unveiling."

The reason that Nasafi does not reveal his own opinions are firstly that he may have been afraid and so he hid his own beliefs under the shelter of other groups and secondly, he was attempting to describe the beliefs of all the major interpretations of Islam in an impartial manner. While it is true that Nasafi was not the first to undertake such a project, he was most likely the first to record the various beliefs in a non-partisan way. In fact, his own dervishes had requested that Nasafi compose his treatises conveying the varying Islamic beliefs without prejudice and without dissimulation and without making them great and without belittling them.

Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111) had studied all the different Islamic beliefs in his attempt to realise the Truth and the results of his intellectual and spiritual investigations are set out in his books in a systematic fashion, describing the beliefs of the 'Ulama',

Philosophers and Sufis. However, his preference for the Sufi interpretation of Islam caused him to disparage those beliefs which were at variance with his own, and he describes the Philosophers as "heretics and irreligious men."

Nasafi's own portrayal of the different Islamic beliefs did not include such derogatory remarks, and Meier's comment that Nasafi may be considered as a "fore-runner of modern comparative religion" captures the essence of Nasafi's spirit. The reality is that while Nasafi was more sympathetic towards the Sufis, he attempted to discover the reality and truth behind other beliefs. This is neatly expressed by Nasafi in his explanation of similar, but different *hadith*.

In one *hadith* it is stated that "the first thing God created was intelligence" and in another, "the first thing God created was the Pen" and in another, "the first thing God created was the Throne" and there are others like these.

In the *Koran* and *hadith* there are many references to the First Intelligence. Know that this first intelligence has been referred to through different attributions and view-point.

"Oh dervish! If one thing has been named in a hundred ways, in truth there is no multiplicity in that one thing, despite its one hundred names."

Yet, Nasafi's method of ascribing certain beliefs to particular groups does have the disadvantage in that one is never quite sure when that discourse comes to an end, or whether the beliefs of the same group are carried over into the following discourse (which may not be attributed to any particular group). Moreover, the difficulty in identifying Nasafi's own beliefs has lead to several contemporary scholars seeing Nasafi's own beliefs within those which are

attributed to other groups (such as the Transmigrationists). It is more likely that Nasafi believed that the explanations of other groups revealed an aspect of the truth, depending upon which station the way-farer had reached.

Another distinctive point in Nasafi's works is the similarity in content, and this reaches the extent that there are passages which appear in different books virtually word for word, or else the imagery is exactly the same. One reason for this is that Nasafi's works were all composed during the latter part of his life and by that time his theosophy had matured to such a degree that he was able to present his teachings in a systematic, coherent manner. There is no development from one work to the next (with the exception of *Kashf-i sirat*, which presents several problems that will be highlighted later), only the same message is presented, that is, the unity of being and the perfectibility of man through ascetic discipline and religious effort.

So, if Nasafi had one fundamental message, the question that must be asked is why did he not write one large book which contained the whole package of his theosophy instead of writing several works which involved a lot of repetition. The reason may be due to Nasafi's teaching in several areas and having different groups of followers. Thus, Nasafi may have composed *Kitab-i Tanzil* in Nasaf and Bukhara at the request of the dervishes and then he composed *al-Insan al-kamil* on the Iranian plateau for another group of dervishes, adding new expressions which he thought would be understood easily. This is not to say that his books are completely the same, because this is not the case. For example, *Manazil as-sa'irin* contains discussions which are not found in *Kashf al-haqa'iq* or *Maqsad-i aqsa*.

Ontological Faces: Abu Hamid Ghazali's acceptance of Sufism as a genuine expression of Islamic belief and his composition of treatises in the field of speculative Sufism (*'irfan-i nazari*) in the language of the *Koran* and philosophers may be regarded as something of a water-shed in the history of Sufism. After Ghazali, numerous Sufi texts were composed in a similar style by affiliates of Sufi orders that had established roots in the Muslim world stretching from Andalusia to Central Asia.

The movement of explaining Sufism in the lingua franca of the 'intelligentsia' of the day perhaps reached a pinnacle in the profound and voluminous theosophy of Ibn 'Arabi, whose writings required and deserved much study and meditation by learned scholars. For the majority of the Islamic populace, his message was delivered in a more simplified and summarised form by interpreters. Some scholars have seen 'Aziz Nasafi's treatises as "popularising the teachings of Ibn 'Arabi" and thus, the Greatest Shaikh's message penetrated into areas such as Iran and Central Asia.

This section is an attempt to summarise Nasafi's ontological teachings and in so doing, show the similarities between his ideas and Ibn 'Arabi's vast corpus of teachings. Nasafi's audience were Persian speakers and were probably beginners on the Sufi path, so his treatises provided his dervishes with plenty to contemplate and served as a basis from which they could advance to the texts of the Greatest Shaikh (Ibn 'Arabi) himself.

In this section, Nasafi's ontology is discussed by focusing upon one chapter from the treatise *Kitab-i tanzil* (the Book of the Descent). It is hoped that this method covers all the main points on the one hand, and also that the reader will catch something of the flow, directness and

simplicity of the original text (which are distinctive characteristics of Nasafi's works).

Incomparability and Similarity: There has been a tendency by scholars to explain Ibn 'Arabi's theosophy in the simple term 'unity of existence' (*wahdat al-wujud*) and to label the world view of the *wujudi* school pantheistic or monist. A more suitable way to characterise this theosophy is not unity of existence (a term which Ibn 'Arabi did not use) but He not He. This axiom neatly encapsulates the Islamic teaching of God's incomparability (*tanzih*) and similarity (*tashbih*). 'Aziz Nasafi's works should also be considered in the same light. The idea of incomparability is expressed in the *Koran* that

"Nothing is like Him,"

and in the *hadith* that

"none knows God but God" and "reflect upon all things but reflect not upon God's essence."

Similarity is also found in the Islamic tradition, perhaps, the best example being the famous *hadith* that

"God made Adam in His own form."

Adam is, of course, the archetypal human being, so each person's essence in fact is a mirror of God's essence.

From a *tanzih* perspective, Nasafi comments upon a *hadith* frequently discussed by Sufis that says:

"He who knows himself knows his Lord. O dear friend! The pure essence and Holy Face of the Truth is so great that an individual's intelligence cannot encompass Him; rather, His exalted self is too high for another person to discover Him as He really is."

Each one of the Prophets and Friends became aware of God Most High in accordance with

their own preparedness and station and each one of them told the people in accordance with the preparedness and station of the listeners. What they knew compared to what they did not know is a drop in the ocean, and what they said compared to what they understood is also a drop in the ocean. No-one understands his self in the way it is, and he cannot understand. The extremity of man's knowledge is that point where he knows that he cannot know God as God really is. So, according to the knowledge one has of one's self, one also has knowledge of God.

Nasafi then proceeds to say that even the most intelligent of philosophers and even the Prophets and Friends, cannot understand God, each believing their own knowledge to be the ultimate vision of God. It is impossible to reach God's essence, which is infinite and beyond man's sense perception and intelligence ('*aql*):

"Just as the seekers and the students who are counted among the People of Thought and Reasoning do not like or accept the discourse which their intelligence does not attain to and just as they judge it correct to deny one another's discourse, because there are ranks (*darajat*) of intelligence and because the wisdom (*hikmat*) in each thing is infinite, so also the way-farers and spiritual warriors who are accounted as the People of Unveiling and Contemplation do not like or accept the spiritual station (*maqam*) which their view does not reach. They judge it correct to deny one another's stations, because there are ranks in unveiling and [God's] self-disclosure (*tajalli*) is infinite. So, in whatever station a man is, it is necessary that he makes this prayer his litany: 'My Lord! Increase me in knowledge,' because if man could live for a thousand years, and in this thousand years he is [busy] in searching and advancing (*taraqqi*), he would discover and understand something everyday

which he had not discovered or understood the day before..."

"O dear friend! If someone fancies that he has understood whatever can be understood and has discovered whatever can be found, this fancy is his idol and this wretched person is an idol worshipper. The reality of an idol is that it keeps a person busy with itself and it becomes an obstacle in his searching and advance".

Yet, it is necessary to make an attempt to understand oneself (and in so doing, God's existence) for He who knows himself knows his Lord. This is a difficult task to undertake and understand as Nasafi himself comments:

"A person may ask, 'How can God's essence which is non-delimited and infinite be considered as together with *Jabarut*, *Malakut* and *Mulk*?' The Sufis have asked many questions about this and the answer to these questions is extremely difficult and hard. But it is necessary to give an answer. If you want to know that it is difficult, I will give an indication: understanding the existence of non-delimitation and infinity, and understanding the existence of something else with that such that the non-delimited and infinite possess limits and boundaries, direction, division, separation, breaking apart and coming together is extremely difficult and hard."

The meaning behind such remarks by Nasafi is that man should reach the essence of God as far as it is possible, that is, he should reach the essence of God as seen through *tashbih*. Thus, whenever Nasafi speak of reaching God's essence, one should read with two eyes (to borrow an analogy from Ibn 'Arabi), that is, with one eye of *tashbih* and with one eye of *tanzih*.

Having given a *tanzih* warning in the opening pages of *Kitab-i tanzil*, Nasafi then

devotes the rest of the chapter to the *tashbih* dimension. It is typical that the *tashbih* section takes up about ninety percent of the whole chapter, for Sufism emphasises the love between God and man, that is, the dimension which can be known. As 'Ali b. Abi Talib is reported to have said: "I only worship a Lord I see." This *tashbih* position is explained by Nasafi from six different points of view, that is, six ontological perspectives, all of which are the spiritual stations (*maqam*) of the Friends (*awliya*), who are those closest to God.

Nasafi's Six Faces: In the Sufi tradition, a spiritual station (*maqam*) describes a relationship between the way-farer and God. This station is acquired (*kasbi*), based upon the way-farer's own spiritual effort, and the knowledge that he actualises in a particular station remains with him even if he progresses on to another station. Spiritual stations are often discussed in the Sufi manuals along with *hal*, or a spiritual state, which is a bestowal by God upon the way-farer which takes place in a particular station. Nasafi does not employ the term *hal* in *Kitab-i tanzil*, but but uses *waqt* (present moment) a technical word discussed by Sufis prior to Nasafi, including Hujwiri and al-Ghazali.

The latter two classified the mystical experience into three stages; the first stage is *waqt*, the second is *hal* and the third is stability (*tamkin*). It is not possible to investigate the differences between these three here, suffice to say that the *waqt* is the lowest stage and stability is the highest stage. Acquisition of the station by the way-farer and God's bestowal of the *waqt* is referred to by Nasafi at the beginning of each of the stations:

"O dear friend! There is a station for the way-farer, and in that station there is a *waqt*. When

he reaches that station and enters into it, and when that *waqt* reaches him..."

The *waqt* is based upon the *hadith* which states:

"I have a *waqt* with God when no angel brought nigh or Prophet sent embraces me."

This *waqt* has been interpreted by some as Muhammad's ascent, referred to in the *Koran*:

"Glory be to Him, who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Farthest Mosque."

According to Islamic tradition, Muhammad rose from his bed and journeyed with Gabriel from Arabia to Jerusalem and then upwards through all the heavens until he reached the final boundary of the heavens. At this point, Muhammad had to proceed alone to witness God, for Gabriel said that if he went further towards God he would be burnt.

The *waqt* is not permanent (unlike the station and the knowledge associated with it); it can last less than one hour and may last for longer than ten days. In another work, Nasafi mentions moments experienced by various Sufis. Our shaikh stated:

"My spirit spent thirteen days in the heavens and then returned to my body. And during those thirteen days my body was like that of a dead man and had no concern for anything. Others who were present said that my body had been in such a way for thirteen days."

And another dear one stated:

"My spirit remained there for twenty days and then came back to the body."

And another good companion said:

"My spirit spent forty days and then returned to the body."

He remembered everything that he saw in those forty days.

Although the identity of the Friends within these six stations is unclear in the majority of cases, by comparing the contents of these stations with the discourses that appear in other works by Nasafi, one can conclude that the beliefs of the 'Ulama', Philosophers, Transmigrationists and the People of Unity are all mentioned. This shows Nasafi at his best, prepared to endorse the beliefs of groups other than the Sufis if he sees truth in them. Yet, typically, he does not claim that any one group represents his own beliefs. The person with real knowledge witnesses the truth (through experience) in all of the stations:

"At the end of journeying, each way-farer is in one of these stations, and one of these stations has become his aim and he remains there. There are few way-farers who are informed of all six stations, and until the way-farer discovers the information of all six stations and sees the correctness (*salah*) and corruption of each one (not through imitation (*taqlid*) and supposition (*guman*) but through unveiling and contemplation) he will neither reach the end point of the journey nor be informed of the extremity of the journey nor discern the truth from the false nor recognise God."

This idea that the way-farer has to recognise the truth in all expressions of belief is perhaps, the fundamental element in Nasafi's theosophy, for it reveals the reality of "no repetition in God's self-discipline" (*la takrar fi 'l-tajalli*) which is the basis of the all embracing nature of Sufism. This idea is discussed in detail within one of the six stations and so it is not necessary to develop it any further at this point.

The First Station: The first station is the shortest of all the stations, perhaps an indication

that Nasafi did not regard it as a profound ontological explanation of the relationship between God and man. God is explained as the essential existent (*mawjud li-dhatihi*) and He is also termed the *Jabarut*. This stands in opposition to the world ('*alam*) which is an existent through other than itself (*mawjud li-ghayrihi*) and comprises *Mulk* and *Malakut*. *Mulk* is the world of sensory existents (*mawjudat-i hissi*) and *Malakut* is the world of intelligible existents (*mawjudat-i 'aqli*). God, or *Jabarut*, is real and eternal existence, whereas the world (*Mulk* and *Malakut*) have metaphorical and created existence.

The world is created by God from non-existence through His attributes, that is, through His knowledge, desire and power. These three attributes of knowledge, desire and power were commonly discussed by the theologians in the process of creation; in order to create something, God must have knowledge of it; then He must have the desire to create that thing; thirdly, He must have the power to bring it in to existence. Nasafi then follows the standard explanation of the theologians that there are seven attributes of essence (*sifat-i dhat*); the seven are life, knowledge, desire, power, speaking, hearing and seeing. Of course, God's attributes are infinite, but apart from the foregoing seven, they are all attributes of acts.

In this station, creation is seen as a process whereby God makes something existent from non-existence, in other words, it is an interpretation reflecting the idea of *creatio ex nihilo*. This is the meaning behind making something exist (*hast gardanid*) from non-existence (*nisti*) and this position is reflected in a small sentence "God was and nothing is else was," which is in fact a *hadith*, Creation from nothing typically taken by Nasafi as the belief of the People of the Holy Law (*ahl-i*

shari'at), (who are called the 'Ulama' in other works):

"Know that the wise men have had differences of opinion about the possibility of non-existence becoming existence, and existence becoming non-existence. The 'Ulama' and *Fuqaha* believe that it is possible for non-existence to become existence and for existence to become non-existence. This is because the world was non-existent and God most different Sufi schools all represent some aspect of truth and are therefore, genuine expressions of Islamic belief."

Imagination: In the previous section, it was shown that Nasafi described existence through the worlds of *Mulk*, *Malakut* and *Jabarut*. Of the six spiritual stations, the most sophisticated is the second where God is other than the words of *Mulk*, *Malakut* and *Jabarut*. Similar discussions to this second spiritual station occur in most of Nasafi's other works and therefore, it is likely that he preferred such a position to any others. This ontological ordering is neatly encapsulated in *Manazil al-sa'irin*:

"Know that *Mulk* is the world of testimony and *Malakut* is the invisible world ('*alam-i ghayb*) and *Jabarut* is the invisible, invisible world ('*alam-i ghayb-i ghayb*) and God Most High is the invisible, invisible, invisible world ('*alam-i ghayb-i ghayb-i ghayb-i*)."

"O dervish! *Jabarut*, which is the invisible, invisible world, is the world of potentiality and the world of potentiality is above *Mulk* and *Malakut*. This is because existents are actual in *Mulk* and *Malakut* and they are potential in *Jabarut* and potential existents are prior to actual existents. First is readiness (*salahiyyat*) and then is special quality (*khassiyat*). In addition, potential existents have no beginning and actual existents have a beginning."

Nasafi's interpretation of *Jabarut* is in fact the same as Ibn 'Arabi's immutable entities. This appellation of the immutable entities as *Jabarut* is somewhat idiosyncratic, for most Sufis and not only those of the *wujudi* school, described *Jabarut* in an altogether different fashion. To demonstrate the specificity of Nasafi's *Jabarut*, it is necessary to see how the term was used by his predecessors and contemporaries.

Imagination and the Divine Presences:

Mulk and *Malakut* are *Koranic* terms. The term *Jabarut* does not appear in the *Koran* although one finds it in a *hadith* which states:

"Glory to He of the *Jabarut* and *Malakut* and Majesty (*al-kubriya*) and Greatness (*al-'azma*)."

Thus, the use of the term *Jabarut* enters the Islamic vocabulary at an early stage, but its meaning as a technical term is not entirely clear. Some scholars have not been able to see a difference between *Malakut* and *Jabarut* in the works of early Islamic philosophers such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina. However, it has suggested that Ibn Sina's system differentiates between *Malakut* and *Jabarut*, the former being the realm of intellectual, realities (or disembodied intellects) and the latter being the realm of symbols that affect the imagination, which is the realm in which Ibn Sina locates the celestial souls.

A contemporary of Ibn Sina was Abu Talib al-Makki (d. 998) who also makes a clear distinction between *Mulk*, *Malakut* and *Jabarut* in his work entitled *Qut al-qulub*. *Mulk* is witnessed by intellectual light; *Malakut* which is the next world, is witnessed by the light of faith; the Majesty (*al-'izza*) which is the (divine) attributes, is witnessed by the light of certainty;

and *Jabarut*, which is the Unity (*al-wahidaniyya*) is witnessed by the light of gnosis.

Abu Hamid Ghazali was familiar with the works of both Ibn Sina and Makki. Within his works there are many references to *Jabarut* which is portrayed in two main ways. The first is found in his *Durra* in which the lowest world is *Mulk*, then *Malakut* and the highest world is *Jabarut*. *Mulk* pertains to "Adam and his posterity," *Malakut* pertains to the classes of angels and *jinn*, while *Jabarut* pertains to the elect among the angels. The elect of the angels are the Cherubs, the bearers of God's Throne and the chamberlains of the godhead.

This ranking appears in treatises of other Sufis, such as the author of *Tabsirat al-mubtadi*, who is thought to be Sadr al-Din Qunawi. Nasafi copied several passages from this work in his *Maqсад-i aqsa*, some of which are discussions related to the existents of *Malakut* (*mawjudat-i malakuti*). Nasafi describes various kinds of existents. The first are those who pay no attention to the world of the creatures and these are the "Enraptured Angels."

Another kind who also are not concerned with the world of bodies and who continually contemplate God are the door-keepers of the Divinity (*hijab bargah-i uluhiyya*) and they are also known as the Folk of *Jabarut*. A second kind of spiritual existent are those who order, govern and retain to this world and they are called 'Spirituals' spiritless" (*ruhaniyyan*). Among these are the Folk of Lower *Malakut* who are the guardians over minerals, plants and animals. The *jinn* and Satan are included among the Folk of Lower *Malakut*. This particular ordering by Nasafi resembles Ghazali's hierarchy found in the *Durra*, but this system is not repeated in any of Nasafi's other

works. The first chapter of *Kitab-i tanzil* is much more representative of his discussions of *Mulk*, *Malakut* and *Jabarut*.

Returning to Ghazali, his second way of portraying *Jabarut* owes more perhaps, to the systems of Ibn Sina and Makki that were described previously. In this second ordering of the three worlds, *Jabarut* is a unity of *Mulk* and *Malakut* within man but it is not the origin of *Mulk* and *Malakut* as in Nasafi's system. Ghazali's *Jabarut* in fact prefigures the discussions of the imagination that became one of the predominant features in many of the Sufi works of the *wujudi* school. For Ghazali, *Mulk* is the world of sense perception and *Malakut* is the invisible world.

"The realm of the world of *Jabarut* lies between the two worlds; partly it may become visible in the world of *Mulk*, partly it is related to the eternal Power and belongs to the world of *Malakut*."

In other words, *Malakut* is a realm which cannot be witnessed by the physical eye, however, that which pertains to *Malakut*, such as spirits and angels, takes a form within the imagination. In this way *Malakut* and *Mulk* combine, resulting in *Jabarut*. Ghazali explains:

"Now the world of *Jabarut* between that of *Mulk* and *Malakut*, resembles a ship which is moving between the beach and the water; it has neither the utter fluxity of the water nor the utter stability and fixedness of the beach. Everyone who walks on the earth walks in the world of *Mulk* and of sensual apperception. And when he has sufficient power to sail on a ship, he is as one who walks in the world of *Jabarut*. And when he has reached such a stage that he can walk on the water without a ship, he walks in the *Malakut* without sinking."

This is the imaginal world which was described and developed in the course of

Sufism. Ghazali's ranking of *Jabarut* as the realm where one can understand spiritual realities through a mental form was also explained by 'Ayn al-Qudat Hamadani (d. 1132). For 'Ayn al-Qudat, it is intelligence which acts as a broker between the brain and the heart, enabling spiritual realities to become embodied.

"Now, know that my brain (*damagh*) would not understand the discourses of my heart if my intelligence ('*aql*) were not between the two. The brain pertains to the realm of *Mulk*, the heart pertains to the realm of *Malakut* and intelligence pertains to the realm of *Jabarut*. Know that intelligence is the interpreter that understands both the tongue of the *Malakuti* heart and also the tongue of the *Mulki* brain."

Another Sufi who had much to say about this imaginal world was Shaikh Shihab al-Din Yahya Suhrawardi (d. 1191). According to his Oriental Theosophy (*hikmat al-ishraq*), there are several worlds, the highest of which is the Light of Lights. From this emanates one Victoria Light (*qahir*) which is referred to under the Mazdean name 'Bahman.' From Bahman, innumerable lights, independent of material bodies are emanated and this, according to Corbin, is the world of *Jabarut*. Then from this world of *Jabarut*, two groups of substances of light are emanated which may be perceived by man. The first are luminous suspended forms (*al-suwar al-mu'allaqa al-mustanira*) and is also known as the imaginal world ('*alam al-khayal*). The second are dark suspended forms (*al-suwar al-mu'allaqa al-zulmaniyya*) which include evil spirits and satans. Corbin calls these last two categories together the world of *Malakut*.

Nasafi's portrayal of *Jabarut* is much closer to Suhrawardi's interpretation than those of Ibn Sina, Ghazali or 'Ayn al-Qudat. since

they understood it as the imaginal world. The reality of the imaginal world was discussed in more detail from the thirteenth century onwards by Sufis of the *wujudi* school. In many ways Nasafi was influenced by this school as was shown in the previous section, however, his works do not discuss the imaginal world in the same manner or detail as Ibn 'Arabi or Sadr al-Din Qunawi. Nasafi's most detailed ontological hierarchy posits four levels which are God, *Jabarut*, *Malakut* and *Mulk*, omitting the world of imagination from his order.

This is not the case with the leading members of the *wujudi* school who include the imaginal world within their ontological hierarchy which contains five (and sometimes six) levels of existence. These five levels were formulated by members of the *wujudi* school into the "Five Divine Presences," (*al-hadarat al-ilahiyya al-khams*). With a lack of a detailed discussion about the imaginal world in Nasafi's theosophy, it is perhaps inevitable that his works are not as sophisticated as those by Sufis such as Ibn 'Arabi, Sadr al-Din Qunawi, Sa'id al-Din Farghani (d.c. 1300), Mu'ayyid al-Din al-Jandi (d.c. 1300), Kamal al-Din 'Abd al-Razzaq Kashani (d. 1329) and Sharaf al-Din Dawud al-Qaysari (d. 1350).

In order to elucidate Nasafi's position *vis-a-vis* the *wujudi* school, it is useful to compare his 'four seas' from his *Maqsd-i aqsa* with the interpretation of the Five Divine Presences by Sa'id al-Din Farghani. The reason for looking at Farghani's exegesis rather than any other interpreter is because the former's works probably exercised a more widespread influence on the Islamic world. Before focusing upon Farghani's Divine Presences, Nasafi's 'four seas' will be briefly analysed (it is not necessary to examine them in detail because the four levels of existence have already been discussed).

In the final two chapters of *Maqṣad-i aqsa*, the topic of discussion is 'the four seas,' which are "the invisible, invisible, invisible world," *Jabarut*, *Malakut* and *Mulk*. The first of these is God's essence which is an infinite, non-delimited light and is a sea without end and without shore. This essence is explained with reference to the *ḥadīth*:

"I was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known."

Since it desired to be known, the first essence made itself a mirror and this is the second sea (which is the mirror in potentiality). The second sea acts as an intermediary between the *tanzīb* first sea and the third and fourth seas. This second sea is the world of *Jabarut* and is called by other names including the Attributed Spirit (*ruh-i idāfi*), the Muhammadan Spirit, the Greatest Light and the Muhammadan Light, and it is also an infinite and non-delimited light and a sea without end and without shore.

"It encompasses the world, and there is not one particle in the world which the Attributed Spirit is not with and which it does not encompass and about which it is not aware. It is the life of the world and of the creatures of the world and it is the governor of the world and of the creatures, it is the master (*mutasarrif*) in its world and it governs the world. Its task is existentiating (*ijād*), annihilation (*i'dām*), reviving (*ihyā*), putting to death (*imāṭat*), honouring (*i'zāz*) and holding in contempt (*idhlāl*)."

The reason that Nasafi gives the name *Jabarut* to this particular level may be found in the etymology of the word. *Jabarut* is not found in the *Koran* although the derived name *al-Jabbar* (the All-Compeller) appears in 59:23. So, the things in *Jabarut* are those which are

fixed and which cannot change their nature or quality. In other words, they are determined or compelled (*jabr*) in their state from eternity.

Nasafi describes the Attributed Spirit (or *Jabarut*) as a seed, which contains *Mulk* and *Malakut* (the third and fourth seas). A seed has the potential to existentiate a plant and it also has a set limit for a plant's life, for a seed contains everything which has the potential to be manifested, from the stalk, to the leaves and petals. The second sea is also described as a pen:

"The ink-pt (*nun*), by the pen and what they are writing. *Nun* is an expression for the first sea because 'I was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known,' and the pen is an expression for the second sea because 'the first thing God created was intelligence' and 'what they are writing' is an expression for the third and fourth seas and they are continually writing and the three kinds of children were and are created from their writing and the three kinds of children are words and they are not repeated, rather, there is no end as the Most High said, 'Say: if the sea were ink for the words of my Lord, sooner would the sea be exhausted than would the words of my Lord, even if we added another sea like it for its aid'."

The words are existent in the pen in an undifferentiated mode and when the pen splits them into the third and fourth seas, it is able to compose them in a differentiated mode.

Aside from Nasafi's four seas, there is a discussion in *Maqṣad-i aqsa* of another level of existence which other Sufis of the *wujūdī* school consider a Divine presence. This is the Perfect Man. Nasafi frequently refers to the afore-mentioned *ḥadīth* that:

"I was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known".

He explains how *Mulk* and *Malakut* are combined together in man, for all existents are compounds of light and darkness. Each compound has its nature (its spiritual dimension) and its body (its sensory dimension). These two are mixed together and need to be separated, a process which is started through eating pure food. The process leads from the stomach through the liver and to the brain where the attributes of light can be manifested. According to Nasafi, animals and men are constantly performing this 'alchemy,' but the Perfect Man takes this alchemy to the limit. The Perfect Man is God's perfect mirror:

"The answer that he Truth Most High gave to David (peace be upon him) that "I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known," becomes apparent and recognised here. He sees His own glory and He witnesses His own attributes, names, works and wisdom."

So, within one chapter of *Maqсад-i aqsa*, Nasafi discusses the ontological hierarchy of the four seas and the Perfect Man who comprehends them all.

Turning now to Sa'id al-Din Farghani's Divine Presences, the first thing to note is that he speaks of six levels rather than five levels. His first level is that of God in His *tanzih* nature, which is called *ahadiyya* or Exclusive Unity. This is the level beyond man's conception, and it is Nasafi's "invisible, invisible, invisible world." The second level is that of Inclusive Oneness (*wahidiyya*) which is another expression for God as Creator, the source of all things, Who has knowledge of all things and can bestow existence upon them.

This is the world of immutable entities, or in Nasafi's terminology, it is *Jabarut*. Once God bestows existence upon His knowledge, there are three modes or levels in which they are the

loci of manifestation. The first is the spiritual world, or the level of intelligible things; the second is the sensory world, or level of sense perception; third is the level of imagination where spirits are corporealised and bodies are spiritualised. The last level is that of the all-encompassing Perfect Man, who comprehends all the prior levels.

Nasafi does not use the terminology of the divine presences although the predominant theme in his theosophy is the hierarchical nature of existence. His four main levels and the Perfect Man accord with Farghani's *ahadiyya*, *wahidiyya*, spiritual and sensory worlds and Perfect Man. That Nasafi did not include detailed discussions in his works of the central concept of the imaginal world is quite surprising given the fact that he explains the other man aspects of *wujudi* theosophy (albeit in a summarised manner). The significance of this omission becomes clear when Nasafi's explanation of what happens to the soul after death is compared with the descriptions given by Ibn 'Arabi and other Sufis of the *wujudi* school.

Attaining Knowledge: 'Ayn al-Qudat Hamadani (d. 1131) claimed the idea of the equi-distance of all things from their ultimate ontological Source in terms of knowledge (or *ma'iyat*, 'witness') to be his own. This understanding of God's proximity reflects the *Koranic* verse which states that God is with man wherever he is, but the practical reality is that man is negligent and he forgets this 'witness,' so he must strive to acquire such knowledge and once attained, keep it in mind constantly. By Nasafi's era, the idea of 'witness' expressed in terms of knowledge had become common in Sufi circles, and is explained in Nasafi's own works:

"O Dervish! God is very close, just as the Most High said: "We are nearer to him than the jugular vein," and there are many examples like this in the *Koran* and *hadith*, but what is the use if the people have fallen far, far behind and remain without any share or portion in the gnosis of God and God's proximity. Everyday they boast and say that we are searching for God, but they do not know that God is present and there is no need to search. O dervish! God is neither far from some nor close to others. He is with everyone. All the existents are equal in proximity with Him. The highest of the high and the lowest of the low are the same in proximity with Him. We have spoken of proximity in terms of knowledge ('*ilm*') and ignorance, that is, whoever is more knowledgeable is nearer."

The knowledge of the various groups that Nasafi portrayed agreed upon the general principles of Islam, such as the unity of God and how He could be described. For example:

"Know that the Sufis say that all the Prophets and Friends have said that there is a creator for the world. After the Prophets and Friends, all the '*Ulama*' and Philosophers have also said that there is a creator for the world and in order to prove this they have given many reasons and they have written and continue to write books, so it is not necessary for me to give any proof for the [existence of a] creator of the world."

"Since you have understood that there is a creator for the world, now know that the Sufis say that there is one creator and He is eternal and has no beginning or end, no like or partner and He cannot change or alter and He cannot be non-existent or annihilated, and He has no place (*makan*), time or 'direction. He is endowed with the appropriate attributes and He is free from inappropriate attributes."

The '*Ulama*' and Philosophers agree on this point with the Sufis. The Sufis say in addition

to this that the essence of God is unlimited and infinite.

"O dervish! The '*Ulama*' and Philosophers also say that the essence of God Most High is infinite and they say that this infinity of God has no beginning or end, above or under, before or after, that is, it has no direction. It is a light, unlimited and infinite. It is an ocean without shore or end. The totality of the universe is a drop in the ocean considered in relation to the greatness of God's essence, perhaps, less than a drop. There is not one existent particle which God is not with, or which God does not encompass and of which He is not aware."

Thus, the beliefs of both the '*Ulama*' and Philosophers are regarded as Islamic and worthy in their own right, however, their knowledge of things does not match that of the Sufis or People of Unity. In fact, Nasafi makes a distinction between the groups which reflects the well-known *hadith* of Gabriel, in which Muhammad divides Islam into three stages. The first stage is submission (*ihsan*). According to this *hidith*, submission is performing the five pillars of Islam: bearing witness that there is no god but God and Muhammad is His messenger, reciting the ritual prayer (*salat*), paying the alms tax, fasting during Ramadan and making the pilgrimage to Mecca. Faith is having faith in God, His angels, His books, His messengers, the Last Day and the measuring out (*qadar*). Excellence means worshipping God as if you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you.

Submission pertains merely to practice, and is the lowest in the hierarchy because people may practise Islam even if they do not want to. There are many reasons for performing actions, ranging from the economic to social, so even a hypocrite (*munafiq*) can submit to God and the

five pillars of Islam. Faith is a stage above practice because the person with faith undertakes submission through sincerity. The relationship between practice and faith can be described in *Koranic* terms as the manifest (*zahir*) and the non-manifest (*batin*). Above faith is excellence, and this is the highest degree in the *hadith* of Gabriel because excellence involves a degree of insight or gnosis which faith does not encompass. For Nasafi, the 'Ulama' have submission, the Philosophers have faith and the People of Unity have excellence (*ihsan*).

The differences between submission, faith and excellence may also be clarified through another *hadith* which Nasafi quotes on numerous occasions:

"The Holy Law (*shari'at*) is my words, the Path (*tariqat*) is my works and the Reality (*haqiqat*) is my states."

Nasafi reworks this *hadith* and states that the Perfect Man has four things: good words, good works, noble character traits (*akhlaq*) and gnosis (*ma'rifat*). Good words and works pertain to the Holy Law, the character traits pertain to the Path, and gnosis pertains to the Reality. Gnosis is the ability to see things as they are, to see the essences (as far as it is possible) of oneself and God, whereas having the appropriate character traits or being sincere does not necessarily mean that one can see things as they are.

The Knowledge of the 'Ulama': Tradition plays a very important role in the Islamic community and this tradition is based upon memorising the *Koran* and *hadith* and also by following the *Sunna* of Muhammad. The importance of this tradition is demonstrated by the fact that Najm al-Din Kubra (the founder of the Sufi order to which Nasafi was probably

affiliated) had spent long periods in the study of *hadith* and he also commenced a commentary on the *Koran* (which was eventually completed by 'Ala' al-Dawla Simnani). This kind of knowledge is fundamental for all Muslims and Nasafi recognises that the 'Ulama' provide a crucial role in society by acting as guardians of this knowledge. They act as propagators of the exoteric message of the *Koran*, *hadith* and *Sunna* and education (reading and writing) is entrusted to them. Nasafi expresses the importance of the 'Ulama' in society:

"O dervish! Whoever puts himself up as a director of creatures, calls himself a shaikh or an ascetic. Know for sure that [such an individual] has found no trace of God's fragrance. It was necessary for the Prophets to be the directors of creatures whether they wanted to be or not. It is also necessary for the 'Ulama'."

"O dervish! Whoever possesses one field of knowledge has a narrow range of thought and his enemy is the 'Ulama' who possess [several] fields of knowledge. Whoever possesses [several] fields of knowledge has a wide range of thought and he is a friend of the 'Ulama'."

However, the knowledge of tradition is founded upon memory and represents only the first step towards the realisation of things. It is not sufficient to be able to recite the *Koran* and *hadith* and act in the way of Muhammad, for one also has to understand the message of the *Koran* and *hadith* and realise why Muhammad behaved in any given manner:

"God Most High sent down the *Koran* in ten meanings."

The grammarians, philologists, jurists, commentators of the *hadith* and expounders (*mufasssirun*) are all at the first stage and are not aware of the second stage.

Nasafi calls the '*Ulama*' the "People of Imitation" (*ahl-i taqlid*) and their belief is based upon the sense of hearing:

"They have heard and accepted, that is, their acceptance is not by reason and demonstration, and not by unveiling and spiritual contemplation. This belief is worthy although it is through the sense of hearing, and this group is included among the People of Submission (*ahl-i islam*). At this level, effort and endeavour are dominant over the way-farer and satisfaction and submission are subdued. There is much difficult asceticism and spiritual discipline and much obedience and worship in this level. They perform very much of everything which pertains to the manifest dimension, and they perform little of anything that pertains to the non-manifest dimension. This is because this group (in this level) believe in existence and oneness, and although they believe that God is Knowing, Desiring and Powerful, they have not seen that His knowledge, desire and power are through the light of reason and demonstration and through the light of spiritual unveiling and contemplation for all secondary causes (*asbab*) and caused things (*musababat*). They have not witnessed that all the secondary causes are incapable and over-powered, like all the caused things. So, effort and endeavour is valid according to them and everything is increased by secondary causes, effort and endeavour. This group see by means of secondary causes, effort and endeavour, because such people are still in the level of sense perception and they cannot advance forth."

This belief is merely a preliminary stage, but it provides the foundation upon which to build other forms of knowledge. Nasafi contrasts the results obtained through the religious institution of the '*Ulama*' (the *madrasa*) with those of the house of Sufis (*khanaqah*):

"There is one way which leads to perfection of the path. At the beginning is education and repetition and at the end it is religious effort and remembrance of God (*dhikr*). One must first go to the *madrasa* and then one must go to the *khanaqah* from the *madrasa*."

Felicity, The Goal Of Sufism: The origin of the word 'Sufism' has been studied in depth by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars but as yet, there is no consensus concerning its etymology. However, the reality of Sufism is clear, for its paramount aim is felicity (*sa'ada*) which is determined by the knowledge or proximity one has to God. For Sufis, Knowledge about God is both 'theoretical' and 'experiential', the former being worthless unless it is used to bring man close to God. Having discussed many of the issues relating to theoretical knowledge of God in the preceding two chapters, it is now necessary to examine the practical side of Sufism, that is, the methods and disciplines particular to Sufism that distinguishes it from other forms of Islamic worship.

Nasafi's version of felicity is attractive because it reveals the simple and complex nature of the '*shahada*' or testimony of Islam. The public and voluntary utterance of the *shahada*, "There is no god but God," is the foundation of Islam and by this statement, consenting adults become Muslims. At the manifest level, the *shahada* is an affirmation of the unity of God and negates any multiplicity of deities. The non-manifest dimension of the *shahada* is more intricate and Nasafi's explanation of this is the means by which the way-farer can enjoy the felicitous life in Sufism. To understand the non-manifest dimension of the *shahada*, it is necessary to know the Sufi meaning of felicity.

Felicity and Heaven: Finding real existence, which is the existence of God, is the cause of felicity. This search is the Sufi path in which there are many stages and the closer one comes to real existence, the more one's felicity increases. Nasafi portrays three basic degrees of felicity by revealing the esoteric meaning of the word '*ajr*', or reward. In Persian, this word is spelt with three letters; *alif*, *im* and *ra*:

"*Alif* is an expression for return to God (*i'adat*), and *jim* is an expression for paradise (*janna*) and *ra* is an expression for vision of God (*ru'yat*). In other words, those who have faith and have performed good works will return to God and their return is to God's essence. There is no doubt that they reach God's essence when they ascend, and they are in paradise and encounter God."

The distinction in felicity between Paradise and witnessing God is a typical Sufi theme and dates back to the time of Rabi'a (d. 801), a female mystic from Basra who stressed the importance of avoiding any ulterior motive in worshipping God. 'Attar (d. 1221) cites one of Rabi'a's prayers:

"O my Lord, if I worship Thee from fear of Hell, burn me in Hell and if I worship Thee from hope of Paradise, exclude me thence, but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake then withhold not from me Thine Eternal Beauty."

The vision of God as the ultimate degree of felicity is not confined to the next world. Through following the Sufi path of ascetic discipline and spiritual effort under the guidance of a shaikh or master, many mystics claim that it is possible to witness God through his signs in this world. Nasafi gives an indication of such Sufis and the subsequent felicity that they experience:

"Know that some of the elite of the elite of the elite among the People of the Holy Law

say that it is possible that through ascetic discipline and spiritual effort, the way-farer's body can reach a point that in terms of attributes and subtlety it becomes extremely translucent, reflective, and luminary. The light and the place of manifestation become like one thing just like a glass goblet which is extremely translucent and reflective in which there is an extremely pure and fine (*latif*) wine. One cannot distinguish the goblet from the wine or the wine from the goblet since the two are like one thing. Hence, the Prophets said: "Our spirits are our bodies are our spirits." Each cry that comes from the way-farers, like "Glory be to Me, how great is My majesty," and "I am the Truth," is in this station. In fact this station requires this because when the wayfarer's body becomes glass-like (*zu'ajil*), extremely translucent and reflective through ascetic discipline and spiritual effort, he sees things that others cannot see, he hears things that others do not do. When it occurs in this way, the way-farer sees the whole of his self as light and he cannot distinguish the light from the glass or the glass from the light. Even if he does not wish, a cry such as "Glory be to Me how great is My majesty," comes from him involuntarily."

"O dervish! At the beginning of this station a cry comes from the way-farers, like "There is nothing in my cloak except God," and "There is nothing in the two worlds except Me." In the middle of this station, in fact the cry "I am the Truth," and "Glory be to Me how great is My majesty," comes from the way-farers. At the end of this station, such a silence and quietness prevail over the way-farer that he does not speak with anyone at any time unless it is necessary, and such an incapacity (*'ajz*) and ignorance (*na'danai*) prevail over him that he knows for sure that nobody knows or will know God's essence and attributes just as God's essence and attributes are, and such a tranquillity (*faraghat*) and peace of mind (*jam'iyat*) prevail over him that he renounces

everything all at once and such an entrustment (*tafwiz*) and surrender (*taslim*) prevail over him that nothing remains as a sorrow for him and he recognises God as knowing and powerful over the servants."

Although the ultimate goal is the contemplation of God, in Nasafi's works there are frequent references to the way-farer being in either heaven (*bihisht*) or hell (*duzakh*). In Sufi terms, being in hell is a state of remoteness from God where it is not possible to witness Him. However, heaven is a place where the way-farer is able to contemplate Him. As Nasafi indicates, some Sufi-claim that it is possible to behold God in this world, therefore there is a heaven and hell in this world as well as a heaven and hell in the next world. In this world:

"Hell is love of fortune and fame, greed and avarice, associating others with God (*shirk*) and not recognising a God. Heaven is the hatred of fortune and fame, renunciation of seeking them, contentment, satisfaction, unity and recognition of God."

This worldly heaven and hell appear in Nasafi's discourses of both the Sufis and the Philosophers. For example, according to the Philosophers:

"the real Heaven is harmony and the real Hell is antagonism and the truth of felicity is obtaining [one's] desire and the truth of non-felicity is not obtaining [one's] desire... Since you understood the truth of Heaven and Hell, now know that Heaven and Hell have many gates. All pleasant words and actions and praise worthy character traits are the gates of Heaven. All unpleasant words and actions and reproachable character traits are the gates of Hell. This is because each torment and unhappiness that befalls man is through unpleasant words and actions and reproachable character traits. Each comfort and felicity that

befalls man is through pleasant words and actions and praise worthy character traits."

"Know that some people say that Hell has seven gates and Heaven has eight gates. This is correct because man has eight senses, that is, man has eight perceptions; five external senses, imagination (*khayal*), sensory intuition (*wahm*) and intelligence (*'aql*). Everything that man perceives and discovers is through these eight gates. Each time that intelligence does not accompany the other seven, or when they operate without the order of intelligence but operate through the order of nature, these seven are the gates of Hell. And when intelligence is manifested and becomes the master of these seven and when they operate on the command of intelligence, the eight become the gates of Heaven. Therefore all of mankind will pass through Hell and then arrive at Heaven. Some remain in Hell and cannot proceed from there, and others pass Hell and arrive at Heaven."

Nasafi's statement that everyone passes the gates of Hell is based upon a verse in the *Koran* which states:

"Not one of you there is, but he shall go down to it [Hell]."

In fact, the whole of Nasafi's works reflects a deep knowledge of the *Koran* and in outlining his thought and that of others, he draws many allusions from it. The following example (which again comes from a discourse of the Philosophers) stresses the immediacy of Heaven and Hell in the present world and portrays the tree in Heaven and the tree in Hell.

"Know that the *Tubba'* tree is a tree which has a branch in each pavilion and in all the levels of Heaven. Each comfort and repose for each individual of the People of Heaven comes from a branch of the *Tubba'* tree, since it is in their pavilion. That tree is wisdom, since there is wisdom in every branch. Each person thinks

about the final cause of each action he performs and he does not regret any action.

And the *Zaqqum* tree is a tree which has a branch in each house and in each of the Hells of Hell. Every torment and vexation that afflicts the People of Hell comes from the *Zaqqum* tree. That tree is nature since there is nature in each branch of this tree. Each person does not think about the final cause of each action that he performs, and this lack of reflection and thought is created by him and he regrets his own action. The sign of the ignorant is that they regret [their] words and actions.

Know that reward and punishment are the fruits of the *Tubba'* and the *Zaqqum* trees. The fruit of their branches will be produced for you since there is a branch of both in your house.

Since you have understood that reward and punishment are the fruits of your tree, now know that the nurturing of these trees is through your own planting and rearing. This is because each action which you perform is through the management and thought of intelligence and the prevention of the soul's caprice is in that action.

Although the two previous quotations are from the discourses of the Philosophers, they also reflect the esoteric dimension of Nasafi's brand of Sufism. The only difference that Nasafi has with the Philosophers is that there is another stage beyond intelligence which enables the way-farer to contemplate God from Heaven. This stage is the love for God where one actualises gnosis (*ma'rifa*).

"O dervish! Ignore is a Hell before [attaining] gnosis. Ignorance after gnosis is Heaven. Before attaining gnosis, ignorance is the cause of greed and avarice, and after gnosis it is the cause of satisfaction and surrender."

The Path of Felicity: Sufism is more than a theoretical interpretation of the esoteric dimension of Islam for there is no benefit to the way-farer in comprehending the theory of felicity without performing those tasks which draw him towards the felicitous life:

"Whoever hears there is a thing in this world called sugar is never equal with the person who knows there is a plant called sugarcane which is extremely sweet and when that plant is cut and beaten and the water is taken from it and made thick, sugar and cane by products are made. Whoever knows how sugar is made is never equal to the person who sees how it is made and places sugar in his mouth. First is the level of hearing (*sam*) concerning the experimental knowledge of sugar, second is the level of knowledge (*ilm*) and third is the level of tasting (*dhawq*)."

In other words, the first level pertains to those members of the '*Ulama*' or religious scholars who stress the exoteric dimension of Islam and the second level is that of the Philosophers who emphasise the use of rational knowledge in explaining the world. The third level belongs to the Sufis whose practices enable them to understand the reality of things as they really are. In *Maqsad-i aqsa*, Nasafi classifies these practices into two sections, which if perfected together, can lead to the felicitous life. The first factor is renunciation (*tark*) and the second is gnosis of God.

Renunciation: Nasafi lived through the two Mongol invasions of Central Asia and Iran between 1220 and 1258. The subsequent occupation of that area by the Mongols clarified to the local inhabitants the insecurity and impermanence of their lives and circumstances. The horrors perpetrated by the Mongols are infamous and need not be repeated here, It may well be a result of his experiences under

Mongol domination that Nasafi was so adamant that

"there is no happiness (*khushi*) in the world (*dunya*)."

The instability of this world and its circumstances (*ahwal*) are compared by Naafi to a wave of the sea:

"O dervish! You must not put your trust in this world or this world's comfort, and you should not put your trust in the life or veracity of fortune and fame. Everything under the sphere of the moon and the stars, does not keep its original state. It will certainly change, in other words, the state of this world does not stay in one condition, but is always changing. Each moment it takes a new form and each hour a plan is created, but the first form has still not been completed or found stability when another form comes and annuls the first form. It resembles a wave of the sea and the wise man never builds his house upon a wave of the sea and he never intends to live there."

As a result of this impermanence, people are always seeking more:

"Nobody is satisfied with his own station. If there is an ignorant person, he seeks something and if there is a wise person, he also seeks something, perhaps, more; and if there is a poor person, he seeks something and if there is a wealthy person, he seeks something, perhaps, more; and if there is a subject and if there is a king, they are both desirers. The conflict and discord are due to desire and seeking; so there are conflict and discord wherever one desires and seeks. There is no difference between the wise and the ignorant person, the wealthy and the poor person, the subject and the king. But the wise person, the wealthy person and the king have more suffering because their desires and seeking are greater."

The only cure for conflict is the renunciation of whatever one is seeking. Know that renunciation is the severing of connections; the severing of connections in its non-manifest dimension is when love of this world is expelled from one's heart, and in its manifest dimension it is when a worldly person renounces everything he has and gives it to the poor people.

Desire is not limited to worldly matters, for according to Nasafi, attachment to religion and the next world is undesirable in certain respects. This is particularly the case if the exoteric dimension of a religion predominates in the believer.

"O dervish, everything which becomes a veil in the path of the way-farer obstructs his path. He must renounce it, whether it belongs to this world or to the next world. That is, just as fortune and fame obstruct the path of the way-farer, there is also a time when too much prayer and fasting obstruct the path. One is a murky veil and the other is a luminous veil."

Nasafi relates an enlightening story which highlights the extent of renunciation when attachment to religion (even Sufism) can become a veil. The story involves two famous Sufis, Ibrahim Adham (d. 790) and Shaiq al-Balhi (d.809).

It is said that Shaiq came to Ibrahim and Ibrahim asked Shaiq —

"O Shaiq! How do the dervishes of your city behave?"

"In the best spiritual state," Shaiq replied.

"How is that spiritual state?" Ibrahim asked.

"If they find something they give thanks and if they do not find anything, they wait," Shaiq replied.

"The dogs of our city act in the same way; if they find something they eat it, and if they don't find anything, they wait," Ibrahim said.

"So how should the dervishes live"? Asked Shaqiq.

"If they don't find anything they give thanks, and if they find something, they give it up (*ithar kunand*)," he replied.

The 'murky' and 'luminous veils' are also called idols (*but*) which come in all forms:

"Old clothes may be an idol for one person and new clothes may be an idol of another. The free person is he who sees both in the same way. The purpose of clothing is the repelling of cold and obtaining warmth, and one should desire whichever serves this purpose. If neither do, then one should desire whichever serves the purpose in an easier way. O derivsh, the person who says, "I want new clothes and I do not want old clothes", is in chains. And the persons who says "I want old clothes and I do not want new clothes", is also in chains. As long as they are in chains, there is no difference between them. Whether gold or iron, both are chains. The free person is one who has no chains of any type in any way, because chains are idols."

Generally, Nasafi describes the root of all idols in the following way:

"O dervish, thee is one big idol and the rest of the idols are small. These small idols derive from the big idol. For some people the big idol is fortune and for others it is fame while for still others it is being accepted by other people. Being accepted by other people is the biggest of all idols, and fame is bigger than fortune."

Nasafi does not advocate the complete recision of everything; rather the renunciation of idols means becoming non-attached to everything to such an extent that makes life possible. One has to be practical in renunciation:

"Renunciation is the renunciation of trifling matters, not the renunciation of what is

required. This is because too much fortune is unpleasant and obstructs the path. The reuniaiton of what is necessary is also unpleasant and also obstructs the path because man needs nourishment, clothing and a place to live to a degree that is necessary. If man renounces everything he need others and he becomes hungry and hunger is the mother of meanness. In the same way that too much fortune causes much corruption, so too does the renunciation of whatever is necessary. Whatever is necessary is a great blessing and whatever is not necessary is great affliction. The amount of whatever is necessary is a blessing, but it becomes an affliction when that amount is exceeded."

Renunciation is not an easy task, since one has to determine what is the necessary amount. This is one reason why Nasafi holds it advisable to practise renunciation with the help of someone who is spiritually more mature, that is, the Sufi shaikh.

"...renunciation must have the permission of the Shaikh. You must renounce whatever he says, whether it pertains to this world or the next world, for nobody recognises his own idol and nobody sees himself as an idol worshipper. Everyone believes himself to be released and free and recognises himself as Unitarian and idol-smasher."

Renunciation and idol-smashing have results in two ways: that one may enter Heaven after the Day of Judgement and that one may enjoy a felicitous life in this world close proximity to God.

Gnosis of God: Renunciation is a concept that is common in the esoteric dimension of all major religions, but the gnosis of god is perhaps, a more particularised aspect in each belief. For Sufis, gnosis of God means seeing God in everything, for His creation reveals something about Him—if one has the ability to

see correctly. His creation is all good, for it is impossible that God should create something evil. Nasafi explains:

"No attribute is bad, but some of these are used on an improper occasion and it is said that the attribute is bad. There is nothing bad in the world. Everything in its right place is good, but the name of something becomes bad when they are not in the right place. Therefore, God Most High does not create anything bad, He has created everything as good."

To take a specific example, force may be a good attribute if one needs to exercise physical strength to break a piece of wood, however, the same force of physical strength should be regarded in a negative light when it is used in robbery. The individual who manifests the right character trait at the right time has the gnosis of God, but the problem of course, is how one knows which character trait to reveal at any given moment.

(a) The simplest way to obtain gnosis of God is to realise, that Heaven and Hell exist within the self and to act appropriately, for God is witnessed in Heaven. Know that someone asked a wise man:

"Each person has a way and that way is called the way of salvation and each person denies the way of the others. I am confused and I do not know where my salvation lies or what way will make me sorrowful." The wise man said, "Go and be a man of good conduct, since no evil befalls a man of good conduct in this world or the next world and the man of good conduct never regrets his actions".

He asked the wise man:

"What is good conduct?" The wise man said, "Don't do anything evil against anyone but wish well for everyone, since the quality of a well-wishers and a good soul is that at first

his own state and affairs prosper and the quality of a bad soul and an evil-fisher is that at first his own state and affairs deteriorate. So, whoever does evil and wishes evil upon people in truth does it against his own soul".

"O dervish! The bad-souled, evil wishing person has a state right now in Hell and burns in Hell and heart is tormented. His fire and torture become more severe on the basis of other peoples' states and to the extent that other peoples' states improve."

Thus, the person who steals for no good reason, steals from himself and the person who torments other people or even animals without purpose, in fact torments himself:

"whatever evil visits you is from yourself".

The manifestation of such character traits at the improper time leads straight to Hell:

"For them is chastisement in the present life; and the chastisement of the world to come is yet more grievous."

(b) The second way is by following the laws that God has sent down to His community. The laws of Islam (the *Shari'a*) are quite specific, ranging from issues on inheritance to those on marriage. However, Nasafi is aware that in some cases the *Shari'a* needs to be understood in an esoteric manner:

"The Unitarian says that recognising good and bad and obedience (*ta'at*) and disobedience (*ma'siyat*) is a great task and nobody understands them except the wise man and perfect ones."

"O dervish! All the religions and Islamic schools have agreed that telling lies is a great disobedience, and they have seen and spoken the truth but there is a time when speaking the truth is a great disobedience and there is a time when lying is a great act of worship, so

is clear that understanding good and bad is a difficult task."

"O dervish! Actions according to intent may be good and they may be bad, so recognising the intent is a great task."

So, it is incumbent upon each individual to make an attempt to recognise the intent behind each person's action, but this does not mean that everyone can ignore the laws of the *Shari'a* on the basis of their own esoteric interpretations of the *Koran* (however much the intent may be in the spirit of the *Shar'a*). Indeed, having composed treatises on the esoteric nature of Islam, Nasafi concludes both *Maqсад-i-aqsa* and *Manazil al-sa'irin* with warnings that the ultimate recourse of the Muslim must be to the *Shari'a*:

"O dervish! In whatever station you are in, do not trust in your own intelligence and knowledge and do not see or name yourself "Verifier of the Truth". Neither make a special way (*tariqi*) for yourself nor establish a religious school (*madhhab*) through your own thought."

In other words, you must be an imitator of your prophet (*payghambar*) in the knowledge and gnosis of any station that you are in and do not neglect his *Shari'a*.

"Don't let your caution slip, in other words, don't neglect the *Shari'a* because anyone who neglects it will certainly be sorrowful since renunciation of caution and discretion is poor opinion."

Know that the wise men have said that man's expediency is to respect the claims of the Verifier of the Truth and not to step outside the bounds of imitation (*hadd-i taqlid*) and admit one's own incapacity and ignorance and know for sure that one cannot know in reality God, as God really is and one cannot recognise

in reality things as they really are. When this was understood, the *Shari'a* was and is respected. The *Shari'a* includes conforming to commands, abstaining from prohibited things, being abstinent, not neglecting one point in observing the *Shari'a*, speaking truthfully and behaving correctly.

"Once the *Shari'a* is respected, the way-farer knows that the perfection of man is that he reaches the human level and becomes completely clean of blame-worthy qualities and unpleasant character traits and he becomes adorned with laudable qualities and pleasant character traits."

Esoteric interpretations of the *Shari'a* are limited to those who have a great degree of spiritual understanding, such as the Sufi shaikh, which introduces the third step for attaining gnosis of God.

(c) The way of the scholars of Islam (through the study of the *Koran* and the *hadith*) and the way of the Philosophers (through reason and intelligence) are regarded as a preliminary stage by the Sufis. They hold that there is a superior way to know God, which is surrendering to Him and building faith through performing acts of worship and devotion such as prayer, renunciation and other Sufi practices including the *dhik*, *chilla* (a period of forty-day isolation for spiritual contemplation) and the recital of litanies. All of these activities must be performed under the guidance of the Sufi shaikh, if they are not, then they have no value because only the Sufi shaikh can recognise the significance of the effects and spiritual visions that may result from such practices.

The aim of these activities is to recognise the self, for man is the purpose of God's creation, since all of God's attributes and character traits can be witnessed through man.

If he perfects himself and manifests the appropriate attribute at the right time, he is like a mirror for God. This is why many Sufis quoted the *hadith*:

"I [God] was a hidden treasure and I desired to be known," and "God created Adam in His own form."

Adam, is of course, the archetype of all humans and therefore, each person is made in God's image, having the potential to manifest all the character traits in the correct manner. From this perspective, one can understand why Nasafi states:

"O dervish, there is a sign for understanding the magnificence and greatness of man and if you find that sign in yourself it is clear that you have understood what a man is. That sign is that hereafter you must search in yourself for whatever you are searching. If you are searching for God's essence and attributes then search in yourself. If you are searching for the First Intelligence and the First Spirit (which is the Attributed Spirit) then search in yourself. If you are searching for Satan and the Devil, then search in yourself. If you are searching for the Resurrection and the Reckoning and the Straight Path then search in yourself. And if you are searching for the water of life then search in yourself—pass the darkness of nature until you arrive at the water of life. O dervish! I say all of this and I know for sure that you do not understand what I am saying."

"I travelled in search of Jamshid's world reflecting chalice
I did not rest during the day and I did not sleep at night.
I listened to the description of Jamshid's chalice from a wise man.
I was the world reflecting chalice!"

The path to felicity, which is composed of renunciation and gnosis of God, is encapsulated by Nasafi to reflect a simple formula known to

millions of Muslims:

"There is no god, but God. O dervish! Renunciation and gnosis of God is the testimony of Islam. The testimony of Islam is negation and affirmation. Negation is the renunciation of idols and affirmation is the gnosis of God. Fortune and fame are two great idols and they have lead astray and they lead astray many people. They are the deities of creatures and many creatures worship fortune and fame. You must have no doubt about the reality of this situation described in this discourse. Whoever has renounced fortune and fame and has cast aside love of this world from his heart has completed the negation and whoever has obtained the gnosis of God has completed the affirmation. This is the reality of there is no god but God."

The testimony of Islam has been the source of inspiration for Sufis throughout history. For Ibn 'Arabi, the testament of Islam could be formulated in the idea of "He/not He," which reflects the negation (there is no god) and affirmation (but God). In other words, everything in the world possesses existence, but this existence is limited in comparison to that of God. For example, man is limited in terms of the duration of his life and also in the talent he possesses, whereas God is eternal and knowing and powerful over everything. Thus, in some respects, man resembles God in that he can manifest the appropriate character traits but in other respects he cannot be compared with God, Whose essence is unknowable, that is He/not He, or "there is no god, but God."

The public utterance of the testimony of Islam makes an adult a Muslim, but for Nasafi, however, being a real Muslim is not so easy:

"Whoever has not carried out renunciation and does not have gnosis of God has never said the testimony of Islam."

Nasafi's own views are reflected in the discourses of the People of Unity:

"O dervish! The People of Unity say this in a better, more pleasant way. They say that the meaning of the testimony of Islam is negation and affirmation, but the negation is not seeing the self and the affirmation is seeing God."

In fact, this is a similar way of expressing Ibn 'Arabi's "He/not He." The incomparability (*tanzih*) of the self with God is contrasted with the similarity (*tashbih*) of the self with God. Real Muslims are able to witness the unity in these opposites and the reward of undertaking renunciation and having gnosis of God is the felicitous life, which for Sufis is a life here and now and also in the next world.

"The testimony of Islam, prayer, fasting have a form and a reality and you have been uninformed of these realities. Renunciation and gnosis of God are like a tree, for the gnosis of God (is the root of this tree and renunciation is the trunk. All the good attributed and pleasant character traits are the fruit of this tree. The root becomes stronger, the trunk also becomes stronger, until renunciation reaches a point where this world, the next world and the existence of the way-farer are obliterated and God alone remains. O dervish! God alone always existed and God alone always exists, but the way-farer was blind but he sees at the hour when he reaches the reality of the testimony of Islam."

Visionary Experience and Unity with God: The aim of Sufism is felicity and the greatest felicity for Sufis is witnessing God. By Nasafi's era, the way-farer followed the Sufi path and engaged in practices such as *dhikr*, *fikr*, *chilla* and *sama'* along with other devotional acts which were means to the end, that is, they were tools for polishing the mirror of his heart. For the Sufi, a transparent heart

could reflect the knowledge of the spiritual world and thus he could come close to God. As he progressed along the path and achieved a greater degree of proximity to God, he discovered 'imaginal' signs and indications manifested in his heart. These signs matched his experiences or states, thus the manifestation of an inner sign without the inner experience or feeling was interpreted as a hallucination, thus signs were witnesses of what the way-farer was.

Frequently appearing in the form of coloured lights, or *photisms*, the imaginal signs were discussed by the Sufis of the Kubrawiyya order, such as Najm al-Din Kubra, Najm al-Din Razi and 'Ala' al-Dawla Simani. the visions of these Sufi were remarkably similar in that each one portrayed a seven-fold hierarchy of photisms, however, the raking of colours (which symbolised a particular spiritual level) differed for each of the three mystics. The seven-fold hierarchy represented the seven heavens referred to in the *Koran* and it was these seven heavens that Muhammad had to pass to reach God during his 'night ascent.' Likewise, the Sufi had to traverse seven levels of being until he was able to encounter his Lord.

Nasafi does not discuss photisms or a seven-fold hierarchy, however, he does describe various kinds of visions and spiritual occurrences that the wayfarer may experience. In this chapter, the different mystical visions and experiences included in Nasafi's works will be presented, revealing his acceptance of all beliefs as genuine expressions of reality. This is followed by an examination of how Nasafi regarded the ultimate spiritual station and vision of God and this is compared with the explanations of how Nasafi regarded the ultimate spiritual station and vision of God and

this is compared with the explanations of Najm al-Din Kubra and Ibn 'Arabi, thus enabling us to see if Nasafi's version of Sufism was representative of the age.

The Journey to God Represented Through Symbols: The works of thirteenth century masters such as Najm al-Din Razi and 'Azizi Nasafi depict the spiritual ascent through images of the stars, moon and sun. It is not surprising that mystics witness such images because these are symbols which occur in the *Koran*, and Sufis spend many hours in contemplation of the esoteric meanings of verses in which these symbols appear. For example, Nasafi refers to the sixth *sura* of the *Koran* which concerns the Prophet Abraham, to explain the reality of the hierarchy of spiritual existents:

"... there are three angels in *Malakut* which are the leaders of angels and they are called the Great Angels. Of these three, one is in such a way that the body of existents comes from him and this Great Angel has four rows of angels, each row having several thousand angels which are busy in obedience and submission to God. These are the terrestrial angels, so each particle of earth has an angel with it. Abraham's first glance was upon this Great Angel and this is the meaning of: 'When the night covered him over, he saw a star, he said 'This is my Lord,' but when it set he said, 'I love not those that set.'"

Of these three angels, one is bigger than the first angel and the life of the existents comes from it. And this angel has nine rows of angels and in each row there are several thousand angels and they are occupied in obedience and submission to God and all these angels are equal. Abraham's second glance fell upon this Great Angel:

"When he saw the moon rising in splendour he said, 'This is my Lord,' but when he saw the moon set he said, 'Unless the Lord guide me, I shall be among those who go astray.'"

There is another Great Angel which is bigger than these two, and this Great Angel has ten rows of angels and in each row there are several thousand angels each yearning for God Most high and Holy and they are absorbed in the Lord of creatures, and this Great Angel is not informed about the earth or heaven. Abraham's third glance fell upon him, and this is the meaning of:

"When he saw the sun rising in splendour he said, 'This is my Lord, this is the greatest of all.' But when the sun set he said, 'O my people! I am indeed free from your guilt of giving partners to God.'"

This angel guided Abraham to the Lord of creatures so that he was liberated from association of others with God and when he attained the world of unity he said:

"For me, I have set my face firmly and truly towards Him who created the heavens and earth and I shall never give partners to God."

The reason that Abraham's glance fell upon *Malakut* is set out in the verse:

"So also did we show Abraham the power and the laws of the heaven and earth that he might have certitude."

Half a century prior to Nasafi, Najm al-Din Razi portrayed a similar account of Abraham's mystical encounters and he related these visions to the mystic's ascent and the condition of his heart. His exegesis of visions of the sun, moon and stars matches the ontological hierarchy of *Jabarut*, *Malakut* and *Mulk* that Nasafi so often describes:

"As for those lights that are seen in the form of heavenly bodies,— stars, moons and sun— they derive from the lights of spirituality that appear in the sky of the heart, in accordance with its degree of purity. When the mirror of the heart becomes as pure as a star, the light of the spirit becomes apparent to the amount of a star... it sometimes happens that the soul attains such purity that it appears to be like the sky and the heart is seen in it like the moon. If the full moon is seen, the heart has become completely pure; if it is less than full, a degree of impurity remains in the heart. When the mirror of the heart attains perfect purity and begins receiving light of the spirit, that light will be witnessed in the likeness of the sun. The brightness of the sun is in proportion to the degree of the heart's purity, until a point is reached at which the heart is a thousand times brighter than the external sun. If the moon and the sun are witnessed together, then the moon is the heart, illuminated with the reflection of the light of the spirit and the sun is the spirit."

Visions of the Next World: Visions of the sun, moon and stars are not the only form of 'imaginalisation,' for Nasafi describes another type of vision which enables the mystic to witness the state of the spirit after natural death:

"Observing the states after death is a great task for the way-farer. People are ignorant about this reality, if they were not, surely they would make an effort and endeavour in order for these states after death to be revealed to them, so that they could witness the station which they will return to after separation from the body."

"Know that the ascent for Sufism means that the spirit of the way-farer leaves the body in a healthy and wakeful state. And the state that will be revealed to [the way-farer] after separation from the body is now revealed to him before death. He surveys Heaven and Hell and he arrives at the level of the eye of

certainty from the level of knowledge of certainty and he sees whatever he has understood."

Our Shaikh stated:

"My spirit spent thirteen days in the heavens and then returned to my body. And during those thirteen days my body was like that of a dead man and had no concern for anything. Others who were present said that my body had been in such a way for thirteen days."

And another dear one stated:

"My spirit remained there for twenty days and then came back to the body."

And another dear one said:

"My spirit spent forty days and then returned to the body."

He remembered everything that he saw in those forty days.

Encounters with Spirits, Future Events and Dreams: Once the heart has become mirror-like, it is able to reflect knowledge that has come from the spiritual world, an example of this includes communication with the spirits of dead people, such as the Friends. Nasafi describes the process of pilgrimage to tombs:

"If [the way-farer] pays a pilgrimage to the tomb of a Friend and requests help from the spirit of the Friend, it will be obtained. The manner of paying pilgrimage and praying is in this way; he must walk around the tomb and concentrate, freeing his mind from everything, thus making the mirror of the heart clean and pure so that his spirit can encounter the deceased through the grave. Then, if the way-farer desires knowledge or wisdom, the solution to [his] problem will be manifested on his heart in that very hour. If he has the receptivity for discovering it and if his request is for help and assistance, not only will his

important affairs be resolved sufficiently, but the approval of the prayer will also be manifested in his other affairs after the pilgrimage. This is because the spirit of the deceased has favour with God and that spirit asks that the important affairs of the way-farer are resolved in a sufficient manner. If the deceased spirit has not found favour near God but has favour near God's esteemed ones, he asks of them that God resolves the important affairs sufficiently."

In addition to this, the mirror of the heart can reflect images about the states of living people and the states of future events:

"There are some people who can tell the names of whoever they see or whoever they have not seen. Moreover, they can tell the names of that person's parents and kinsmen and tribe even though they are not informed of those peoples' past and present circumstances."

There are some people who see in their sleep the occurrence of a thing even before it has taken place in this world. Other people witness the occurrence of a thing even before it has taken place while they are awake. There are several types [of vision]:

"either a form becomes illustrated outside of the mind and describes a past or future circumstance, or a picture appears upon their heart. This is the reality of revelation (*wahī*), inspiration (*ilham*), a thought (*khatir*) and intuition (*firasat*)."

The witnessing of visions, as mentioned earlier depends upon dulling the five external senses and this occurs naturally for most people during sleep:

"... the invisible world has levels and from level to level there are many differences and the non-manifest dimension of the way-farer also has levels and from level to level there are many differences. The first level [of the

non-manifest dimension of the way-farer] can extract from the first level [of the invisible world] and the last level [of the invisible world]. The knowledge and insight of the way-farer are also obtained in this way and veridical dreaming (*khwab-i rast*) is one example of this. Ecstasy (*wajd*), parietal occurrences (*warid*), inspiration (*ilham*) and divine knowledge (*'ilm-i ladunni*) are expressions for this reality. This reality does not pertain to infidelity (*kuf*) or Islam. Each person who makes his heart clear will find these effects and such meanings are discovered in the dreams of many people, but occurs less in wakefulness because the senses are incapacitated in dreams. And the obstructions which are produced by means of the senses and by means of anger and appetites, are lessened. For this reason, the non-manifest dimension [of the way-farer], at that hour, is able to acquire knowledge from that world. So, isolation and seclusion, the way-farer's ascetic discipline and spiritual effort are for the sake that during wakefulness, his body can be like that of the person who is asleep, perhaps, cleaner and purer."

"When the senses are incapacitated by means of sleep, at that time the heart finds suitability with the heavenly angels in the same way as two clear mirrors which are opposite one another. The reflection of the angel's knowledge will appear on the heart of the sleeper.... This dream can be interpreted and explained. And this is the meaning of veridical dream and this dream is one part of the forty-six parts of prophecy."

It is interesting to note in the foregoing passage that Nasafi admits that making the heart mirror-like is not confined to Muslims, thus the opportunity of witnessing visions and having mystical experiences such as communicating with the spirits of the living and the dead is open to non-Muslims:

"O dervish, this manifestation of reflections does not depend on unbelief (*kuf*) or belief

(islam), it depends upon a heart which is plain and without colouring. This manifestation of reflections appears in the complete and in the pious and in the lewd person."

Moreover, this form of knowledge is not confined to humans:

"And apart from way-farers there also exists a people whose hearts have been made plain and are not tarnished and it is also manifested upon their hearts. And some say it is even manifested for animals. Some of the animals inform people before the arrival of each calamity or fortuity which comes to this world. Some people understand and some do not understand."

Najm al-Din Razi also indicates that non-Muslims can witness mystical visions, yet he stipulates that they cannot reach the same degree of gnosis that Muslims enjoy. Indeed, he classifies visions into two varieties; the first is the mystical vision of the spirit and the second is the mystical vision when God reveals himself to the mystic in the form in which the mystic can comprehend Him as the Real God.

The Different Levels of Mystical Experience as Manifested Through Visions:

The distinction that Najm al-Din Razi draws between two forms of mysticism enables him to discount non-Muslims, for they cannot see the 'lights of the attribute of unity' and therefore, cannot transcend the human state. The reason that Razi gives for the inability of followers of other religions (Hindus, Christians and Philosophers) to reach the ultimate stage is because their practices are deficient. For example, the 'extreme mortification of the soul' can only lead to a certain degree of unveiling and they cannot know whether or not they have been lead astray in their journey by their own ego since they do not see the necessity of

having a shaikh. Nasafi also divides mystical experience into two different kinds:

O dervish, life, knowledge, desire, power, hearing, seeing and speech are the attributes of the First Intelligence and creation, giving life and instruction are the actions of the First Intelligence. No one except for God knows the greatness and splendour of the First Intelligence. Many great men among the eminent shaikhs have arrived at this First Intelligence and have been obstructed by it because they have seen its attributes and actions and have not seen anything greater than its decree or found anything above its command: "When He decrees a thing He need only say 'Be,' and it is." They believed that perhaps it was God, and they worshipped it for a while until the favour of the Truth Most High came to them and they saw a decree greater than that of the First Intelligence and a command above that [of the First Intelligence] "And Our command is but one, as the twinkling of an eye." At that time it became clear for them that it was God's caliph, it was not God, but it was the locus of manifestation of God's attributes and actions."

In the foregoing quotation, the first realisation of the shaikhs is the unity of existence seen in the First Intelligence (that is, *Jabarut*). The superior realisation is the unity of existence which stretches from man to the level of God beyond the First Intelligence which is the level of *Ahadiyya*. In the Sufi tradition, this level transcends man's experiences and therefore, it can only be considered theoretically.

With this perspective in mind, we can now return to the question of whether non-Muslims can enjoy the same range of mystical experience as Muslims. As we have seen, Najm al-Din Razi denies this possibility and although Nasafi does not say so explicitly, it seems that he does

not share the same opinion. This is revealed by his discussion of the discourse of the Indians (*ahl-i hind*) which describes human perfection in exactly the same way as the discourses of the Muslims, which draws inspiration from the Light verse of the *Koran*.

"....understanding this discourse is very important, for the ascetic disciplines and spiritual effort of the Indians are included as the foundation of this discourse. In other words, this discourse is extremely good and many problems are resolved by understanding it."

The world is made of two things, light and darkness, in other words, a sea of light and a sea of darkness. These two seas are mixed together and it is necessary to separate the light from the darkness in order for the attributes of light to be manifested. Indeed, this light can be separated from the darkness within a given creature, because there are workers in the creature's body... The alchemy that man performs is that he takes the 'soul' of whatever he eats; in other words, he takes the select and quintessence of food. In this way, light is separated from darkness in such a way that light knows and sees itself as it is. Only the Perfect Man can do this.

"O dervish! It is not possible to completely separate this light from darkness because light cannot exist without darkness... Light must be with darkness just as a lamp in a niche, so that its attributes may be witnessed. When the light ascends in levels and each one of the workers completes its task, so that the light reaches the brain, it is like a lamp in a niche. The reality of man is the lamp. When this lamp becomes strong and pure, the knowledge and wisdom which is hidden in its essence becomes more apparent. O dervish! From beginning to end, this discourse has been on explanation of the journey of the Indians."

So, non-Muslims can also witness God by following their own divine laws and engaging in spiritual exercises. This conclusion reflects Nasafi discussion concerning man's perfection and its relationship with the 'four times,' for each of the four moments carry the specific qualities of the heavens and stars which determine the characteristics of each individual. It is possible for the 'four times' to bring the same qualities to one person in each climate, whereby individuals outside of the *Dar al-Islam* (the Islamic world) can attain perfection.

Nasafi was not the first Sufi to believe that non-Muslims could witness God. For example, Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi (*al-maqtul*) explained that divine wisdom or mystical intuition manifested itself in pre-Islamic sages. According to Suhrawardi, two chains of divine wisdom were united in himself: the first of these came from Hermes and was passed on through the Greek sages including Empedocles, Pythagoras, Plato and Aristotle; the second chain commenced with Zoroaster and was then given to Iranian sages such as Jamas, Farshawashtar and Buzurgmihr.

This ecumenical position in Sufism accords with verses in the *Koran* which express tolerance towards other religions:

"To each among you We have prescribed a Law and an open way. If God has so willed He would have made you a single people but His plans to test you in what He hath given you; so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is God. It is He Who will show you the truth of the matters in which ye dispute."

The Kubrawi exegesis of visions played an important part in the development of '*irfan*' during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Iran and Central Asia. There are two reasons

which may explain the formulation of the particular techniques and methodologies in the Sufi orders. Firstly, it was a reaction to the popularity that Sufism enjoyed during this period, and secondly it was a way to recognise the correct spiritual station of Sufis, some of whom mistakenly thought that they had reached the ultimate station and whose 'Hallajian' *shathiyyat* incurred the wrath of the 'Ulama'.

The great appeal of Sufism was indeed a problem because it resulted in lay people desiring a 'popular' form of Islamic mysticism which in reality obscured the essence of Sufism. Indeed, Nasafi himself was opposed to such a "vulgarisation" of Sufism as his comments concerning the Sufis and the common people sitting together for *sama*' (see previous chapter) indicate. His concern about the popularisation of Sufism is mirrored in Trimmingham's observation that

"the practical goal of Sufism for the majority came to be the attainment of ecstasy (*wajd* = *faqd al-ihsas*), 'loss of consciousness.' This is not the *wajd* (encounter with God) of the Sufis; it was in fact a degeneration which the early masters of Sufism had perceived and warned against when dealing with the question of *sama*'."

For the masses:

"...loss of consciousness is regarded as 'union,' an emotional identification of seeker and sought. To some this experience became a drug for which soul and body craved. For the ordinary lay member, participation in the ritual of *dhikr*, which for him occasionally leads to the trance ecstasy, provides at lowest a release from the hardship of everyday existence, and, at a higher level, some measure of freedom from the limitations of human life and a glimpse at transcendental experience."

Nasafi hinted at this problem outlined by Trimmingham:

"And 'inviting ecstasy' (*tawajjud*) is an expression for a person who is not an ecstatic but [for a person] who makes himself resemble an ecstatic (*wajidat*), since inviting ecstasy is the same as feigning illness."

The obvious question that arises after studying Nasafi's treatises is what contribution did he make to the existing Sufi beliefs in thirteenth century Central Asia and Iran? Nasafi was not an original mystic in the same way as Ibn 'Arabi or Najm al-Din Kubra, for Ibn 'Arabi's esoteric interpretation of the *Koran* probably cannot be matched by any other Sufi, and Najm al-Din Kubra's explanation of the ascent of the soul through visionary experience was quite unique during his life-time.

However, Nasafi's importance lies in his ability to both incorporate all the major elements of Sufi belief as discussed by others and also to present them in a coherent fashion for novices of the Sufi path. Thus many familiar themes appear in a summarised yet, lucid fashion including God's incomparability and similarity, the ultimate station of bewilderment, the all-encompassing nature of Sufism (*kama ust*), spiritual creating through *himmat* and the perfection of man in the form of *walayyat*. This simple and clear version of Sufism is demonstrated in his systematisation and order of Sufi ontology and epistemology; proof of this is Nasafi's six spiritual stations and the four stages of mystical knowledge, from *dhikr* to *fikr* and then to *ilham* and finally to contemplation ('*ilyan*') which is the station of stability (*tamkin*).

It is highly probable that his treatises provided the foundation for many Sufi novices

to progress to more profound works of other Sufi masters. That Nasafi was establishing a basis and foundation and addressing beginners on the Sufi path may explain why he did not elaborate on more 'advanced' topics, such as Najm al-Din Kubra's *shaikh al-ghayb* and the *wujudi* explanation of the nature of the soul in the grave. Whatever the reason for Nasafi's failure to discuss these topics in detail, he should be considered as a major figure in strengthening and developing Sufism in Central Asia and Iran. Yet, his influence extended further than these two areas as the existence of numerous manuscripts of his treatises in Turkey, China, Egypt and India demonstrate. Regarding the last of these, it has been shown that the Indian Sufi Muhammad Gisudiraz (d. 1422) cited and utilised Nasafi's *Kitab-i tanzil* and also called Nasafi a 'wise man.' The popularity of Nasafi's brand of Sufism may be a result of the following points.

- (i) Nasafi's 'orthodox' Sufi treatises continued the trend of presenting Sufism in the terminology of the *kalam* and of the Philosophers as well as utilising their logic to demonstrate the 'Islamicity' of Sufism. He aimed to deliver the Sufi message to an audience who probably would have been familiar with the terminology of the *Koran* and *kalam*, and may even have had some knowledge of the language and ideas of the Philosophers. Had Nasafi composed his treatises in the fashion of Sa'd al-Din Hammuya's highly enigmatic and esoteric works, such as *Misbah fi'l tasawwuf*, it is unlikely that the audience which Nasafi desired would have understood very much.
- (ii) One of the major concerns of speculative Sufism is the classification of the levels of existence, which for Nasafi meant *Mulk*,

Malakut and *Jabarut*. The Sufi would have found Nasafi's classification and interpretation of these levels both simple and comprehensive.

- (iii) Nasafi attempted to be impartial in portraying the discourses of the various Islamic beliefs, that is, the beliefs of the 'Ulama', Philosophers, transmigrionists and the Sufis (who included the People of Unity). This non-partisan perspective was assisted by his belief that everything is a self-disclosure of God, which meant that every belief was a genuine expression of reality. Such a non-biased stand-point may have appealed to an audience larger than that claimed by more dogmatic Islamic thinkers.
- (iv) Nasafi's version of Sufi belief was not extreme and adherence to it probably would not have caused excessive difficulty to novices. The discussions on ascetic discipline and religious effort, renunciation and other Sufi practices, constantly advised moderation. Moreover, his Sufism was strictly personal, in other words, between the novice, the Shaikh and God. For example:

"O Dervish! Make your manifest dimension resemble [that] of other people. You should live in the same way that others live since this is the legacy of the Friends and the dome (*qubba*) of the Friend, and everyone is beneath this dome."

"O Dervish! If there is inter-action (*mu'amala*) for you with God, [then, these are the states (*ahwal*) of the heart and no one else is aware of them. The progress and ascent pertain to [one's] inside (*andarun*) and your advantage (*imtiyaz*) over others is at the inside not at the outside (*birun*). The advantage of the hypocrites over others is at the outside, not the inside."

Such advice from Nasafi contained several layers of meaning. Firstly, it was a warning against those who made claims and used Sufism for their own gain, for the true Sufi upheld values such as humility and selflessness. Secondly, it provided a way for preserving the teachings of Sufism should any danger arise from sympathetic political rulers. The threats of secular rulers always hung over Sufism, as did the opposition from some members of the 'Ulama' who stressed the exoteric dimension of Islam. One is struck by Nasafi's refusal to discuss matters pertaining to the letter of the law, however, the 'Ulama' may have been reconciled to Nasafi's Sufism because of his belief that the dervishes must first attend the *madrasa* and then progress to the *khanagah*.

Related to this issue of not antagonising the 'established' powers in society is the problem surrounding Nasafi's Shi'-ism, which some Sufis (such as Haydar Amuli) may indeed have witnessed such a nexus between Sufism and Shi'-ism, Nasafi's own beliefs remain a highly contentious issue. It appears that the problem of Shi'-ism was really quite peripheral to his Sufi message of perfection through ascetic discipline and religious effort.

Nasafi's form of Sufism was able to thrive during one of the most traumatic periods of Islamic history. His greatest contribution to Sufism in Central Asia and Iran was an interpretation of Sufism which was acceptable to most groups in society. It did not alienate the Mongol rulers of the 'Ulama' and at the same time his uncomplicated and summarised version of themes explained by Ibn 'Arabi and Najm al-Din Kubra found new audiences, ensuring the survival and spread of Sufism.

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Nasrudin, Mullah

Mulla (Master) Nasrudin is the classical figure devised by the dervishes partly for the purpose of halting for a moment situations in which certain states of mind are made clear. The Nasrudin stories, known throughout the Middle East, constitute (in the manuscript *The Subtleties of the Incomparable Nasrudin*) one of the strangest achievements in the history of metaphysics. Superficially, most of the Nasruddin stories may be used as jokes. They are told and retold endlessly in the teahouses and the caraven-serais, in the homes and on the radio waves, of Asia. But it is inherent in the Nasruddin story that it may be understood at any one of many depths. There is the joke, the moral—and the little extra which brings the consciousness of the poetical mystic, a little further on the way to realisation.

Since Sufism is something which is lived as well as something which is perceived, a Nasrudin tale cannot in itself produce complete enlightenment. On the other hand, it bridges the gap between mundane life and a transmutation of consciousness in a manner which no other literary form yet produced has been able to attain.

The Subtleties has never been presented in full to a Western audience, probably because the stories cannot properly be translated by a non-Sufi, or even be studied out of context, and retain the essential impact. Even in the East the collection is used for study purposes only by initiate Sufis. Individual 'jokes' from the collection have found their way into almost every literature in the world, and a certain amount of scholastic attention has been given them on this account—as an example of culture drift, or to support arguments in favour of the basic identity of humour everywhere. But if because of their perennial humorous appeal the stories have proved their survival power, this is entirely secondary to the intention of the corpus, which is to provide a basis for making available the Sufi attitude towards life, and for making possible the attainment of Sufic realisation and mystical experience.

The Legend of Nasrudin, appended to the *Subtleties*, and dating from at least the thirteenth century, touches on some of the reasons for introducing Nasruddin. Humour cannot be prevented from spreading. It has a way of slipping through the patterns of thought which are imposed upon mankind by habit and design. As a complete system of thought Nasrudin exists at so many depths that he cannot be killed. Some measure of the truth of this might be seen in the fact that such diverse and alien organisations as the British Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge and the Soviet Government have both pressed Nasrudin

into service. The S.P.C.K. published a few of the stories as *Tales of the Khoja*; while (perhaps on the principle of "If you cannot beat them, join them") the Russians made a film of Nasrudin under the name of *The Adventures of Nasrudin*. Even the Greeks, who accepted few other things from the Turks, consider him a part of their cultural heritage. Secular Turkey, through its information department, has published a selection of the metaphysical jokes attributed to this supposed Moslem preacher who is the arche-type of the Sufi mystic. Yet, the dervish Orders were suppressed by law in republican Turkey.

Nobody really knows who Nasrudin was, where he lived, or when. This is truly in character, for the whole intention is to provide a figure who cannot really be characterised and who is timeless. It is the message, not the man, which is important to the Sufis. This has not prevented people from providing him with a spurious history, and even a tomb. Scholars, against whose pedantry in his stories Nasrudin frequently emerges triumphant, have even tried to take his *Subtleties* to pieces in the hope of finding appropriate biographical material. One of their 'discoveries' would have warmed the heart of Nasrudin himself. Nasrudin said that he considered himself upside down in this world, argues one scholar, and from this he infers that the supposed date of Nasrudin's death, on his 'tombstone', should be read not as 386 but 683. Another professor feels that the Arabic numerals used would, if truly reversed, look more like the figures 274. He gravely records that a dervish to whom he appealed for aid in this:

"...merely said, 'Why not drop a spider in some ink and see what marks he makes in crawling out of it. This should give the correct date or show something'".

In fact, 386 means 300+80+6. Transposed into Arabic letters, this decodes as SH, W,F. which spells the word ShaWaF:

"to cause someone to see; to show a thing."

The dervish's spider would 'show' something as he himself said.

If we look at some of the classical Nasrudin stories in as detached a way as possible, we soon find that the wholly scholastic approach is the last one that the Sufi will allow:

Nasrudin, ferrying a pedant across a piece of rough water, said something ungrammatical to him. "Have you never studied grammar?" asked the scholar.

'No'.

"Then half of your life has been wasted".

A few minutes later Nasrudin turned to the passenger. "Have you ever learned how to swim?"

'No, Why'

"Then *all* your life is wasted—we are sinking'!

This is the emphasis upon Sufism as a practical activity, denying that the formal intellect can arrive at truth, and that pattern-thinking derived from the familiar world can be applied to true reality, which moves in another dimension.

This is brought out even more forcefully in a wry tale set in a tea-house; a Sufi term for a meeting place of dervishes. A monk enters and states:

"My master taught me to spread the word that mankind will never be fulfilled until the man who has *not* been wronged is as indignant about a wrong as the man who actually has been wronged".

The assembly is momentarily impressed. Then Nasrudin speaks:

"Mu master taught *me* that nobody at all should become indignant about anything until he is sure that what he thinks is a wrong is in fact a wrong—and not a blessing in disguise!"

Nasrudin, in his capacity as a Sufi teacher, makes frequent use of the dervish technique of himself playing the part of the unenlightened man in the story, in order to highlight a truth. A famous tale denying the superficial belief in cause and effect makes him the victim:

Mulla Nasrudin was walking along an alleyway one day when a man fell from a roof and landed on top of him. The other man was unhurt—but the Mulla was taken to the hospital.

"What teaching do you infer this event, Master?" one of his disciples asked him.

"Avoid belief in inevitability, even if cause and effect seem evitable! Shun theoretical questions like: If a man falls off a roof, will his neck be broken? He fell—but my neck be broken?"

Because the average person thinks in patterns and cannot accommodate himself to a really different point of view, he loses a great deal of the meaning of life. He may live, even progress, but he cannot understand all that is going on. The story of the smuggler makes this very clear:

Nasrudin used to take his doney across a frontier everyday, with the panniers loaded with saw. Since he admitted to being a smuggler when he trudged home every night, the frontier guards searched him again and again. They searched his person, staffed the straw, steeped it in water, even burned it from time to time. Meanwhile, he was becoming visibly more and more prosperous.

Then he retired and went to live in another country. Here, one of the customs officers met him, years later.

"You can tell me now, Nasrudin," he said. "Whatever was it that you were smuggling, when we could never catch you out?"

"Donkeys", said Nasrudin.

This story also emphasises one of the major contentions of Sufism that preternatural experience and the mystical goal is something nearer to mankind than is realized. The assumption that something esoteric or transcendental must be far off or complicated has been assumed by the ignorance of individuals. And that kind of individual is the least qualified to judge the matter. It is 'far off' only in a direction which he does not realize.

Nasrudin, like the Sufi himself, does not violate the canons of his time. But he adds a new dimension to his consciousness, refusing to accept for specific, limited purpose that truth, say, is something that can be measured as can anything else. What people call truth is relative to their situation. And he cannot find it until he realizes this. One of the Nasrudin tales, a most ingenious one, shows that until one can see through relative truth, no progress can be made.

One day, Nasrudin was sitting at court. The King was complaining that his subjects were untruthful. Nasrudin said:

"Majesty, there is truth and truth. People must practice real truth before they can use relative truth. They always try the other way around. The result is that they take liberties with their man-made truth, because they know instinctively that it is only an invention".

The King thought that this was too complicated.

"A thing must be true or false. I will *make* people tell the truth, and by this practice they will establish the habit of being truthful. When

the city gates were opened the next morning, a gallows had been erected in front of them, presided over by the captain of the royal guard. A herald announced: "Whoever would enter the city must first answer the truth to a question which will be put to him by the captain of the guard".

Nasrudin, who had been waiting outside, stepped forward first. The Captain spoke:

"Where are you going? Tell the truth—the alternative is death by hanging".

"I am going", said Nasrudin, "to be hanged on those gallows".

"I don't believe you!"

"Very well, then. If I have told a lie, hang me!"

"But that would *make* it the truth!"

"Exactly", said Nasrudin, "*your* truth".

The would-be Sufi must also understand that standards of good and bad depend upon individual or group criteria, not upon objective fact. Until he experiences this internally as well as accepting it intellectually, he will not be able to qualify for inner understanding. This shifting scale is exemplified by a story of the chase:

A King who enjoyed Nasrudin's company, and also liked to hunt, commanded him to accompany him on a bear hunt. Nasrudin was terrified.

When Nasrudin returned to his village, someone asked him: "How did the hunt go?"

"Marvellously".

"How many bears did you see?"

"None".

"How could it have gone marvellously, then?"

"When you are hunting bears, and when you are me, seeing no bears at all is a marvellous experience".

Internal experience cannot be transmitted through repetitiousness, but has to be constantly refreshed from the source. Many schools continue to operate long after their actual dynamic is exhausted, becoming mere centers repeating a progressively weakened doctrine. The name of the teaching may remain the same. The teaching may have no value, may even oppose the original meaning, is almost always a travesty of it. Nasrudin emphasises this as one of the points in his 'Duck Soup' story:

A kinsman came to see the Mulla from somewhere deep in the country, bringing a duck as a gift. Delighted, Nasrudin had the bird cooked and shared it with his guest. Presently, however, one countryman after another started to call, each one the friend of the friend of the "man who bought you the duck." No further presents were forthcoming.

At length, the Mulla was exasperated. One day, yet another stranger appeared. "I am the friend of the friend of the friend of the relative who brought you the duck".

He sat down, like all the rest, expecting a meal. Nasrudin handed him a bowl of hot water.

"What is this?"

"That is the soup of the soup of the soup of the duck which was brought by my relative".

The sharpened perception which the Sufi attains sometimes enables him to experience things which are imperceptible to others. Ignorant of this, members of other schools generally give away their lack of perception by saying or doing something which is so obviously the result of spiritual immaturity that the Sufi can read him like a book. In these circumstances Sufis seldom trouble to say anything. The perception, however, is illustrated by another Nasrudin tale:

Nasrudin called at a large house to collect for charity. The servant said, "My master is out".

"Very well", said the Mulla; "even though he has not been able to contribute, please give your master a piece of advice from me. Say: 'Next time you go out, don't leave your face at the window—someone might steal it.'"

People do not know where to look when they are seeking enlightenment. As a result, it is hardly surprising that they may attach themselves to any cult, immerse themselves in all manner of theories, believing that they have the capacity to distinguish the true from the false.

Nasrudin taught this in several ways. On one occasion, a neighbour found him down on his knees looking something.

"What have you lost, Mulla?"

"My key", said Nasrudin.

After a few minutes of searching, the other man said, "Where did you drop it?"

"At home".

"Then why, for heaven's sake, are you looking here?"

"There is more light here".

This is one of the most famous of all Nasrudin tales, used by many Sufis, commenting upon people who seek exotic sources for enlightenment. Acting it on the stage was a part of the repertoire of Karl Valentin, the late "metaphysical clown" of Munich.

The mechanism of rationalisation is one which effectively bars the deepening of perception. The Sufic impact may often be wasted because the individual will not properly absorb it.

A neighbour came to borrow Nasrudin's clothesline.

"I am story, but I am drying flour on it".

"But how can you dry flour on a line?"

"It is less difficult than you think, when you don't want to lend it".

Nasrudin here presents himself as the evasive part of the mind, which will not accept that there are other ways of approaching truth than the conventional patterns.

In the development of the human mind, there is a constant change and limit to the usefulness of any particular technique. This characteristic of Sufi practice is ignored in repetitious systems, which condition the mind and create an atmosphere of attainment or nearness to attainment, without actually producing it. Nasrudin figures as the character in a story which seeks to make this clear:

The Mulla nearly fell into a pool of water. A passer-by saved him in the nick of time. Every time they met in future, the man reminded Nasrudin about how he had prevented him from getting wet.

Ultimately, unable to stand it any longer, the Mulla took his friend to the pool; jumped in as far as the neck, and shouted: "Now I am as wet as I would have been if I had never met you! Will you leave me alone?"

The ordinary joke or fable, containing only one point or emphasis, cannot be compared to the Nasrudin system—ideally a participation-recital which exercises an inward as well as an outward or superficial effect. The parable, fable and ordinary joke are considered mystically sterile because they lack penetration or true regenerative force.

While the complex ingenuity and intention of the Nasrudin story is far ahead of, say the Baldakiev figure of the Russians, the Arab Joha, or Bertoldo of the Italians—all well-known

comical figures—something of the difference of depth in stories can be assessed by means of the Mulla's jokes and their equivalent to their sporadic occurrence elsewhere.

A Zen story provides an interesting example. In this a monk asks a master to give him a version of the reality beyond reality. The master snatches up a rotten apple; and the monk perceives the truth by means of this sign. We are left in the dark so to what lies behind, or leads up to, the illumination. The Nasrudin story about an apple fills in a great deal of missing detail:

Nasrudin is sitting among a circle of disciples, when one of them asks him the relationship between things of this world and things of a different dimension. Nasrudin says, "You must understand allegory." The disciple says, "Show me something practical—for instance an apple from Paradise."

Nasrudin picks up an apple and hands it to the man. "But this apple is bad on one side—surely a heavenly apple would be perfect."

"A celestial apple would be perfect," says Nasrudin; "but as far as you are able to judge it, situated as we are in this abode of corruption, and with your present faculties, this is as near to a heavenly apple as you will ever get."

The disciple understood that the terms which we use for metaphysical things are based upon physical terms. In order to penetrate into another dimension of cognition, we have to adjust to the way of understanding of that dimension.

The Nasrudin story, which may well be the original of the apple allegory, is designed to add to the mind of the hearer something of the flavour which is needed to build up the consciousness for experiences which cannot be reached until a bridge has been created.

The gradual building up of inner consciousness is characteristic of the Nasrudin Sufic method. The flash of intuitive illumination which comes as a result of the stories is partly a minor enlightenment in itself, not an intellectual experience. It is also a stepping stone toward the re-establishing of mystical perception in a captive mind, relentlessly conditioned by the training systems of material life.

A Nasrudin joke, detached (perhaps, by translation) from its technical terminology, can still pass current on its humorous value. In such cases much of its impact may be lost. An example is the salt and wool joke:

Nasrudin is taking a load of salt to market. His donkey wades through a stream, and the salt is dissolved. When it reaches the opposite bank, the ass is frisky because his load is lightened. But Nasrudin is angry. On the next market day he packs the panniers with wool. The animal is almost drowned with the increase of weight when it takes up water at the ford.

"There!" says Nasrudin triumphantly, "that'll teach you to think that you gain something every time you go through water!"

In the original story, two technical terms are used, salt and wool. 'Salt' (*milh*) is the homonym for 'being good, wisdom.' The donkey is the symbol for man. By shedding his burden of general goodness, the individual feels better, loses the weight. The result is that he loses his food, because Nasrudin could not sell the salt to buy fodder. The word 'wool' is of course another word for 'Sufi.' On the second trip the donkey had an increase of his burden through the wool, because of the intention of his teacher, Nasrudin. The weight is increased for the duration of the journey to market. But the end result is better, because Nasrudin sells

the damp wool, now heavier than before, for a higher price than dry wool.

Another joke, found also in Cervantes (*Don Quixote*, Ch. 5) remains a joke although the technical term 'fear' is merely translated and not explained:

"I shall have you hanged," said a cruel and ignorant king to Nasrudin, "if you do not prove that you have deep perceptions such as have been attributed to you." Nasrudin at once said that he could see a golden bird in the sky and demons within the earth. "But how can you do this?" the King asked. "Fear," said the Mulla, "is all you need."

'Fear' in the Sufi vocabulary, is the activation of conscience whose exercises can produce extra-sensory perception. This is an area in which the formal intellect is not used, and other faculties of the mind are called into play.

Yet, Nasrudin, in a manner wholly unique, manages to use the very fabric of intellectuality for his own purposes. An echo of this deliberate intent is found in the *Legend of Nasrudin*, where it is recounted that Hussein, the founder of the system, snatched his messenger-designate Nasrudin from the very clutches of the 'Old Villain' —the crude system of thought in which almost all of us live.

'Hussein' is associated in Arabic with the concept of virtue. 'Hasein' means 'strong, difficult of access.'

When Hussein had searched the whole world for the teacher who was to carry his message through the generations, he was almost at the point of despair when he heard a commotion. The Old Villain was upbraiding one of his students for telling jokes. "Nasrudin!" thundered the Villain, 'for your irreverent attitude I condemn you to universal ridicule.

Henceforth, when one of your absurd stories is told, six more will have to be heard in succession, until you are clearly seen to be a figure of fun."

It is believed that the mystical effect of seven Nasrudin tales, studied in succession, is enough to prepare an individual for enlightenment.

Hussein, eavesdropping, realized that from every situation comes forth its own remedy; and that this was the manner in which the evils of the Old Villain could be brought into their true perspective. He would preserve truth through Nasrudin.

He called Nasrudin to him in a dream and imparted to him a portion of his *baraka*, the Sufi power which inter-penetrates the nominal significance of meaning. Henceforth all the stories about Nasrudin became works of 'independent' art. They could be understood as jokes, they had a metaphysical meaning; they were infinitely complex and partook of the nature of completion and perfection which had been stolen from human consciousness by the vitiating activities of the Old Villain.

Baraka, looked at from the ordinary viewpoint, has many 'magical' qualities—although it is essentially a unity and the fuel as well as the substance of objective reality. One of these qualities is that anyone who is endowed with it, or any object with which it is associated, retains a quota of it, no matter how much it may be altered by the impact of unregenerate people. Hence, the mere repetition of a Nasrudin jest takes with it some *baraka*; pondering over it brings more.

"So that by this method the teachings of Nasrudin in the line of Hussein were impressed forever within a vehicle which could not be

utterly distorted beyond repair. Just as all water is essentially water, so within the Nasrudin experiences there is an irreducible minimum which answers a call, and which grows when it is invoked."

This minimum is truth, and through truth, real consciousness.

Nasrudin is the mirror in which one sees oneself. Unlike an ordinary mirror, the more it is gazed into, the more of the original Nasrudin is projected into it. This mirror is likened to the celebrated Cup of Jamshid, the Persian hero; which mirrors the whole world, and into which the Sufis 'gaze.'

Since Sufism is not built upon artificial conduct or behaviour in the sense of external detail, but upon comprehensive detail, the Nasrudin stories must be experienced as well as thought about. Further, the experiencing of each story will contribute toward the 'homecoming' of the mystic. One of the first developments of homecoming is when the Sufi shows signs of superior perception. He will be able to understand a situation, for example, by inspiration, not formal cerebration. His actions, as a result, may sometimes baffle observers working on the ordinary plane of consciousness: but his results will nevertheless be correct.

One Nasrudin story, showing how the right result comes for the Sufi through a special mechanism ('the wrong method,' to the uninitiated) explains much of the seeming eccentricities of Sufis:

Two men came before Nasrudin when he was acting in his capacity of magistrate. One said, "This man has bitten my ear—I demand compensation." The other said, "He bit it himself." Nasrudin adjourned the case and withdrew to his chambers. There, he spent half an hour trying to bite his own ear. All that he

succeeded in doing was falling over in the attempt, and bruising his fore-head. Then he returned to the courtroom.

"Examine the man whose ear was bitten," he ordered. "If his fore-head is bruised, he did it himself, and the case is dismissed. If not, the other one did it, and the bitten man is compensated with three silver pieces." The right verdict had been arrived at by seemingly illogical methods.

Here, Nasrudin arrived at the correct answer, irrespective of the apparent logic of the situation. In another story, himself adopting the role of fool ('the Path of Blame,' to the Sufi), Nasrudin illustrates, in extreme form, ordinary human thinking:

Someone asked Nasrudin to guess what he had in his hand.

"Give me a clue," said the Mulla.

"I'll give you several," said the wag. "It is shaped like an egg, egg-sized, looks, tastes and smells like an egg. Inside it is yellow and white. It is liquid within before you cook it, coalesces with heat. It was, moreover, laid by a hen...."

"I know!" interrupted the Mulla. "It is some sort of cake."

I tried a similar experiment in London. At three tobacconists I successively asked for "cylinders of paper filled with particles of tobacco, about three inches long, packed in cartons, probably with printing on them."

None of the people who sold cigarettes all day long could identify what I wanted. Two directed me elsewhere—one to their wholesalers, another to a shop which specialised in exotic imports for smokers.

The word 'cigarette' may be a necessary trigger to describe paper cylinders filled with

tobacco. But the trigger habit, depending upon associations, cannot be used in the same way in perceptive activities. The mistake is in carrying over one form of thinking—however admirable in its proper place—into another context, and trying to use it there.

Rumi tells a story which resembles Nasrudin's tale of the egg, but emphasises another significant factor. A king's son had been placed in the hands of mystical teachers who reported that they now could not teach him any more. In order to test him, the King asked him what he had in his hand. "It is round, metallic and yellow—it must be a sieve," the boy replied. Sufism insists upon a balanced development of inner perceptions and ordinary human conduct and usage.

The assumption that just because one is alive, one is perceptive, is denied by Sufism, as we have already seen. A man may be clinically alive, but perceptively dead. Logic and philosophy will not help him in attaining perception. One aspect of the following story illustrates this:

The Mulla was thinking aloud.

"How do I know whether I am dead or alive?"

"Don't be such a fool," his wife said; "if you were dead your limbs would be cold."

Shortly afterward, Nasrudin was in the forest cutting wood. It was mid-winter. Suddenly, he realized that his hands and feet were cold.

"I am undoubtedly dead," he thought; "so I must stop working, because corpses do not work."

And, because corpses do not walk about, he lay down on the grass.

Soon, a pack of wolves appeared and started to attack Nasrudin's donkey, which was tethered to a tree.

"Yes, carry on, take advantage of a dead man," said Nasrudin from his prone position; "but if I had been alive I would not have allowed you to take liberties with my donkey."

The preparation of the Sufi mind cannot be adequate until the man knows that he has to make something for himself—and stops thinking that others can make it for him. Nasrudin brings the ordinary man under his magnifying lens:

One day, Nasrudin went into the shop of a man who sold all kinds of miscellaneous things.

"Have you leather?"

"Yes"

"And nails?"

"Yes."

"And dye?"

"Yes."

"Then why don't you make yourself a pair of boots?"

The story emphasises the role of the mystical master, essential in Sufism, who provides the starting point for the would-be seeker to do something about himself—that something being the 'self-work' under guidance which is the outstanding characteristic of the Sufi system.

The Sufi quest cannot be carried out in unacceptable company. Nasrudin emphasizes this point in his tale of the ill-timed invitation:

The hour was late, and the Mulla had been talking to his friends in a tea-house. As they left, they realized that they were hungry. "Come and eat at my home, all of you," said Nasrudin, without thinking of the consequences.

When the party had nearly arrived at his house, he thought he should go on ahead and tell his

wife. "You stay here while I warn her," he told them.

When he told her, she said, "There is nothing in the house! How dare you invite all those people!"

Nasrudin went upstairs and hid himself.

Presently, hunger drove his guests to approach the house and knock on the door.

Nasrudin's wife answered. "The Mulla is not at home!"

"But we saw him going in through the front door," they shouted.

She could not think, for the moment, of anything to say.

Overcome by anxiety, Nasrudin, who had been watching the interchange from an upstairs window, leaned out and said, "I could have gone out again by the back door, couldn't I?"

Several of the Nasrudin tales emphasise the falsity of the general human belief that man has a stable consciousness. At the mercy of inner and outer impacts, the behaviour of almost anyone will vary in accordance with his mood and his state of health. While this fact is of course, recognised in social life, it is not fully admitted in formal philosophy or metaphysics. At best, the individual is expected to create in himself a frame-work of devoutness or concentration through which it is hoped that he will attain illumination or fulfilment.

In Sufism, it is the entire consciousness which has ultimately to be transmuted, starting from the recognition that the unregenerate man is very little more than raw material. He has no fixed nature, no unity of consciousness. Inside him there is an 'essence.' This is not yoked to his whole being, or even his personality. Ultimately, nobody automatically knows who he really is. This in spite of the fiction to the contrary. Thus, Nasrudin:

The Mulla walked into a shop one day.

The owner came forward to serve him.

"Forest things first," said Nasrudin; "did you see me walk into your shop?"

"Of course."

"Have you ever seen me before?"

"Never in my life." "Then how do you know it is *me*?"

Excellent as this may be as a mere joke, those who regard it as the idea of a stupid man, and containing no deeper significance, will not be people who are in a position to benefit from its regenerative power. You extract from a Nasrudin story only a very little more than you put into it; if it appears to be no more than a joke to a person, that person is in the need of further self-work. He is caricatured in the Nasrudin inter-change about the moon:

"What do they do with the moon when it is old?" a stupid man asked the Mulla.

The answer fitted the question: "They cut each old moon up into forty stars."

Many of the Nasrudin tales highlight the fact that people seeking mystical attainment expect it on their own terms, and hence generally exclude themselves from it before they start. Nobody can hope to arrive at illumination if he thinks that he knows what it is, and believes that he can achieve it through a well-defined path which can conceive at the moment of starting. Hence, the story of the woman and the sugar:

When Nasrudin was a magistrate, a woman came to him with her son. "This youth," she said, "eats too much sugar. I cannot afford to keep him in it. Therefore, I ask you formally to forbid him to eat it, as he will not obey me."

Nasrudin told her to come back in seven days.

When she returned, he postponed his decision for yet another week.

"Now," he said to the youth, "I forbid you to eat more than such and such a quantity of sugar everyday."

The woman subsequently asked him why so much time had been necessary before a simple order could be given.

"Because, madam, I had to see whether I myself could cut down on the use of sugar, before ordering anyone else to do it,"

The woman's request had been made, in accordance with most automatic human thinking, simply on the basis of certain assumptions. The first was that justice can be done merely by giving injunctions; secondly, that a person could in fact eat as little sugar as she wanted her son to eat; thirdly, that a thing can be communicated to another person by someone who is not himself involved in it.

This tale is not simply a way of paraphrasing the statement: "Do as I say, not as I do". Far from being an ethical teaching, it is one of grim necessity.

Sufi teaching can only be done by a Sufi, not by a theoretician or intellectual exponent.

Sufism, since it is the attunement with true reality, cannot be made closely to resemble what we take to be reality, but which is really more primitive short-term rule of thumb. For example, we tend to look at events one-sidedly. We also assume, without any justification, that an event happens as it were in a vacuum. In actual fact, all events are associated with all other events. It is only when we are ready to experience our inter-relation with the organism of life that we can appreciate mystical experience. If you look at any action which

you do, or which anyone else does, you will find that it was prompted by one of many possible stimuli; and also that it is never an isolated action—it has consequences, many of them ones which you would never expect, certainly which you could not have planned.

Another Nasrudin 'joke' underlines this essential circularity of reality, and the generally invisible interactions which occur:

One day, Nasrudin was walking along a deserted road. Night was falling as he spied a troops of horsemen coming toward him. His imagination began to work, and he feared that they might rob him, or impress him into the army. So strong did this fear become that he leaped over a wall and found himself in a grave-yard. The other travellers, innocent of any such motive as had been assumed by Nasrudin, became curious and pursued him.

When they came upon him lying motionless, one said, "Can we help you—why are you here in this position?"

Nasrudin, realizing his mistake, said, "It is more complicated than you assume. You see, I am here because of you; and you, you are here because of *me*".

It is only the mystic who 'returns' to the formal world after literal experience of the interdependence of seemingly different or unconnected things, who can truly perceive life in this way. To the Sufi, any metaphysical method which does not embrace this factor is a concocted (external) one, and cannot be the product of what he calls mystical experience. Its very existence is a barrier to the attainment of its purported aim.

This is not to say that the Sufi, as a result of his experience becomes divorced from the reality of superficial life. He has an extra dimension of being, which operates parallel to

the lesser congestion of the ordinary man. The Mulla sums this up neatly in another saying:

"I can see in the dark".

"That may be so, Mulla. But if it is true, why do you sometimes carry a conde at night?"

"To prevent other people from bumping into me".

The light carried by the Sufi may be his conforming with the ways of the people among whom he is cast, after his 'return' from being transmuted into a wider perception.

The Sufi, is by virtue of his transmutation, a conscious part of the living reality of all being. This means that he cannot look upon what happens—either to himself or to others—in the limited way in which the philosopher or theologian does. Someone once asked Nasrudin what Fate was. He said, "What you call Fate' is really assumption. You assume that something good or bad is going to happen. The actual result you call Fate", The question, "Are you a fatalist?" cannot be asked of a Sufi, because he does not accept the unsubstantial concept of Fate which is implied in the question.

Similarly, since he can perceive the ramifications in depth of an event, the Sufi's attitude toward individual happenings is comprehensive, not isolated. He cannot generalise from artificially separated data. "Nobody can ride that horse, the King said to me," Said the Mulla; but I climbed into the saddle". "What happened?" "I couldn't move it either". This is intended to show that when an apparently consistent fact is extended along its dimensions, it changes.

The so-called problem of communication, which engages so much attention, hinges on

assumptions that are unacceptable to the Sufi. The ordinary man says:

"How can I communicate with another man beyond very ordinary things?"

The sufi attitude is that

"communication of things which have to be communicated cannot be prevented. It is not that a means has to be found".

Nasrudin and a Yogi in one of the tales, both play the part of ordinary people who have, in fact, nothing to communicate to one another:

One day, Nasrudin saw a strange-looking building at whose foot a contemplative Yogi sat. The Mulla decided that he would learn something from this impressive figure, and started a conversation by asking him who and what he was.

"I am a Yogi", said the other, "and I spend time in trying to attain harmony with all living things".

"That is interesting", said Nasrudin, because a fish once saved my life".

The Yogi begged him to join him, saying that in a life-time devoted to trying to harmonise himself with the animal creation, he had never been so close to such communication as the Mulla had been.

When they had been contemplating for some days, the Yogi begged the Mulla to tell him more of his wonderful experience with the fish, "now that we know one another better".

"Now that I know you better", said Nasrudin, "I doubt whether you would profit by what I have to tell".

But the Yogi insisted, "Very well", said Nasrudin. "The fish saved my life all right. I was starving at the time, and it sufficed me for three days."

The meddling with certain capacities of the mind which characterises so-called

experimental mysticism is something which no Sufi would dare to do. The product of consistent experimentation countless centuries ago, Sufism actually deals in phenomena which are still elusive to the empiric:

Nasrudin was throwing handfuls of bread all round his house.

"What are you doing?" someone asked.

"Keeping the tigers away".

"But there are no tigers around here".

"Exactly. Effective, isn't it?"

One of several Nasrudin tales which are found in Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (Ch. 14) warns of the dangers of rigid intellectualism:

"There is nothing which be answered by means of my doctrine", said a monk who had just entered a tea-house where Nasrudin was sitting with his friends.

"And yet, just a short time ago," replied the Mulla, "I was challenged by a scholar with an unanswerable question."

"If only I had been there! Tell it to me, and I shall answer it".

"Very well. He said, "Why are you trying to get into my house by night?"

The Sufi perception of beauty is associated with a power of penetration which extends beyond the ken of the usual forms of art. One day a disciple had taken Nasrudin to view, for the first time, a beautiful lake-land scene.

"What a delight!" he exclaimed. "But if only, if only..."

"If only what, Mulla?"

"If only they had not put water into it!"

In order to reach the mystic goal, the Sufi must understand that the mind does not work in the manner in which we assume that it does.

Furthermore, too people may merely confuse one another:

One day, the Mulla asked his wife to make a large quantity of *halwa*, a heavy sweet-meat, and gave her all the ingredients. He ate nearly all of it.

"In the middle of the night, Nasrudin woke her up.

"I have just had an important thought".

"Tell it to me."

"Bring me the rest of the *halwa*, and I will tell you".

When she had brought it, she asked he again.

The Mulla first finished up the *halwa*.

"The thought," said Nasrudin, "was: 'Never go to sleep without finishing up all the *halwa* that has been made during that day'".

Nasrudin enables the Sufi Seeker to understand that the formal ideas current about time and space are not necessarily those which obtain the wider field of true reality. People who believe, for instance, that they are being rewarded for past actions and may be rewarded in future doings, cannot be Sufis. The Sufi time conception is an inter-relation—a continuum.

The classic story of the Turkish bath caricatures it in a manner which enables something of the idea to be grasped:

"Nasrudin visited a Turkish bath. Because he was dressed in rags, he was cavalierly treated by the attendants, who gave him an old towel and a scrap of soap. When he left, he handed the amazed bath men a gold coin. The next day, he appeared again, magnificently attired, and was naturally given the best possible attention and deference."

When the bath was over, he presented the bath keepers with the smallest copper coin available.

"This," he said, "was for the attendance last time. The gold coin was for your treatment of me this time."

The residue of pattern-thinking, plus a distinct immaturity of mind, cause people to attempt to enrol themselves in mysticism on their own terms. One of the first things taught to the disciple is that he may have an inkling, of what he needs, and he may realize that he can get it from study and work under a master. But beyond that he can make no conditions. This is the Nasrudin tale which is used to inculcate this truth:

A woman brought her small son to the Mulla's school. "Please frighten him a little," she said, "because he is rather beyond my control."

Nasrudin turned up his eye-balls, started to puff and pant, danced up and down and beat his fists on the table until the horrified woman fainted. Then he rushed out of the room.

When he returned and the woman had recovered consciousness, she said to him, "I asked you to frighten the boy, not me!"

"Madam," said the Mulla, "danger has no favourites. I even frightened myself, as you saw. When danger threatens, it threatens all equally".

Similarly, the Sufi teacher cannot supply his disciple with only a small quantity of Sufism. Sufism is the whole, and carries with it the implications of completeness, not of the fragmentation of consciousness which the unenlightened may use in his own processes, and may call "concentration."

Nasrudin pokes a great deal of fun at the dabblers, who hope to learn, to steal, some deep secret of life, without actually paying for it:

A ship seemed about to sink, and the passengers were on their knees praying and

repenting, promising to make all kinds of amends if only they could be saved. Only Nasrudin was unmoved.

Suddenly, in the midst of the panic he leaped up and shouted, "Steady, now, friends! Don't change your ways—don't be too prodigal. I think I see land."

Nasrudin hammers away at the essential idea—that mystical experience and enlightenment cannot come through a rearrangement of familiar ideas, but through a recognition of the limitations of ordinary thinking, which serves only for mundane purposes. In doing this, he excels beyond any other available form of teaching.

One day, he entered a tea-house and declaimed, "The moon is more useful than the sun."

Someone asked him why.

"Because at night we need the light more."

The conquest of the "Commanding Self" which is an object of the Sufi struggle is not achieved merely by acquiring control over one's passions. It is looked upon as a taming of the wild consciousness which believes that it can take what it needs from everything (including mysticism) and bend it to its own use. The tendency to employ materials from whatever source for personal benefit is understandable in the partially complete world of ordinary life, but cannot be carried over into the greater world of real fulfilment.

In the story of the thieving bird, Nasrudin is carrying home a piece of liver and the recipe for liver pie. Suddenly, a bird of prey swoops down and snatches the meat from his hand. As it wings away, Nasrudin calls after it, "Foolish bird! You may have the liver, but what will you do without the recipe?"

From the kite's point of view, of course, the liver is sufficient for its needs. The result

may be a satiated kite, but it gets only what it thinks it wants, not what could have been.

Since the Sufi is not always understood by other people, they will seek to make him conform to their idea of what is right. In another Nasrudin bird story (which also appears in Rumi's poetic masterpiece, the *Mathnawi*), the Mulla finds a king's hawk perched on his window sill. He has never seen such a strange 'pigeon.' After cutting its aristocratic beak straight and clipping its talons, he sets it free, saying: 'Now you look more like a bird. Someone had neglected you.'

The artificial division of life, thought and action, so necessary in ordinary human undertakings, has no place in Sufism. Nasrudin inculcates this idea as a pre-requisite to understanding life as a whole.

"Sugar dissolved in milk permeates all the milk."

Nasrudin was walking along a dusty road with a friend, when they realized that they were very thirsty. They stopped at a tea house and found that they had between them only enough money to buy a glass of milk. The friend said: "Drink your half first; I have a twist of sugar here which I will add to my share."

"Add it now, brother, and we shall both partake," said the Mulla.

"No, there is not enough to sweeten a whole glass."

Nasrudin went to the kitchen, and came back with a salt-cellar. "Good news, friend—I am having my half with salt—and there is enough for the whole glass."

Although, in the practical but nonetheless artificial world which we have created for ourselves, we are accustomed to assuming that "first things come first," and that there must be

an A to Z of every thing, this assumption cannot hold good in the differently orientated metaphysical world. The Sufi Seeker will learn, at one and the same time, several different things, at their own levels of perception and potentiality. This is another difference between Sufism and the systems which rest on the assumption that only one thing is being learned at any one moment.

A dervish teacher comments upon this multiform relationship of Nasrudin with the Seeker. The tale, he says, is in a way like a peach. It has beauty, nutrition, and hidden depths—the kernel.

A person may be emotionally stirred by the exterior; laugh at the joke, or look at the beauty. But this is only as if the peach were lent to you. All that is really absorbed is the form and colour, perhaps the aroma, the shape and texture.

“You can eat the peach, and taste a further delight—understand its depth. The peach contributes to your nutrition, becomes a part of yourself. You can throw away the stone—or crack it and find a delicious kernel within. This is the hidden depth. It has its own colour, size, form, depth, taste, function. You can collect the shells of this nut, and with them fuel a fire. Even if the charcoal is of no further use, the edible portion has become a part of you.”

As soon as the Seeker gains some degree of insight into the real workings of existence, he ceases to ask the questions which once seemed such urgently relevant ones to the whole picture. Further, he sees that a situation can be changed by events which seemingly have no relevance to it. The tale of the blanket spotlights this:

“Nasrudin and his wife woke one night to hear two men fighting below their window. She sent

the Mulla out to find out what the trouble was. He wrapped his blanket over his shoulders and went downstairs. As soon as he approached the men, one of them snatched his one and only blanket”. Then they both ran off.

“What was the fight about, dear?” his wife asked as he entered the bedroom.

“About my blanket, apparently. As soon as they got that, they went away.”

A neighbour went to Nasrudin, asking to borrow his donkey. “It is out on loan,” said the Mulla.

At that moment the donkey was heard to bray, somewhere inside the stable.

“But I can hear it bray, over there.”

“Whom do you believe,” said Nasrudin; “me or a donkey?”

Experience of this dimension of reality enables the Sufi to avoid selfishness and the exercise of the mechanism of rationalisation—the way of thought which imprisons a part of the mind. Nasrudin, in playing the part of a typical human being for a moment, brings this point home to us:

A yokel came to the Mulla and said, “Your bull gored my cow. Am I entitled to any compensation?”

“No,” said the Mulla at once; the bull is not responsible for its actions.”

“Sorry,” said the crafty villager, ‘I put it the wrong way around. I meant that it was *your* cow which was gored by *my* bull. But the situation is the same.”

“Oh no,” said Nasrudin; “I think I had better look up my law books to see whether there is a precedent for this.”

Because the whole body of intellectual human thought is expressed in terms of external reasoning, Nasrudin as the Sufi teacher returns

again and again to an exposure of the falsity of ordinary assessment. Attempts at putting into speech or writing the mystical experience itself have never succeeded, because "those who know do not need it; those who do not know cannot gain it without a bridge." Two stories of some importance are often used in conjunction with Sufi teaching to prepare the mind for experiences outside the usual habit-patterns.

In the first tale, Nasrudin is visited by a would-be disciple. The man, after many vicissitudes arrives at the hut on the mountain side where the Mulla is sitting. Knowing that every single action of the illuminated Sufi is meaningful, the newcomer asks Nasrudin why he is blowing on his hands. "To warm myself in the cold, of course."

Shortly afterward, Nasrudin pours out two bowls of soup, and blows on his own. "Why are you doing that, Master?" asks the disciple. "To cool it, of course," says the teacher.

At this point the disciple leaves Nasrudin, unable to trust any longer a man who uses the same process to arrive at different results — heat and cold.

Examining a thing by means of itself—the mind by means of the mind, creation as it appears to a created but undeveloped being—cannot be done. Theorising based on such subjective methods may hold good in the short run, or for specific purposes. To the Sufi, however, such theories do not represent truth. While he obviously cannot provide an alternative in mere words, he can—and does—magnify or caricature the process in order to expose it. Once this is done, the door is open for seeking an alternative system of assessment of the correlation of phenomena.

"Everyday," says Nasrudin to his wife, "I am more and more amazed at the efficient way in which this world is organised—generally for the benefit of mankind."

"What exactly do you mean?"

"Well, take camels for instance. Why do you suppose they have no wings?"

"I have no idea."

"Well, then; just imagine, if camels had wings, they might nest on the roofs of houses and destroy our peace by romping about above and spitting their cud down at us."

The role of the Sufi teacher is stressed in his famous story of the sermon. It shows (among other things, as in all Nasrudin tales) that no start can be made on completely ignorant people. Further, that those who know need not be taught. Finally, that if there are some enlightened people in a community, there is no need for a new teacher.

Nasrudin was invited to give a discourse to the inhabitants of a nearby village. He mounted the rostrum and began.

"O people, do you know what I am about to tell you?"

Some rowdies, seeking to amuse themselves, shouted, "No!"

"In that case," said the Mulla with dignity, "I shall abstain from trying to instruct such an ignorant community."

The following week, having obtained an assurance from the hooligans that they would not repeat their remarks, the elders of the village again prevailed upon Nasrudin to address them.

"O people!" he began again; "do you know what I am about to say to you?"

Some of the people, uncertain as to how to react, for he was gazing at them fiercely, muttered, "Yes."

"In that case," retorted Nasrudin, "there is no need for me to say more." He left the hall.

On the third occasion, when a deputation had again visited him and implored him to make one further effort, he presented himself before the assembly.

"O people! Do you know what I am about to say?"

Since he seemed to demand a reply, the villagers shouted, "Some of us do, and some of us do not."

"In that case," said Nasrudin as he withdrew, "let those who know tell those who do not."

In Sufism one cannot start the 'work' at a pre-determined point. The teacher must be allowed to guide each would-be illuminate in his own way. Nasrudin was once approached by a young man who asked him how long it would take before he became a Sufi.

He took the young man to the village. "Before I answer your question, I want you to come with me, as I am going to see a music master about learning to play the lute."

At the musician's house Nasrudin inquired about the fees.

"Three pieces of silver for the first month. After that, one silver piece a month."

"Splendid!" shouted the Mulla; "I shall be back in a month's time!"

The sixth sense which the Sufi acquires, which is assumed by theoreticians to be a sense of complete prescience, of almost divine all-knowledge, is nothing of the kind. Like all the other senses it has its limitations. Its function is not to make the Perfected Man all-wise, but to enable him to fulfil a mission of greater perception and fuller life. He no longer suffers from the sense of uncertainty and incompleteness which is familiar to other

people. The story of the boys wanted to run away with Nasrudin's slippers.

As he came along the road they crowded around him and said, "Mulla, nobody can climb this tree!"

"Of course they can," said Nasrudin. "I shall show you how, then you will be able to do it."

He was about to leave his slippers on the ground, but something warned him, and he tucked them into his belt before starting his climb.

The boys were discomfited. "What are you taking your slippers for?" one shouted up to him.

"Since this tree has not been climbed, how do I know that there is not a road up there?" the Mulla answered.

When the Sufi is using his intuition, he cannot explain his actions plausibly.

The sixth sense also gives the possessor of *baraka* the means apparently to create certain happenings. This capacity comes to the Sufi by a means other than using formal reasoning:

"Allah will provide recompense," said Nasrudin to a man who had been robbed.

"I don't see how it could work," said the man.

Nasrudin immediately took him into a nearby mosque and told him to stand in a corner. Then the Mulla started to weep and wail, calling upon Allah to restore to the man his twenty silver coins. He made such a disturbance that the congregation made a collection and handed that sum to the man.

"You may not understand the means which operate in this world," said Nasrudin; "but perhaps, you will understand what has happened in Allah's house."

Participating in the working of reality is very different from intellectual extensions of observed fact. In order to demonstrate this, Nasrudin once took the slowest of lumbering oxen to a horse race which accepted all entrants.

Everyone laughed, for it is well-known that an ox cannot run at any speed.

"Nonsense," said the Mulla; "it certainly will run very fast indeed, given a chance. Why, when it was a calf, you should have seen how it ran. Now, though it has had no practice, no occasion to run, in its fully grown. Why should it not run even faster?"

The story also combats the belief that just because a thing—or person—is old, it is necessarily better than something which is young. Sufism as a conscious and living activity is not tied to the past or hide-bound tradition. Every Sufi who is living today represents every Sufi who has lived in the past, or who will ever live. The same amount of *baraka* is there, and immemorial tradition does not increase its romance, which remains constant.

A further depth of this tale points out that the disciple (the calf) may develop into someone with an apparently different function (the ox) from what one might have assumed. The clock cannot be turned back. Those who rely upon speculative theory cannot rely upon Sufism.

The absence of an intuitive faculty in mankind in general produces an almost hopeless situation; and many Nasrudin tales emphasise this fact.

Nasrudin plays the part of the insensitive, ordinary dervish in the story of the bag of rice. One day, he disagreed with the prior of a monastery at which he was staying. Shortly afterward, a bag of rice was missing. The chief

ordered everyone to line up in the courtyard. Then he told them that the man who had stolen the rice had some grains of it in his beard.

"This is an old trick, to make the guilty party touch his beard involuntarily," thought the real thief, and stood firm.

Nasrudin, on the other hand, thought, "The prior is out to revenge himself upon me. He must have planted rice in my beard!" He tried to brush it off as inconspicuously as he could.

As his fingers combed his beard, he realized that everyone was looking at him.

"I *knew*, somehow, that he would trap me sooner or later," said Nasrudin.

What some people take to be "hunches" are often really the products of neurosis and imagination.

The spirit of scepticism about metaphysical matters is by no means confined to the West. In the East it is not uncommon for people to say that they feel that discipleship in a mystical school will deprive them of their autonomy, or otherwise rob them of something. Such people are generally ignored by Sufis, because they have not yet reached the stage where they realize that they are already prisoners of a far worse tyranny (that of the Old Villain) than anything which could be devised for them in a mystical school. There is one succinct Nasrudin joke, however, which points this out:

"I hear a burglar downstairs," the Mulla's wife whispered to him one night.

"Not a sound," replied Nasrudin. "We have nothing for him to steal. With any luck, *he* might leave something behind."

Nasrudin, burglar of many empty houses, always leaves something behind—if the inhabitants recognise it.

In Sufism, practical methods of instruction are essential. This is partly because Sufism is an active undertaking; partly because, although people pay lip service to truths when they are told them, the reality of the truth does not usually penetrate beyond their discursive faculty.

Nasrudin was mending the roof one day when a man called him down into the street. When he went down he asked the man what he wanted.

"Money."

"Why did you not say so when you called to me?"

"I was ashamed to beg."

"Come up to the roof."

When they reached the roof, Nasrudin started to lay the tiles again. The man coughed, and Nasrudin, without looking up, said "I have no money for you."

"What! You could have told me that without bringing me up here."

"Then how would you have been able to recompense me for bringing me down?"

A great many things are instantly obvious to the Sufi, which cannot be arrived at by the average man. An allegory is used to explain some of the amazing acts of Sufi initiates, based upon super-sensory powers. To the Sufi, these are no more miracles than any of the ordinary senses are to the layman. Just how they work cannot be described; but a rough analogy can be drawn.

"Mankind is asleep," said Nasrudin, when he had been accused of falling asleep at court one day. 'The sleep of the sage is powerful, and the 'wakefulness' of the average man is almost useless to anyone."

The King was annoyed.

The next day, after a heavy meal, Nasrudin fell sleep, and the King had him carried into an adjoining room. When the court was about to rise, Nasrudin, still slumbering, was brought back to the audience chamber.

"You have been asleep again," said the King.

"I have been as awake as I needed to be."

"Very well, then, tell me what happened while you were out of the room."

To everyone's astonishment, the Mulla repeated a long and involved story that the King had been reciting.

"How did you do it, Nasrudin?"

"Simple," said the Mulla; "I could tell by the expression on the face of the King that he was about to tell that old story again. That is why I went to sleep for its duration."

Nasrudin and his wife are presented in the next story as two ordinary people, who are man and wife, yet separated in understanding of each other by the fact that ordinary human communication is faulty and insincere. The communication between Sufis is of a different order. Further, it is hopeless to try to use the crudity and dishonesty of ordinary communication for mystical purposes. At least, the various methods of communication are combined by Sufis to produce an altogether different signalling system.

The Mulla's wife was angry with him. She accordingly brought him his soup boiling hot, and did not warn him that it might scald him.

But she was hungry herself, and as soon as the soup was served, she took a gulp of it. Tears of pain came to her eyes. But she still hoped that the Mulla would burn himself.

"My dear, what is the matter?" asked Nasrudin.

"I was only thinking about my poor old mother. She used to like this soup, when she was alive."

Nasrudin took a scalding mouthful from his own bowl.

Tears coursed down his cheek.

"Are you crying, Nasrudin?"

"Yes, I am crying at the thought that your old mother is dead, poor thing; and left someone like you in the land of the living."

Seen from the stand-point of reality, which is the Sufi one, other metaphysical systems contain several severe drawbacks, some of which are worth considering. What a mystic has to say of his experiences, when reported in words, always constitutes nearly useless distortion of fact. Furthermore, this distortion can be repeated by no illuminative value. For the Sufi, mysticism is not a matter of going somewhere and gained enlightenment, and then trying to express something of it. It is an undertaking which correlates with his very being and produces a link between all humanity and the extra dimension of understanding.

All these points—and several more—are made concurrently in one of the Nasrudin tales:

The Mulla had returned to his village from the imperial capital, and the villagers gathered around to hear what he had to say of his adventures.

"At this time," said Nasrudin, "I only want to say that King spoke to me."

There was a gasp of excitement. A citizen of their village had actually been spoken to by the King! The titbit was more than enough for the yokels. They dispersed to pass on the wonderful news.

But the least sophisticated of all hung back, and asked the Mulla exactly what the King had said.

"What 'Get out of my way!'"

The simpleton was more than satisfied. His heart expanded with joy. Had he not, after all, heard words actually used by the King; and seen the man to whom they had been addressed?

The story is popularly current among the folk tales of Nasrudin, and its obvious moral is aimed against name droppers. But the Sufic meaning is important in preparing the dervish mind for the experiences which replace superficial ones like this.

It is more than interesting to observe the effect of Nasrudin tales upon people in general. Those who prefer the more ordinary emotions of life will cling to their obvious meaning, and insist upon treating them as jokes. These include the people who compile or read small booklets of the more obvious jests, and who show visible uneasiness when the metaphysical or "upsetting" stories are told them.

Nasrudin himself answers these people in one of his shortest jokes:

"They say your jokes are full of hidden meanings, Nasrudin. Are they?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"Because I have never told the truth in my life, even once; neither will I ever be able to do so."

The ordinary individual may say, with a sense of profundity, that all humour is really serious; that every joke carries a message on a philosophical level. But this message system is not that of Nasrudin. The cynical humorist, it may be supposed, like the Greek philosopher, may point out absurdities in our thoughts and actions. This is not the role of Nasrudin either—because the over-all effect of Nasrudin is

something more profound. Since the Mulla stories all have a coherent relationship with one another and with a form of reality which the Sufi is teaching, the cycle is a part of a context of conscious development which cannot be correctly related to the snipping of the ordinary humorist or the sporadic satiricism of the formal thinker.

When a Nasrudin tale is read and digested, something is happening. It is this consciousness of happening and continuity which is central to Sufism.

In reply to the question, "What method lacks Sufism?" Khoja Anis said, "Without continuity, there is no Sufism; without being and becoming, there is no Sufism; without inter-relation, there is no Sufism."

This truth is to an extent transmitted by words. Better still, it is partially conveyed by the mutual action of the words and the reaction of the hearer. But the Sufi experience comes by means of a mechanism which takes over at the point where words leave off—the point of action, of 'working with' a master.

Nasrudin once illustrated this in his famous 'Chinese' story. He had gone to China, where he gathered a circle of disciples, whom he was preparing for enlightenment. Those who became illuminated, travelled from Persia to China to continue their studies with him. After their first lecture, he received them.

"Why, Mulla," one of them asked, 'do you lecture on secret words which we (unlike the Chinese) can understand? They are *namidanam* and *hichmalumnist*! They mean, in merely 'I don't know' and Nobody Knows'"

"What would you have me do instead—lie my head off?" asked Nasrudin.

Sufis use technical terms to render an approximate equivalent of mysteries which are

experiences not to be verbalised. Until the Seeker is ready to 'catch' the experience, he is protected from making the mistake of trying to investigate it intellectually by the very use of these technicalities. Itself the result of conscious specialization, Sufism has discovered that there is no short-cut to enlightenment. This does not mean that the enlightenment may take a long time. It does mean that the Sufi must stick to the Path.

Nasrudin, playing the part of the man who seeks a short-cut, figures in a joke which conveys this idea:

It was a wonderful morning, and the Mulla was walking home. Why, he thought to himself, should he not take a short-cut through the beautiful woodland beside the dusty road?

"A day of days, a day for fortunate pursuits!" he exclaimed to himself, plunging into the greenery.

Almost at once, he found himself lying at the bottom of a concealed pit.

"It is just as well I took this short-cut," he reflected, as he lay there; "because if things like this can happen in the midst of such beauty—what catastrophe might not have developed on that uncompromisingly tiresome highway?"

Under somewhat similar circumstances, the Mulla was once seen investigating an empty nest:

"What are you doing, Mulla?"

"Looking for eggs."

"There are no eggs in last year's nest!"

"Don't be too sure," said Nasrudin; "if you were a bird and wanted to protect your eggs, would you build a new nest, with everyone watching?"

This is another of the Mulla's tales which appear in *Don Quixote*. The fact that this joke can be read in at least two ways might deter the formalist thinker, but provides the dervish with the opportunity of understanding the duality of real being, which is obscured by conventional human thinking. Hence, what is its absurdity to the intellectual becomes its strength to the intuitively perceptive.

Contact between Sufis sometimes takes place by means of signs, and communication can be carried on through methods which are not only unknown, but could appear incomprehensible, to the mind conditioned in the ordinary way. This, of course, does not prevent the pattern-thinker from trying to make sense out of what seems nonsense. In the end he gets the wrong interpretation, though it may satisfy him.

Another mystic stopped Nasrudin in the street, and pointed at the sky. He meant, "There is only one truth, which covers all."

Nasrudin was accompanied at the time by a scholar, who was seeking the rationale of Sufism. He said to himself, "This weird apparition is mad. Perhaps, Nasrudin will take some precautions against him."

Sure enough, the Mulla rummaged in his knapsack and brought out a coil of rope. The scholar thought, "Excellent, we will be able to seize and bind up the madman if he becomes violent."

Nasrudin's action had, in fact, meant, "Ordinary humanity tries to reach that 'sky' by methods as unsuitable as this rope."

The 'madman' laughed and walked away. 'Well done,' said the scholar; "you saved us from him."

This story has given rise to a Persian proverb. "A question about the sky—the answer

about a rope." The proverb, often invoked by non-Sufi clerics or intellectuals, is often used in a contrary sense to its initiatory one.

Knowledge cannot be attained without effort—a fact which is fairly generally accepted. But the ludicrous methods which are used to project effort, and the absurdity of the efforts themselves, effectively close the gateway to knowledge for people who try to transfer the learning systems of one field into that of another.

Yogurt is made by adding a small quantity of old yogurt to a larger measure of milk. The action of the *bacillus bulgaricus* in the seeding portion of yogurt will in time convert the whole into a mass of new yogurt.

One day, some friends saw Nasrudin down on his knees beside a pond. He was adding a little old yogurt to the water. One of the men said, "What are you trying to do, Nasrudin?" "I am trying to make yogurt."

"But you can't make yogurt in that way!"

"Yes, I know; but just *supposing it takes!*"

Almost anyone will smile at the idiocy of the ignorant Mulla. Some people believe that many forms of humour depend for their enjoyment value on the knowledge that one would not be as much of a fool as the person laughed at. Millions of people who would not try to make yogurt with water would attempt to penetrate esoteric thinking by equally futile methods.

One tale attributed to Mulla Nasrudin goes a long way toward distinguishing between the mystical quest in itself and the form which is based upon lesser, ethical or formally religious criteria:

A Chinese sage is represented as having said to Nasrudin, "Each person must regard his

behaviour as he would regard that of the other. You must have in your heart for the other what you have in your heart for yourself."

This is not a paraphrase of the Christian Golden Rule, though it contains the same sentiment. It is, in fact, a quotation from Confucius (born 551 B.C.).

"This would be an astonishing remark," replied the Mulla, "for anyone who paused to realize that what a man desired for himself is likely to be as undesirable in the end as what he would desire for his enemy, let alone his friend.

"What he must have in his heart for others is not what he wants for himself. It is what *should* be for him, and what *should* be for all. This is known only when inner truth is known."

Another version of this reply says tersely, "A bird ate poisonous berries, which did it no harm. One day, it collected some for its meal, and sacrificed its lunch by feeding the fruit to its friend, a horse."

Another Sufi master, Amini of Samarkand, comments tersely on this theme, as did Rumi before him: "A man wished another man to kill him. Naturally, he wished this for everyone else, since he was a 'good man. The 'good' man is, of course, the man who wants for others what he wants for himself. The single problem of this is that what he wants is often the last thing which he needs."

Again, there is the insistence in Sufism upon the reality which must precede the ethic—not the ethic merely set up in isolation and assumed to have some sort of universal validity which even general consideration can show to be absent.

The Nasrudin stories cannot, incidentally, be read as a system of philosophy which is intended to persuade people to drop their beliefs and embrace its precepts. By its very

construction, Sufism cannot be preached. It does not rely upon underlining other systems and offering a substitute, or a more plausible one. Because Sufi teaching is only partially expressed in words, it can never attempt to combat philosophical systems on their own terms. To attempt to do so would be to try to make Sufism accord with artificialities—an impossibility. By its own contention, metaphysics cannot be approached in their way; so Sufism relies upon the composite impact—the 'scatter' dissemination. The would-be Sufi may be prepared or partially enlightened by Nasrudin. But in order to 'mature' he will have to engage in the practical work, and benefit from the actual presence of a master and of other Sufis. Anything else is referred to by the pithy term, "Trying to transmit a kiss by personal messenger." It is a kiss, sure enough; but it is not what was intended.

If Sufism is accepted to be the methodology whereby the injunctions of religious teachers may be given their real expression, how is the would-be Sufi to find a source of instruction for an instructor he must have?

The true master cannot prevent the growth and development of supposedly mystical schools which accept pupils and perpetuate the counterfeit version of illuminative teaching. Still less, if we are to see the facts objectively, is the tyro able to distinguish between a true and a false school. "The false coin exists only because there is such a thing as true gold," runs the Sufi dictum—but how can the true be distinguished from the false by someone who has no training in so doing?

The beginner is saved from complete insensitivity because within him there is a vestigial capacity to react to 'true gold.' And the teacher, recognising the innate capacity, will

be able to use it as a receiving apparatus for his signals. True, in the earlier stages, the signals transmitted by the teacher will have to be arranged in such a way as to be perceptible to the inefficient and probably distorting mechanism of the receiver. But the combination of the two elements provides a basis for a working arrangement.

At this stage the teacher marks time to a great extent. Several Nasrudin tales, in addition to their entertainment value, emphasised the initial seemingly incomplete harmony between the teacher and the taught which occupies a preparatory period:

A number of would-be disciples came to the Mulla one day and asked him to give them a lecture. 'Very well,' he said, 'follow me to the lecture hall.'

Obediently they lined up behind Nasrudin, who mounted his donkey back to front, and moved off. At first the youths were confused, later they remembered that they should not question even the slightest action of a teacher. Finally, they could not bear the jeers of the ordinary passers-by.

Sensing their unease, the Mulla stopped and stared at them. The boldest of them all approached him.

"Mulla, we do not quite understand why you are riding that donkey face to tail."

"Quite simple," said the Mulla. "You see, if you were to walk in front of me, this would be disrespect toward you. This is the sole possible compromise."

To someone whose perception is sharpened, more than one dimension of this and other stories becomes apparent. The net effect of experiencing a tale at several different levels at once is to awaken the innate capacity for understanding on a comprehensive, more

objective manner than is possible to the ordinary, pains-taking and inefficient way of thinking. The Sufi, for instance, sees in this story, at one and the same time, messages and linkages with the other sphere of being which not only help him on his way but also give also positive information. To a small extent the ordinary thinker may be able to experience (*mutatis mutandis*) the different perspectives by considering them separately.

For instance, Nasrudin is able to observe the pupils by sitting back to front. He is unconcerned as to what other people will think of him, while the undeveloped students are still sensitive to public (and uninformed) opinion. He may be sitting back to front, but he is still mounted, while they are not. Nasrudin, in violating the ordinary conventions, even making himself appear ridiculous, is stating that he is different from the average person. Since, too, he has been along that path before, he does not need to face forward, to look where he is going. Again, in that position, uncomfortable by average standards, he is able to keep his equilibrium. He is, again, teaching by doing and being, not by words.

Such considerations, transposed into the field of metaphysics and then experienced concurrently, provide the total, yet composite impact of the Nasrudin story upon the progressing mystic.

Nasrudin's guile, made necessary by the need to slip through the mesh which has been arranged by the Old Villain, appears in one story after another. His seeming madness is characteristic of the Sufi, whose actions may be inexplicable and appear mad to the on-looker. In story after story he stresses the Sufi assertion that nothing can be had without paying for it. This paying may take one of many forms

of sacrifice— of cherished ideas, of money, of ways of doing things. This latter point is essential because the Sufi quest is impossible if the areas employed in the journey are already occupied by elements which prevent the journey being pursued.

And yet, in the end, Nasrudin gets away scot-free. This indicates the fact that although deprivation in the early stages of Sufism may appear to be 'paying,' in the true sense the Seeker does not pay at all. He does not pay, that is to say, anything of ultimate worth.

The Sufi attitude toward money is a special one, far removed from the shallower, philosophical or theological assumption that money is the root of evil, or that faith is in some way opposed to money.

One day, Nasrudin asked a wealthy man for some money.

"What do you want it for?"

"To buy an elephant."

"If you have no money you will not be able to maintain an elephant."

"I asked for *money*, not advice!"

The link here is with the elephant in the dark. Nasrudin needs money for the 'work.' The rich man, Nasrudin realizes, cannot re-adjust his ideas to see how the money would be spent; he would need a plausible scheme of finance to be put before him. Nasrudin uses the Sufi word 'elephant' to stress this. Naturally, the rich man does not understand.

Nasrudin is poor; the word being the same one which is used by Sufis to denote one of their number— Fakir. When he does in fact obtain money, he does so by a method, and uses it in a way which is incomprehensible to the formalist thinker:

One day, the Mulla's wife was upbraiding him for being poor.

"If you are a man of religion," she said, "you should pray for money. If that is your employment, you should be paid for it, just as anyone else is paid."

"Very well, I shall do just that."

Going into the garden, Nasrudin shouted at the top of his voice, "O God! I have served you all these years without financial gain. My wife now says that I should be paid. May I therefore, and at once, have a hundred gold pieces of my outstanding salary?"

A miser who lived in the next house was at that moment on his roof counting his riches. Thinking that he would make a fool of Nasrudin, he threw down in front of him a bag containing exactly a hundred golden dinars.

"Thank you," said Nasrudin, and hurried into the house.

He showed the coins to his wife, who was very impressed.

"Forgive me," she said, "I never really believed that you were a saint, but I now see that you are."

During the next day or two, the neighbour saw all manner of luxuries being delivered at the Mulla's house. He began to grow restive. He presented himself at Nasrudin's door.

"Know, fellow," said the Mulla, "I am a saint. What do you want?"

"I want my money back. I threw down that bag of gold, not God."

"You may have been the *instrument*, but the gold did not come as a result of my asking *you* for it."

The miser was beside himself. "I shall take you at once to the magistrate, and we will have justice."

Nasrudin agreed. As soon as they were outside, Nasrudin said to the miser, 'I am dressed in rags. If I appear beside you before the magistrate, the disparity of our appraises may well prejudice the court in your favour.'

'Very well,' snarled the miser, 'take my robe and I will wear yours.'

They had gone a few yards farther when Nasrudin said, 'You are riding and I am on foot. If we appear like this before the magistrate he may well think that he should give the verdict to you.'

'I know who is going to win this case, no matter what he looks like! *You* ride on my horse.'

Nasrudin mounted the horse, while his neighbourly walked behind.

When their turn came, the miser explained what had happened to the judge.

'And what have you got to say to this charge?' the judge asked of the Mulla.

'Your honour. This man is a miser, and he is also suffering from delusions. He has the illusion that *he* gave me the money. In true reality, it came from a higher source. It merely *appeared* to this man to have been given by him.'

'But how can you prove that?'

'There is nothing simpler. His obsessions take the form of thinking that things belong to him when they do not. Just ask him to whom this robe belongs...' Nasrudin paused and fingered the robe which he was wearing.

'That is mine!' shouted the miser.

'Now,' said Nasrudin; 'ask him whose horse I was riding when I came to this court....'

'You were riding *my* horse!' screamed the plaintiff.

'Case dismissed,' said the judge.

Money is looked upon by the Sufis as an active factor in the relationship between people, and between people and their environment. Since the ordinary perception of reality is short-sighted, it is not surprising that the normal human use of money is equally limited in perspective. The joke about the frogs in the Nasrudin collection explains something of this flavour:

A passer-by saw Nasrudin throwing money into a pool, and asked him why he was doing it.

'I was on my donkey. He had slipped and was slithering down side of this pool, about to over-balance and fall. There seemed no hope that either of us would survive a serious fall. Suddenly the frogs in the water began to croak. This frightened the donkey. He reared up and by this means he was able to save himself.

'Should the frogs not benefit from having saved our lives?'

Whereas on the ordinary plane this joke is taken to show Nasrudin as a fool, the deeper meanings are direct reflections of Sufi financial attitudes. The frogs represent people, who cannot use money. Nasrudin rewards them because of the general rule that a reward follows a good action. That the croaking of the frogs was accidental, seemingly, is another factor to ponder. In one respect, at least, the frogs were less blame-worthy than ordinary people would be. They probably did not think that they were capable of using money, correctly or otherwise. This story is also used in the sense of 'casting pearls before swine,' in answer to a questioner who asked a Sufi why he did not make his knowledge and wisdom available to all and sundry, and especially to people who (like the frogs) had showed him kindness and what they thought to be understanding.

In order to understand the wider aspects of Sufi thought, and before progress can be

made along lines outside the web cast over humanity by the Old Villain, the dimensions provided by Nasrudin must be visited. If Nasrudin is like a Chinese box, with compartment within compartment, at least he offers numerous simple points of entry into a new way of thinking. To be familiar with the experience of Nasrudin is to be able to unlock many doors in the more baffling texts and practices of the Sufis.

As one's perceptions increase, so does the power of extracting nutrition from the Nasrudin tales. They provide for the beginner what the Sufis call a 'blow'—calculated impact which operates in a special way, preparing the mind for the Sufi undertaking.

Looked upon as nutrition, the Nasrudin blow is called a coconut. This term is derived from a Sufi statement: "A monkey threw a coconut from a tree-top at a hungry Sufi, and it hit him on the leg. He picked it up; drank the milk; ate the flesh; made a bowl from the shell."

In one sense, they fulfill the function of the literal blow which occurs in one of the most terse of the Mulla tales:

Nasrudin handed a boy a pitcher, told him to fetch water from a well, and gave him a clout on the ear. "And mind you don't drop it!" He shouted.

An onlooker said, "How can you strike someone who has done nothing wrong?"

"I suppose," said Nasrudin, "that you would prefer me to strike him after he has broken the pitcher, when the pitcher and water are both lost? In my way the boy remembers, and the pot and contents are also saved."

Since Sufism is a comprehensive work, it is not only the Seeker who must learn, like the

boy. The work, like the pitcher and the water, has its own rules, outside the mundane methods of arts and sciences.

Nobody can set off on the Sufi path unless he has the potentiality for it. If he tries to do so, the possibilities of error are too great for him to have a chance of bringing back the water without breaking the pot.

Sometimes, Nasrudin stories are arranged in the form of aphorisms, of which the following are examples:

It is not in fact so.

Truth is something which I never speak.

I do not answer all the questions; only those which the know-alls secretly ask themselves.

If your donkey allows someone to steal your coat—steal his saddle.

A sample is a sample. Yet nobody would buy my house when I showed them a brick from it.

People clamour to taste my vintage vinegar. But it would not be forty years old if I let them, would it?

To save money, I made my donkey go without food. Unfortunately, the experiment was interrupted by its death. It died before it got used to having no food at all.

People sell talking parrots for huge sums. They never pause to compare the possible value of a thinking parrot.

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EB

Nesimi, Seyyid Imad Al-Din

Nesimi, Seyyid 'Imad Al-Din, known as Nesimi, an early Ottoman poet and mystic, believed to have come from Nesim near

Baghdad, whence his name. As a place of this name no longer exists, it is not certain whether the lakab should not be derived simply from nasim "zephyr, breath of wind". That Nesimi was of Turkoman origin seems to be fairly certain, although the 'Seyyid' before his name also points to Arab blood. Turkish was as familiar to him as Persian, for he wrote in both languages. Arabic poems are also ascribed to him. Little is known of his life; part of it fell in the reign of Murad I (761-91/1360-89), as his biographers tell us. He was at first a member of the school of Shaikh Shibli (247-334/861-945), but about 804/1401 he became an enthusiastic follower of Fadl Allah Hurufi with whom he was undoubtedly personally acquainted. He championed the views of his master with ardour and at the risk of his life. The poet Refi'i, author (811/1408) of the Besharet-name (copies in London, cf. Rieu, Cat., 164-5, and Vienna, cf. Flugel, Kat., i, 720) was his pupil. A certain Shah Khandan who was a dervish mystic is mentioned as his full brother. Nesimi met a cruel death in 820/1417-18 at Aleppo, where he was flayed for his heretical poems, on a fetwa of the extremely fanatical mufti. He is considered the greatest poet and preacher of the Hurufi sect.

His work consists of two collection of poems, one of which, the rarer, is in Persian and the other in Turkish. The Turkish Diwan consists of 250-300 ghazels and about 150 quatrains, but the existing mss. differ considerably from the printed edition (Istanbul 1298/1881). No scholarly edition has so far been undertaken, but a study of his vocabulary is given by Jehangir Gahramanov, Nasimi divanynyn leksiksy, Baku, 1970. The Persian Diwan has been edited by Muhammad Rida, Mar'ashi, Khurshid-i Darband. Diwan-i 'Imad al-Din Nasimi, Tehran 1370 Sh/1991. the earlier

Ottoman empire was considerable. The pro-
'Alid guilds, in particular, honour Nesimi as
one of their masters, testimony to whose far-
reaching influence is found even in the earlier
European travellers like Giov. Antonio
Menavino (ca. 1540; cf. F. Babinger, in *Isl.*,
xi. 19, n. 1. from which it is evident the Nicolas
de Nicolay copied him and therefore, cannot
be regarded as an independent source, as Gibb
HOP, i, 356-7, thought) and Sir Paul Ricaut
(17th century; cf. Gibb HOP i, 357 ff.).
Nesimi's importance as a poet and mystic can
only be estimated and realised in connection
with a thorough study of the older Hurufi texts,
among which a most important one is that
mentioned but not recognised by W. Pertsch,
Pers. Handschr. Brelin, 264-5; no 221, by
Sayyid 'Ali al-A'la (d. 822/1419) because it
might show the connection of the Hureufiyya
with the Bektashiyya. Nesimi's poems were
made popular in earlier times, especially by the
wandering Kalendar dervishes [see *Kalandariya*]
and were known to everyone.

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EB

Al-Niffari (d. 965)

Al-Niffari, Muhammad B. 'Abd al-
Djabbar, Sufi mystic, whom the principal Sufi
biographers fail to mention and who flourished
to the 4th/10th century, and according to Hadjdj
Khalia, died in the year 354/965, but more
probably in ca. 366/979-7. His nisba refers to

the town of Niffar in 'Irak and one ms. of his
works asserts that it was during his residence
at Niffar and Nil that he committed his thought
to writing Al-Niffari's literary reliquiae consist
of two books, the *Maakif* and the *Mukhatabad*
(ed. A.J. Arberry, London, 1935), together with
a number of fragments. It is improbable that
Niffari himself was responsible for the editing
of his writings, according to his principal
commentator, 'Afif al-Din al-Tilimsahi (d. 690/
1291), either his son or his grandson collected
his scattered writings and published them
according to his own orderings. The *Mawakif*
consists of 77 sections of varying length, made
up for the most part of brief apothegms
touching on the main aspects of Sufi teaching;
and purporting to be inspired and dictated by
God; the *Mukhatabat* is similar in content and
divided into 56 sections.

Al-Niffari's most characteristic contribution
to mysticism in his doctrine of *wakfa*. This
term, which would appear to be used by him
sense; implies a condition in the peculiarly
technical which is accompanied by direct divine
audition and perhaps even automatic script.
Maukif is the name given to the state of the
mystic in which *wakfa* is classed higher than
ma'nfa, and *ma'rifa*, and *mar'ifa* is above 'ilm.
The *wakif* is near to God than any other thing
and almost transcends the condition of
bashariyya, being alone separated from all
limitation.

Al-Niffari definitely maintains the
possibility of seeing God in this world; is a
preparation for vision in the world to come. In
several places, al-Niffari distinctly touches on
the theory of the Mahdi and indeed appears to
identify himself with the Mahdi, if these
passages are genuine; and this claim is
seemingly in the mind of al-Zabidi, when he

describes al-Niffari as sahib al-da'aua wa 'l-dalal. Al-Tilmsani, however, interprets these passages in an esoteric and highly mystical sense and it does not accord with the general character of the author that he should make for himself such extravagant claims. Al-Niffari shows himself in his writings to be a fearless and original thinker. While undoubtedly influenced by his great predecessor al-Halladj he acknowledges no obligations and has a thought conviction of the reality of his own mission.

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A.J. ARBERRY

Ni'mat Allâh, Ahmad B. Kadi Mubarak (d. 1561/62)

Ahmad B. Kadi Mubarak Ni'mat Allâh, known as Khalil Sufi, was born in Sofia, where as an enameller he made a reputation as an artist, he moved to Istanbul and there entered the Nakshbandi order. Association with the Nakshbandi dervishes made him more closely acquainted with literature and especially with Persian poetry.

Ni'mat Allâh decided to make accessible to others the knowledge he had acquired by an

ardent study of Persian literature, and thus arose his lexicographical work, which he probably compiled at the instigation and with the assistance of the famous Kemal Pasha-zade (d. 940/1533).

He died in 969/1561–2 and was buried in the court of the monastery at the Edirne gate in Istanbul. His work, which survives in a considerable number of manuscripts, is divided into three parts; verbs, particles and inflection, and nouns. His sources were:

1. *Uknum-i 'Adjam* (see Oxford Bodleian, Uri 291, no. 108);
2. *Kasima-yi Luft Allâh Halimi* (Hadjji Khalifa, iv, 503);
3. *Wasila-yi makasid* (Flugel, *Vienna catalogue*, i, 197);
4. *Lughat-i Kara-Hisari* (Rieu, 513a);
5. *Sihah-i 'Adjam* (Hadjdaji Khalifa, vi, 91 and *Leiden catalogue*, i, 100).

Besides making careful use of these sources, Ni'mat Allâh added much independent material, of which his dialect notes and ethnographical observations are especially valuable. This work is of considerable scientific importance and deserves greater attention than it has so far received.

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E. BERTHELS

Nurbakhsh, Sayyid Muhammad b. Muhammad b. 'Abd Allāh (1392–)

Nurbakhshiyya, a Shi'i offshoot of the Kubrawi Sufi order, which functioned for part of its existence as a distinct sect because of the intermittent claims to the status of *mahdi* of its eponym, Sayyid Muhammad b. Muhammad b. 'Abd Allāh Nurbakhsh. Its importance lies primarily in exemplifying the messianic-tinged Sufi-Shi'i ferment that preceded and, in some measure, prepared the way for the establishment of the Safawid state.

Nurbakhsh was born at Ka'in in Kuhistan in 795/1392. His father, supposedly a descendant of the Imam Musa al-Kazim, had come from Katif, a Shi'i region of eastern Arabia, on pilgrimage to Mashhad before settling in Ka'in; he may therefore be presumed to have been a Shi'i. Nurbakhsh's grandfather was from al-Ahsa, likewise an area of Shi'i settlement; this accounts for Nurbakhsh's occasional use of the *takhallus* Lahsawi.

While studying in Harat in his early youth, Nurbakhsh was recruited into one branch of the Kubrawi order by a follower of Ishak Khuttalani, the principal successor to Sayyid 'Ali Hamadani (d. 786/1384). Moving to the *khanakah* at Khuttalan, he soon became the most prominent disciple of Khuttalani, who bestowed on him the title Nurbakhsh ("Bestower of Light") in accordance with an indication contained in a dream. The account given by Nur Allāh Shushtari (d. 1019/1610) in his *Madjalīs al-mu'minin* (ed. Tehran, 1375–6/1955–6, ii, 143–7)—followed almost unanimously by later writers—relates that on the basis of the same dream Khuttalani also declared Nurbakhsh to be the Mahdi and incited

him to style himself Imam and caliph and to lay claim to rule. He swore allegiance to him himself and ordered his disciples to do the same; all obeyed, with the exception of Sayyid 'Abd Allāh Barzishabadi (d. ca 856/1452). Nurbakhsh asked for a delay in starting his insurrection, but Khuttalani refused, saying that the divinely-appointed time for rebellion (*khurudj*) had arrived.

The beginnings of the episode are recounted somewhat differently by Hafiz Husayn Karbala'i, a spiritual descendant of the dissident Barzishabadi. He attributes a far more active role to Nurbakhsh, claiming that he originated the claim to the status of *mahdi* himself and then had it endorsed by Khuttalani, who was too senile and decrepit to stand in his way. Barzishabadi allegedly succeeded in having the endorsement temporarily withdrawn, but his influence over Khuttalani was no match for that of Nurbakhsh, and preparations for the uprising proceeded.

This version of the affair seems at least as credible as that offered by Shushtari. Nurbakhsh certainly had a high estimate of his own worth; he claimed to possess superiority to Plato and Avicenna and absolute mastery of all the sciences. Moreover, he continued to advance claims to the status of *mahdi*, however sporadically, after the death of Khuttalani and wrote a treatise, *Risalat al-Huda*, attempting to vindicate these claims.

In 826/1423, Khuttalani and Nurbakhsh left the *khanakah* in Khuttalan and ensconced themselves with their followers in the nearby castle of Kuh-tiri. Before they could complete their military preparations, they were attacked and taken prisoner by Bayazid, the Timurid governor of the area. Khuttalani, together with his brother, was put to death almost

immediately, despite his advanced age. Nurbakhsh himself was spared and sent in chains to the presence of Shahrukh in Harat. The contrasting fates of the two men might be taken to confirm Shushtari's depiction of Khuttalani as the instigator of the whole affair; it is also possible, however, that Khuttalani was singled out for death because of his long-standing ties to local rulers in Badakhshan who had sought to block the expansion of Timurid power in the region (Devin DeWeese, *The eclipse of the Kubraviyah in Central Asia*, 60).

After interrogation, Nurbakhsh was sent on from Harat to Shiraz; Ibrahim Sultan, Shahrukh's governor of Fars, subjected him to a further spell of imprisonment in Bihbahan before releasing him. Nurbakhsh then made his way in turn to Shushtar, Basra, Hilla (where he is said to have met the celebrated Shi'i scholar Ibn Fahd al-Hilli) and Baghdad. Next he proceeded to Kurdistan and the Bakhtiyari country where he revived with some success his claim to worldly sovereignty; loyalty was sworn to him and coins were struck, and the *khutba* was read in his name. It happened that Shahrukh was campaigning in Adharbaydjan at the time, and he had Nurbakhsh seized and brought to his camp. Nurbakhsh escaped and attempted to flee via Khalkhal back to Kurdistan, but he was soon recaptured and after fifty-three days spent at the bottom of a pit he was sent to Harat with instructions to mount the *minbar* at the Masjid-i Djami' and publicly disavow his claims. This he did, with obvious reluctance, in the following ambiguous words: "They relate certain things from this wretch. Whether I said them or not, 'O Lord, we have wronged ourselves; if You do not forgive us and have mercy upon us, we will certainly be among the losers' (Kur'an, VII, 23)."

He was then released anew, on condition that he restrict himself to teaching the conventional religious sciences (*'ulum-i rasmi*), a condition he appears to have broken, for in 848/1444 he was re-arrested with orders for him to be rejected from the Timurid realm into Anatolia. Instead he was confined in turn in Tabriz, Shirwan and Gilan, being definitively released on the death of Shahrukh in 850/1447. Thereupon he made his way to the village of Sulfan near Rayy, remaining there until his death in Rabi' I 869/November 1464. These last years of Nurbakhsh's life appear to have been relatively tranquil. It is probable that he reduced his public claims to spiritual eminence to those customary for a Sufi *shaikh*, although he continued to designate himself by such suggestive terms as *mazhar-i maw'ud* ("the promised manifestation") and *mazhar-i djami'* ("the comprehensive manifestation").

Nurbakhsh wrote a number of treatises, only one of which has ever been published, as well as a considerable quantity of verse. The most interesting of his writings is perhaps the *Risalat al-Huda* in which he clarifies his concept of the status of *mahdi*, one that deviates considerably from that of his ancestral Twelver Shi'ism. Nurbakhsh utterly rejects the occultation (*ghayba*) of the Twelfth Imam, asserting that his body has decomposed and that his functions and attributes are now manifest (*bariz*) in him, Nurbakhsh. He defines "absolute imamate" as reposing on four pillars: perfection of prophetic descent, perfection of knowledge, perfection of sanctity and the possession of temporal power.

All the preceding Imams, with the exception of 'Ali b. Abi-Talib, lack the fourth pillar; Nurbakhsh, destined as Mahdi to gain supreme political power, is therefore superior

to them. The proofs cited by Nurbakhsh for the status of *mahdi* consist largely of celestial signs and dreams and predictions by figures as varied as the Kubrawi saint Sa'd al-Din Hamuya (d. 650/1252) and the scholar Nasir al-Din Tusi (d. 672/1274). Some of the dreams related here foretell setbacks as well as ultimate triumph in the form of a universal rule lasting seven or eight years; this suggests that the treatise may have been written after Nurbakhsh's coerced renunciation of the status of *mahdi* in Harat.

The most accomplished disciple of Nurbakhsh was Shaikh Muhammad Lahidji (d. 921/1515), author of the *Mafatih al-i'djaz fi sharh-i Gulshan-i-raz*, one of the most widely-read later Sufi texts in Persian. He established a Nurbakhshi *khanakah* in Shiraz, known as the Nuriyya, which was visited by Shah Isma'il. The direction of this *khanakah* was inherited by an apparently unworthy and dissolute son, Shaikh-zada Ahmad Lahidji, after whom there is no trace of this line of Nurbakhshi transmission.

Nurbakhsh had two sons; Sayyid Dja'far, who went to the court of Husayn Mirza Baykara in Harat but, dissatisfied with the stipend offered him there, left for Khuzistan, where he spent the rest of his life; and Shah Kasim Faydbakhsh, his principle heir. Faydbakhsh also spent a period in Harat, where he is said to have acquired Baykara as a disciple and to have worsted Sunni '*ulama*', such as 'Abd al-Rahman Djami, in public debate (Shushtari, *Madjalis al-mu'minin*, ii, 149). One of Faydbakhsh's sons, Shah Baha' al-Din, was likewise close to Baykara, and under his protection established a Nurbakhshi *khanakah* in Harat. In general, however, the Nurbakhshiyya appears to have been unable to strike root in Khurasan, and first Faydbakhsh

and then Baha' al-Din left Harat for more westerly regions. Faydbakhsh took up residence on his father's holdings near Rayy, which were considerably enlarged by a grant of land from Shah Isma'il. He died in 917/1511. Baha' al-Din also initially enjoyed the favour of the Safawid ruler, but after a few years he fell under suspicion and, as Khwandamir delicately phrases it, "in accordance with the requirements of fate he was interrogated and passed away".

Relations between the descendants of Nurbakhsh and the Safawids were definitively ruptured in the time of Faydbakhsh's grandson. Shah Kawam al-Din b. Shah Shams al-Din. Already in his grandfather's lifetime, Kawam al-Din attempted to establish himself as the dominant force in Rayy and its environs, silencing opponents and rivals by force. He also attempted to enlarge the family lands still farther, and when the poet Umidi refused to surrender to him a large and desirable orchard, he had him assassinated, in either 925/1519 or 930/1524.

Several years later, in the reign of Shah Tahmasp, Kawam al-Din was imprudent enough to begin building castles and fortifications on the family lands, and using the unavenged blood of Umidi as pretext, the monarch had him arrested and brought to Kazwin, where he was tortured to death.

It appears that towards the end of the life of Nurbakhsh, and still more after his death, attempts were made to normalise Nurbakhshi beliefs by aligning them with those of conventional Twelver Shi'ism. This is suggested by Shushtari's assertion that Khuttalani had never really believed in the status of *mahdi* of Nurbakhsh, viewing it simply as a device to incite an uprising against Shahrukh and to provide a transition to true Shi'ism (*Madjalis*

al-mu'minin, ii, 147). The messianic claim could, however, always be revived, and it was no doubt to eliminate the possibility of such a danger that the Safawids—mindful of the circumstances under which they had risen to power—did away with the Nurbakhshis of Rayy.

After the death of Kawam al-Din, there are traces of Nurbakhsh presence in Kashan, Natanz, Na'in and Kum, but it is plain that the organised activity of the order was at an end. It is true that a Nurbakhshi lineage has been reported for such luminaries of the Safawid period as Baha' al-Din 'Amili (d. 1030/1621) and Mulla Muhsin Fayd Kashani (d. 1091/1680 [see Fayd-i Kashani, in Suppl.]), not to mention Sufis of the 12th/18th and even 13th/19th centuries. If such *silsilas* have any validity at all, they should be taken as indicating an intellectual filiation, not membership in an organised and functioning Sufi order. It is curious that the anti-Sufi polemicist Mulla Muhammad Tahir Kummi (d. 1098/1686) should nonetheless assert that "most Persians follow the Nurbakhshi *silsila*" (*Tuhfat al-akhbar*, Tehran 1336 Sh./ 1957, 202; see too Section Nine of the same author's *Hidayat al-'awamm wa-fadihat al-li'am*, ms. 1775, Ayatallah Mar'ashi Nadjafi Library, Kum).

It may be that he wished to fix on all contemporary Persian Sufis the opprobrium of following Nurbakhsh, who had falsely claimed the status of *mahdi* for himself. One indication that that claim had not been forgotten, despite subsequent adjustments in Nurbakhshi doctrine, is provided by Mulla Muhammad Bakir Madijlisi (d. 1110/1699) in his *Ayn al-hayat* (Tehran 1341 Sh./ 1963, 238), where he denounces Nurbakhsh for his gross and heretical error.

A prolongation of the original Nurbakhshi movement took place in Kashmir and Baltistan ("Little Tibet"), where it was introduced by Mir Shams al-Din 'Iraki, a disciple of Shah Kasim Faydbakhsh; for this, see 'Iraki, Shams al-Din, in Suppl. The supremacy of Sunni Islam in Kashmir after the period of Nurbakhshi influence there was restored by Mirza Muhammad Dughlat when he invaded Kash U mir from Kashghar in 940/1533. He sent the *Fikh-i ahwat*, a summation of Nurbakhshi doctrine written by Shams al-Din (although sometimes erroneously attributed to Nurbakhsh) to the 'ulama' or India for their estimate, and invoking their condemnatory *fatwa* attempted to extirpate the Nurbakhshiyya throughout Kashmir.

He also summoned Daniyal, one of the sons of Shams al-Din, from Iskardo, and had him beheaded in 957/1550. A recrudescence of Cak [q.v. in Suppl] dominance and Nurbakhshi influence took place after Dughlat's death the following year, and it was not until the full establishment of Mughal power in Kashmir in the second decade of the 11th/17th century that the Nurbakhshis of Kashmir were fully uprooted, despite occasional intervention on their behalf by the Baltistani branch of the sect. The remaining Nurbakhshis merged into the Twelver Shi'i population, to such a degree that the tomb of Shams al-Din 'Iraki was favoured by the Sunnis as a target of desecration during the communal riots that were frequent in Srinagar. It was ultimately relocated to a safer site at Chadur.

The Nurbakhshiyya survived much longer in Baltistan, which was after all an extremely remote region. Adherents of the sect (called "Keluncheh" by Vigne, *Travels in Kashmir, Ladak, and Iskardo*, ii, 254) captured power in

the 12th/18th century. As late as the second half of the following century, travellers reported that fully one-third of the population of Baltistan was Nurbakhshi; that the *Fikh-i ahwat* was still in circulation; and that the tombs of Mir Mukhtar and Mir Yahya, two other sons of Shams al-D 'Iraki, in Kiris and Shigar, were still places of pilgrimage (J. Biddulph, *Tribes of the Hindoo Koosh*, Calcutta 1880, 118–25). A curious detail related by Biddulph is that the Nurbakhshis would pray with their hands folded like the Sunnis in the winter and with their hands hanging loose like the Shi'is in the summer.

It remains finally to be noticed that Amir Sultan (d. 833/1429), the Bukharan saint who migrated to Bursa and married a daughter of Bayezid I, has also been described as a Nurbakhshi. Although he is said, as a *sayyid*, to have had certain Shi'i inclinations, it is chronologically impossible that he should have been a Nurbakhshi. The origin of the error lies, no doubt, in the fact that Amir Sultan's father, 'Ali al-Husayni al-Bukhari, was a disciple of Ishak Khuttalani, together with Sayyid Muhammad Nurbakhsh (Medjdi Efendi, *Terdjume-yi Shaka'ik i Nu'maniyye*, Istanbul 1269/1852, 77). That the Nurbakhshiyya was unknown in Turkey is indicated by its frequent misidentification as a branch of the Khalwatiyya (see, for example, Sinasi, Coruh, *Emir Sultan*, Istanbul n.d., 29).

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H. ALGAR

Al-Nuri, Abu 'L-Husayn (840–907)

Al-Nuri, Abu 'L-Husayn (or Abu 'L-Hasan) Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Baghawi, was a Sufi mystic, of Khurasani background, was born (probably ca. 226/840, as he had met Dhu 'I-Nun) in Baghdad, where he spent most of his life. He died in 295/907. The most extensive information about him is given by al-Sarradj and al-Kalabadhi; the brief biographies of al-Sulami

and Abu Nu'aym agree almost verbatim, as do the Persian notes in Ansari and Jami. 'Attar's biography elaborates on otherwise little-known details, Bakli devotes five chapters (ss 95–9) of his *Sharh-i Shathiyyat* to al-Nuri.

It is said that he acquired his surname because "he radiated light when talking"; he claimed "I looked into the light until I became that light myself." A disciple of al-Sari as-Sakati, he underwent extreme self-mortification: "Sufism is leaving all pleasures of the nafs", and emphasised the true Jakir's reliance upon God alone. His best-known quality is *ithar*, i.e. that "it is a religious duty to prefer one's companions to oneself"; for Sufism consists not of forms and sciences but of *akhlaq*, good qualities."

That is illustrated by his attitude during the trial of the Sufis by Ghulam Khalil in 264/877, where he offered up his life for his friends, whereupon the caliph acquitted the Sufis. Al-Nuri was quite emotional, and considered intellect to be 'incapable'; contrary to the sober and prudent Djunayd he enjoyed participating in the sama. "The Sufi is one who hears the sama" and Bakli asks in his threnody (*Sharh*, S.377) "Where is the singing tarannum, of Nuri?" That his death was caused by his running, in full ecstasy, into a freshly-cut reed-bed and dying from wounds, fits into this picture, as does Ansari's remark that "he was more worshipping, a' bad, than Djunayd."

Al-Nuri, who, according to Attar, was seen weeping along with the sad Iblis, claimed to be a lover, 'ashik, which led the Hanbalis to declare him a heretic; but for him, mahabba (mentioned in Ku'ran, V, 59) was a higher age than 'ishk, and "Love is to tear the veils and unveil the secrets." More dangerous seemed his remark 'Deadly poison!', when hearing the

mu'adhdhin's call, but answering a dog's barking with labbayka, he intended to blame the one who performed religious duties for money, but understood every creature's praise of God, even from the dog's mouth.

Al-Kalabadhi mentions that al-Nuri wrote about mystical sciences with isharat, symbolic expressions, but only recently did P. Nwyia discover his Makamat al-kutub, which contains descriptions of the heart, that house of God, which is inhabited by the King Certitude, who is aided by two viziers, Fear and Hope. Such an allegorical interpretation of Kur'anic data appears also in the comparison of the heart to a castle with seven ramparts (reminiscent of St. Theresa's imagery).

The language of al-Nuri, called by 'Attar *latif zarif*, 'fine and elegant', is highly poetical, and a number of brief poems is attributed to him; the imagery of the heart as a garden which is fertilised, or else destroyed, by rain and in which laud and gratitude are the odoriferous herbs, prefigures Persian garden imagery. Al-Nuri is called 'the faithful one, *sahib al-wafa*', and "prince of hearts", *amir al-kulub*, and, as a true love mystic, was one of the most

remarkable companions of Djunayd who said at his death, 'half of Sufism is gone'.

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A. SCHIMMEL

R

Al-Razi (9th Century)

Abu Zakariyya Yahya b. Mu'adh al-Razi (A.D. 871) of Persia was a celebrated saint and a well-known author of mystical works. He was well-versed in the doctrine of intuitive knowledge and was regarded as the Shaikh of the learned theologians (*'ulama*) of his time. He is supposed to be the first Muslim mystic who publicly spoke on the different aspects of Sufism.

Yahya, like Sari al-Saqati, concentrated on the systematisation of various stations (*maqamat*) on the mystic path. He interpreted mystical stages like hope and fear, humbleness, piety, love and gnosis with originality. Abu'l Hasan al-Husri of the second half of tenth century says this about Yahya's concept of hope in God:

"God had two Yahyas, one a prophet and the other a saint. Yahya b. Zakariyya trod the path of fear so that all pretenders were filled with fear and they despaired of their salvation, while Yahya b. Mu'adh trod the path of hope so that he tied the hands of all pretenders to hope".

Yahya recognised humbleness as a great saintly virtue. He prays to God:

"O God! I fear Thee because I am a slave and I hope in Thee since Thou art the Lord". "O

God ! how should I fear Thee since Thou art Merciful and how should I not fear Thee because Thou art Mighty".

The mystic stage of '*tawakul*' or trust in God brings the seeker of God close to Him. Yahya prays to God:

"O God! I fear Thee on account of my sins but I have hope in Thy greatness". "O Lord ! my deeds are not worthy for the reward of Paradise and I cannot endure the sufferings of Hell. Now I entrust myself to Thy mercy".

As regards the mystical qualities of piety, love and gnosis to be acquired by the saints at different stages, Yahya observes:

"When you see that a man indulges in good works, know that his path is that of devotion; when you see that he refers to the signs of Divinity, know that his path is that of the governors of the universe (*abdal*); when you see that he points to the infinitude of God, know that his path is that of the lovers; and when you see that he is concerned with the recollection of God, know that his path is that of the gnostics".

Yahya was against orthodoxy and ritualism. A true worship develops a real kinship between the worshipper and the worshipped. In fact, it is the attitude of love behind devotion to God which the aspirant has to follow.

"One mustard seed of love is dearer to me than seventy years of worship without love".

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EB

Razi, Fakhar Al-Din (1149—?)

The intellectual life of Islam after the attacks of Ash'ari and Ghazali upon rationalistic philosophy can be largely described as the gradual transition from the Aristotelian philosophy toward the intuitive and illuminative wisdom of the Ishraqis and Sufis. Although Islam began to weaken politically and culturally during the later part of the 'Abbasid Caliphate, Muslim thought especially in the Shi'ah world continued the process of divorcing itself from the categories of Peripatetic philosophy.

One of the most influential and colourful figures in this movement, who played a major role in the attack against the rationalists, was Fakhr al-Din Razi, who is considered to be the reviver of Islam in the sixth-twelfth century as Ghazali was in the fifth/eleventh. Razi is in many ways a second Ghazali; in fact he may without exaggeration be considered to be one of the greatest Muslim theologians.

Abu al-Fadl Muhammad ibn 'Umar, known as Fakhr al-Din Razi and also as Imam Fakhr, ib al-khatib, and *Imam al-Mushakkikin* (the Imam of the Doubters), was born in Rayy in Northern Persia in 543/1149 in a family of scholars who came originally from Tabasristan. His father, Dia' al-Din, was a well-known scholar in Rayy and was Imam Fakhr's first teacher.

Later, Fakhr al-Din studied philosophy with Muhammad al-Baghawi and Majd al-Din al-Jili (the latter being also the teacher of Shaikh al-Ishraq Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi) and theology with Kamal al-Din Simani in Rayy and Maraghah, and soon became a master of all the sciences of his time including even the mathematical, medical, and natural sciences.

Having completed his formal studies, Imam Fakhr set out for Khwarizm to combat the Mu'tazilites, and from there journeyed to Transoxiana and was warmly accepted at the Court of the Ghur rulers, Ghiyath al-Din and his brother Shihab al-Din. But this stay terminated soon due to the opposition and jealousy of certain scholars and courtiers.

Consequently, Imam Fakhr left the Ghur Court for Ghaznah, where he taught for a while, and finally settled in Herat where, under the patronage of Khwarizm Shah 'Ala al-din, a special school was built for him. There he spent the rest of his life as a teacher and preacher in comfort and honour among a large number of disciples and students who came from all over the Muslim world to study under him. He passed away at the height of fame and glory in 606/1209.

The career of Imam Fakhr is in many ways a repetition of that of Ghazali's. Like his great predecessor the was of the Shafi'i school, well versed in all the science and philosophy and yet opposed to many aspects of the Greek heritage, a critic of the Muslim philosophers, and drawn towards Sufism. In theology in which he followed, the Ash'arite school, he was certainly influenced by Ghazali and Imam al-Haramain. In philosophy he came under the influence of his compatriot, Muhammad Zakariya Razi, as well as ibn Sina, and in physics his master was without doubt abu al-

Barakat al-baghdadi. Like a series of anti-Aristotelian philosophers before him, Imam Fakhr tried to reconcile religion and rational philosophy by reliance upon ideas derived more from the *Timaeus* of Plato than the *Physics* of Aristotle.

Imam Fakhr's main role in the intellectual life of Islam was to support the orthodox policy of the Caliphate of his time to suppress rationalistic philosophy in favour of theology. In the unified view of Islam, politics religion and intellectual life have never been divorced, so much so that the political struggle of minorities in the Caliphate, whether they were opposed to Arab domination or, like the Shi'ahs, to the Abbasid Caliphate as such, was reflected clearly in the intellectual and religious activities of the period. As the Caliphate supported the orthodox Sunni theologians against the rationalists, the philosophers sought refuge in the Courts of those minor dynasties that were opposed to the central authority of the Caliphs.

So, we see such figures as ibn Sina and Khwajah Nasir al-Din Tusi seeking favour of rulers opposed to the authority of Baghdad, and especially of Shi'ah princes. And, on the other hand, there appeared a series of great scholars and sages, mostly theologians and Sufis, of whom the most important were Ghazali, Imam Fakhr and the Sufi masters like Shihab al-din Umar Suhrawardi, who lifted their pen in support of the Caliphate and used both theology and Sufism in order to combat rationalistic philosophy.

The works of Imam Fakhr were above all else dedicated to this cause. Sunni theology reached its height in his works and weakened considerably with the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate, which came to an end about fifty years after his death.

The writings of Fakhr al-Din Razi, of which nearly a hundred are known, deal almost with every aspect of Muslim intellectual life and include all the sciences of his time. Some of these, like the commentary upon the *al-Isharat w-al-Tanbihat* of ibn Sina and upon his '*Uyun al-Hikmah* and the *Mabahith al-Mashriqiyyah*, are written as criticisms of Muslim philosophers, especially ibn Sina, and on general problems of philosophy. Others deal with the many branches of the intellectual sciences including logic, mathematics, metaphysics, and the natural and the esoteric sciences.

Still another set of books deals with theology, of which the most famous are the *Kitab al-Arba'in fi Usul al-Din*, *Lawami' al-Bayyinat*, and the *Muhassal*, a classic among writings on the *Kalam*. Fakhr al-Din also wrote a large number of works on particular sciences, like the commentary upon the syntax of Zamakhshari, *Kitab al-Sirr al-Maklum* on astrology and astronomy, *Manaqib al-Shafi'i* on history, the commentary upon the *Qanun* or *Caon* of ibn Sina, and many other treatises dealing with medicine, geometry, physiognomy, agriculture, theurgy etc.

Besides these writings, Imam Fakhr composed a large number of works on the purely Islamic sciences of exegesis and jurisprudence, of which the most famous are the *Mafatih al-Ghaib*, the voluminous commentary upon the *Qur'an*, and *al-M'alim fi Usul al-Fiqh* on the principles of jurisprudence. Throughout these writings the character of Imam Fakhr as a critic and 'doubter' is evident. He criticises not only the philosophers, but also theologians like Ash'ari and historians like Shahrastani, whom he accuses of plagiarising Baghdad's *al-Farq bain*

al-Firaq in his *al-Milal wa-al-Nihal*. Imam Fakhr's particular genius for analysis and criticism is evident in whatever field he turns his attention to, so that in the annals of Muslim thought he has quite justly become famous as one who is a master in posing a problem but not in solving it, in entering into a debate but not in concluding it.

Theology (*Kalam*): Muslim theology known as *Kalam* began as a reaction against the rationalistic school of the Mu'tazilites, and only gradually developed into a complete science. In the earlier centuries the theologians, following the lead of abu al-Hasan al-Aash'ari, tried to use logic, the instrument of their enemies, in order to defend the truths of revelation. From the fourth/tenth century onward, the defence itself became more subtle and systematic, reaching its height in the works of Imam al-Haramain abu al-Ma'ali 'Abd al-Malik al-Juwaini, such as the *Irshad* and the *Shamil*.

With Ghazali *Kalam* took a new turn; opposed as it was from the beginning to the school of the philosophers, it now began to employ the syllogistic method, intellectual ('*aqli*') evidence, and certain theses of the philosophers, thus laying the foundations of the school of philosophical *Kalam* of the later theologians.

Imam Fakhr is the greatest master of this later school of theology, surpassing in many ways even the more illustrious Ghazali. With Imam Fakhr philosophical *Kalam* reaches its zenith of power and perfection; his works became consequently a continuous source of influence over the later theologians, whether they were Sunnis like al-'aji and al-Taftazani or Shi'ahs like Khwajah Nasir. Properly speaking, Razi must be credited with the foundation of a

new school of *Kalam*, and certain writers have even considered him to be the Third Teacher after Aristotle and Farabi.

Actually, he composed works characteristic of both the first period of Muslim theology—marked by a revolt against the philosophers and yet by a dependence upon their methods and even some of their ideas—and the second period, after Ghazali, in which theology became a more independent science and lost much of its defensive and apologetic quality. Among the first type of writings one may name *Muhassal* and *al-Arabi'n fi Usul al-Din* and among the second *Asas al-Taqdis* and *Lawami' al-Bayyinat*.

The theology of Imam Razi is marked by the integration of theological themes with other sciences. For example, in his Persian treatise, *Asrar al-Tanzil*, he combines theology with ethics; and in the *Lawami' al-Bayyinat*, theology with Sufism, giving theology a fragrance of spirituality and a beauty not found in most writings. In the sixth chapter of the *Lawami'* he gives a detailed and profound discussion concerning *dhikr*, the invocation of one of the divine names, which is the basic technique of Sufism. Concerning one of the interior forms of *dhikr* he writes:

"The third kind of *dhikr* is that man should contemplate the creatures of God until each particle of the essence of creation becomes a polished mirror before the unmanifested world so that when he looks into this mirror with the eye of wisdom the ray of the eye of his soul will fall upon the world of Majesty. This is a station without end and a sea without limit."

In this way Imam Razi raises theology to a height approached only by Ghazali, far surpassing the usual level of this study.

To understand Razi's approach to theology, it is enough to analyse the structure of one of his treatises. We take as an example perhaps, the most famous of his theological works, the *Muhassal*, which became a classic source book on the *Kalam* almost from the moment of its composition. Here, Imam Razi divided theology into four parts (*arkan*): Preliminaries, Being and its divisions, rational theology (*ilahiyat*) and traditional questions (*sam'iyyat*). The preliminaries include the principles of logic, the sufficiency of demonstration (*dalil*) to prove the existence of God and the obligation upon each believer to prove God's existence.

The section on Being and its divisions considers the questions of Being and Non-Being, the relation of the One to the many, cause and effect, etc. Rational theology which is inter laced with passages from the *Qur'an* concerns the Necessary Being, His attributes and acts and the divine names. Finally, the traditional questions, which are exclusively scriptural, concern prophethood, eschatology, the Imamate, the faith and other related subjects. As a whole, therefore, Imam Razi's theology combines the transmitted or traditional elements of revelation (*naqli*) and the intellectual and rational evidence concerning religious and metaphysical questions (*'aqli*) into a science which takes into account the problems of religion while participating in many of the discussions of philosophy.

In the method and problems of theology, Imam Razi followed the Ash'arites. As he writes in his *Kitab al-Arba'in*:

"We (the Ash'arites) believe that God is neither body nor substance, and that He is not in space; yet, we believe that we can see God."

But to show his independence of judgment he goes on to assert:

"Our companions (the Ash'arites) have given an intellectual reason for the possibility of seeing God, but we have brought twelve objections against it which cannot be answered. Therefore, we only say that we can see God by appealing to transmitted reasoning, i.e., the *Qur'anic* text."

Imam Razi also criticised Ash'ari on the question of atomism which is such an essential aspect of the Ash'arite theology. Razi rejected atomism in his earlier works like the *Mabahith al-Mashriqiyyah* and wrote his *Kitab al-Jauhar al-Fard* to refute it, but in later works like the great *Qur'anic* commentary, the *Mafatih al-Ghaib*, he accepted it once again. (Atomism does not play a major role in his theology as it does in the system of other Ash'arites like Baqillani.) This change of position occurs also in the rejection of infinity, the void and the plurality of words in the earlier writings and their acceptance in later works like the *Mafatih*.

There are several points in Imam Razi's theology which are of special interest in so far as his particular point of view is concerned. One relates to the question of faith in which he joins most theologians in regarding faith as the necessary and sufficient requirement for being saved. Hell is not for those who have committed evil acts accidentally but for the infidels who have no faith. Man is, of course, responsible for his work but ultimately all is determined by the divine will. Imam Razi is very emphatic in his determinism and overthrows even the theory of acquisition (*kasb*) of the Ash'arites.

His *Qur'anic* commentary is full of arguments for determinism, which he defends more openly and ably than any other theologian. God is the creator of both good and evil, faith and impiety, benefit and injury; all these qualities are decreed by the determination of

the divine will (*qada' wa qadar*). Yet, none of the divine acts can be considered to be inappropriate or blameable since God is the creator and ruler of the world and whatever He does in His kingdom is His own affair and is as such appropriate.

According to Imam Razi, God's attributes and names must be interpreted symbolically (*ta'wil*) in order to be understood. He follows the method of Imam al-Haramain in applying *ta'wil* to *Qur'an*, especially to those verses in which God is attributed with such anthropomorphic qualities as sight, bearing, etc. This does not mean that Razi tries to overcome the rational difficulties of certain of the principles of faith by *ta'wil*, as did many of the philosophers. For example, on the question of resurrection, unlike the philosophers who believed only in the resurrecting of the soul, Imam Razi asserts that at resurrection God will create for each soul the same body, made of the same elements as those it possessed in this life.

On the question of knowledge and the process of reasoning, Imam Razi is of the view that reason is neither the cause of which knowledge is the effect nor the source which produces knowledge. There is an intelligible succession between the two; God creates a reasoning which knowledge follows necessarily. He accords a definite value to the rational faculty; his aim in theology is in fact to create a science which combines and harmonises reason and revelation, '*aql* and *naql*.'

In his *Qur'anic* commentary he calls those who have succeeded in integrating these two elements the Muslim sages (*hukama' islamiyyah*) and praises them greatly. His own importance in Muslim theology lies in his success in establishing the school of philosophical *Kalam*, already begun by Ghazali,

in which both intellectual and revelational evidence played important roles.

Philosophy: The importance of Imam Razi in philosophy lies more in his criticism of the philosophers than in the establishment of a new school. Influenced by the writings of Ghazali, he studied philosophy to such an extent that he became a definite master of it. Unlike the theologians who rejected Greek philosophy totally or the Peripatetics who followed it strictly, Imam Razi criticised many points of Greek philosophy while accepting certain others. In the introduction to the *Mabahith al-Mashriqiyyah*, the most important of his philosophical works, he writes:

"Our associates belong to two groups: one consisting of those who imitate the Greek philosophers, permit no one to discuss their thought, and take pride in being able to understand their sayings, and the other comprising those who reject all of their ideas without exception. Both of these groups are wrong. We have delved deep into the writings of the previous philosophers and have affirmed the true and rejected the false. We have added certain principle to this philosophy and have put forth some new ideas."

The new ideas of which Imam Razi speaks are mostly those pertaining to the rejection of certain basic elements of Aristotelianism and in some cases of Platonism. In the *Mabahith* he rejects the Platonic ideas, since in the Ash'arite perspective all infinite modes of Being are absorbed in the Absolute. He also criticises the Platonic notion of knowledge as reminiscence and the idea held by certain Muslim philosophers that light is a body. One of his most important and penetrating discussions involves criticism of the principle that from Unity only unity can issue forth, *ex uno non fit nisi unum*, a principle held by nearly

all medieval philosophers. Imam Razi puts this view to the test of his severe judgment and criticises it with his usual genius for analysis. He asserts, on the contrary, that from Unity multiplicity can issue forth, but does not pursue the proof of this assertion very far.

The *Mabahith* deals with many other subjects treated in the well-known texts of Muslim philosophy like those of ibn Sina. In each case it is the acute criticism of commonly held Peripatetic notions that is of interest. In his commentary upon the *al-Isharat w-al-Tanbihat* of ibn Sina, which after the *Mabahith* is his most important philosophical work, this type of criticism and doubts about Peripatetic philosophy continue—doubts which his pupil, Nasir al-Din Tusi, tried to answer in his own commentary upon the *Isharat*. Ever since these works were written, nearly every student of Peripatetic philosophy in the Muslim world, especially in Persia, has reached this philosophy through the criticism of Imam Razi, so that the thought of Imam Razi has become a permanent heritage of Muslim philosophers. His other philosophical works, like the commentary upon the *'Uyun al-Hikmah*, *Lubab al-Isharat* and many treatises on logic and metaphysics, are also significant, but his greatest philosophical importance lies in the criticisms and doubts cast upon the principles of Peripatetic philosophy, which not only left an indelible mark upon that school but open the horizon for the other modes of knowledge like *ishraqi* philosophy and gnosis, which were more intimately bound with the spirit of Islam.

The Sciences: There have been very few Muslim theologians who have had as much knowledge of the mathematical and natural sciences as Imam Razi. His pre-occupation with the sciences is itself of great interest, because

usually the Sunny theologians and doctors of Law shunned any discipline outside the sphere of the strictly religious sciences. Imam Razi, on the contrary, studied all the *awa'il* sciences, that is, the sciences inherited from the Greeks, and was considered by many of his contemporaries to be the greatest authority of his time on them. There is hardly a science in which he did not compose treatise—although he never occupied himself with the study of nature in the manner of ibn al-Haitham or Biruni. His main importance in the sciences was in considering their principles and their relation to theology and to the spirit of Islamic revelation.

A field in which Imam Razi excelled is medicine, a discipline the mastery of which one hardly expects from a theologian. He wrote several treatises on health, pulse and anatomy and a medical encyclopaedia entitled *al-Jami' al-Kabir* or *al-Kabir* which he never completed. His most important medical work was his commentary upon the *Qanun* of ibn Sina, which he often criticised, basing himself on the opinions of Galen and the Muslim physicians, especially Muhammad Zakariya Razi. The commentary is sufficient evidence that Imam Razi did not learn medicine by reading one or two manuals but studied it thoroughly and was well versed in it. He was in fact famous in Herat for his ability and exactitude in diagnosis.

Imam Razi also wrote several treatises on geometry, astronomy, agriculture, politics, history, and comparative religion. Also of interest are his works on the esoteric sciences (*'ulum gharibah*), to which he devoted much attention. There remain among his writings treatises on theurgy (*talismat*), geomancy (*raml*), physiognomy (*firasa*), astrology, and other similar subjects.

It is curious that Imam Razi wrote all these treatises, although he was opposed to certain of these subjects like astrology which he attacked throughout his writings. He was, however, more sympathetic to the study of esoteric sciences than either the theologians or the philosophers, as is illustrated by his defence of alchemy against the charges of Ibn Sina.

Of particular interest to the history of Muslim sciences is the scientific encyclopaedia of Imam Razi, the *Jami' al-'Ulum*. This work offers a good source for the names, definitions, scope, and major principles of the various Muslim sciences. Imam Fakhr begins with a discussion of traditional religious sciences such as theology, jurisprudence, dialectics, comparative religion, inheritance, will and testament, *Qur'anic* commentary, and reading of the *Qur'an* and Hadith; and then passes on to linguistic sciences dealing with grammar, syntax, etymology of words, prosody and poetic metre, and, after that to history. Having considered the transmitted (*naqli*) sciences, he devotes the rest of the book to the intellectual (*'aqli*) sciences which include natural philosophy, interpretation of dreams, physiognomy, medicine, anatomy, pharmacology, the science of the occult properties of things, alchemy, theurgy, agriculture, geometry, science of weights, arithmetic, algebra, optics, music, astronomy, astrology, metaphysics, ethics and its various branches, and even chess and other games.

Imam Razi describes the principles, scope, and major problems of each science. Despite the fact that his discussion is always general and characteristic of an encyclopaedist and never penetrates too deeply into any single science, the work is perfect evidence of his vast erudition and encyclopaedic knowledge. In this respect Imam Razi is similar to the Isma'ili

and the later Twelve-Imam Shi'ah theologians of the Safawid period many of whom, like Shaikh Baha al-Din Amili, took great interest not only in philosophy but also in all the cosmological and mathematical sciences.

Imam Fakhr's importance in the Muslim sciences is, therefore, mostly in bringing closer together the theological and cosmological traditions which until his time had been far apart, and in studying nature with a view to discovering God's wisdom in creation, as was done by many other Muslim scientists. In this case, as in so many others, he advanced upon a path already trodden by Ghazali.

Commentaries upon the Qur'an: Imam Razi's fame in the Muslim world lies as much in his commentaries on the Holy Qur'an as in his theological works. He was greatly devoted to the Qur'an from childhood and studied Qur'anic commentary with his father. His study of all the other sciences by no means reduced his love for the Qur'an. As he wrote in old age: "I have experienced all the methods of theology and all the ways of philosophy, but I did not find in them the benefit which could equal the benefit I derived from the reading of the exalted Qur'an."

Imam Razi's Qur'anic commentaries include the *Tafsir al-Fatihah*, *Tafsir Surat al-Baqarah*, *Asma' Allah al-Husna*, and *Risalah fi al-Tanbih 'ala ba'd al-Asrar al-Mau'izah fi al-Qur'an*, of which last is a theological commentary combined with Sufi ideas in which metaphysics (*ilahiyay*) is based on the chapter (*surah*) *al-I khlās*, prophecy on the chapter *al-A'la*, resurrection on the chapter *al-Tin*, and the recording of human actions on the chapter *al-Asr*. The most important of Imam Razi's commentaries is the voluminous *Mafatih al-Ghaib*, known as the 'Great Commentary'

(*Tafsir al-Kabir*), which was collected and organised by ibn al-Khu'i and Suyuti after his death. This work is the most important theological commentary ever written on the Qur'an.

Imam Razi makes this also an occasion to expose his encyclopaedic knowledge in that he inter-mingles history, geography, and other branches of knowledge with the commentary of the Qur'anic text wherever possible. He mentions and praises often in this work the Muslim sages who combine intellectual principles with the principles of Islamic revelation. He also analyses the stories of the Qur'an and interprets their theological and metaphysical meanings. Despite its volume and the number of topics which do not seem very relevant to the immediate subject-matter, the *Mafatih* is an impressive theological Qur'anic commentary. In its intellectual interpretation and the combining of 'aql and naql, of reason and authority, and in the understanding of the sacred Scripture it remains one of the major commentaries upon the Qur'an.

Jurisprudence Fiqh: Although primarily occupied with theology, Imam Razi occasionally devoted himself to jurisprudence as well. The few works like *al-Mahsul fi al-Usul al-Fiqh*, *al-Ma'alim*, and *Ihkam al-Ahkam* bear evidence to his mastery of jurisprudence which he interpreted according to the school of which he was considered to be one of the 'ulama' and authentic interpreters. Imam Razi was particularly well versed in the principles of jurisprudence (*Usul*), which he treated in a manner similar to theology. This subject has, in fact, never been able to divorce itself from *Kalam*, and is still studied almost as if it were one of its branches. The importance of Imam Razi in Shafi'i jurisprudence lies more in his

contribution to the theoretical principles of *Fiqh* than in their actual application embodied in the *fatwas* of the various Shafi'i 'ulama'.

Dialectic, Rhetoric, And Poetry: Following the example of Ghazali, Imam Razi became a dialectical theologian and, as his works testify, excelled in dialectics. He was famous for his eloquence in persuasion and argumentation, for the quickness of his intelligence and keenness of wit. These gifts were combined with a rhetorical power which made him the most famous preacher in Herat. Hardly would a scholar dare enter into debate with him; those who took sides against him would soon feel the thrust of his dialectical and rhetorical weapons.

The *Munazarat* bears ample evidence of these traits. In its pages one sees Imam Razi as a tiger who pounces mercilessly upon his helpless adversary and has little regard for softness in discourse. Much of his energy throughout life was spent in attacking bitterly the small sects which arose against the main orthodoxy, such as the Karramiyyah, who probably finally poisoned him. As the *Shaikh al-Islam* of Herat, his main duty was to preach and defend Islam; and he took the opportunity of using his remarkable gifts of rhetoric and dialectic in a manner which made him one of the most famous of Muslim preachers.

Imam Razi had also the gift of poetry, and many verses both in Arabic and Persian are attributed to him. As in the case of so many other sages like Khayyam, poetry became for Imam Razi the vehicle for the expression of gnosis and the form of 'ignorance' which lies above all formal knowledge. In a quatrain in Persian he writes:

"My heart was never deprived of science;

There is little of the mysteries that I did not understand

For seventy-two years I thought night and day,
Yet, I came to know that nothing is to be known."

There is little doubt that Imam Razi was sympathetic to Sufism, especially in later life, when he wrote most of his poems like the one mentioned above. Moreover, many of his works are, like his *Qur'anic* commentary, full of Sufistic ideas, and in his *Lawami' al-Bayyinat* he outlines the degrees of knowledge in a manner very similar to the Sufi treatise of Suhrawardi, *Safir-i Simurgh*. He is altogether a theologian with sympathies towards Sufism.

What is difficult for us to discover is whether Imam Razi was a practising Sufi or not. Certainly Sufism is not so evident in his writings as in Ghazali's, and his life, rich in worldly fame and wealth, had none of the ascetic elements of the life of his great predecessor. There is even an extant letter from the master of gnosis, the Anadalusian Sufi, Shaikh al-Akbar Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi, advising Imam Razi to leave dialectic and discursive thought and try to reach the stage of gnosis and contemplation, telling him that in heaven medicine and geometry will do him little good. Moreover, in his writings as in his life, Imam Razi displayed an aggressiveness and fighting quality hardly characteristic of the lives and writings of the Sufis.

Yet, despite all this negative evidence, some of his later writings do show the clear influence of Sufism upon him, and it may be that, because of his social position even after joining the circle of the Sufis, he to a large extent hid his sympathies and affiliations in order to avoid any external opposition. His own poems and his great love for the blind Arab

poet abu 'Ala' al-Ma'arri, the gnostic who often appears like a sceptic to the uncritical eye, whose *Diwan* he is said to have commented, point to the fact that Imam Razi was not an ordinary theologian but knew that there is another form of knowledge, gnosis, which lies above all rational sciences like theology. Whether he actually participated in this knowledge in an effective way, is a question too difficult to answer from either historical evidence or internal evidence from his own writings.

There is a poem of Imam Razi which is in itself almost sufficient evidence for his Sufism. In the original Arabic it is so beautiful and effective that hardly any of his biographers has failed to mention it. Written in old age by a man who was the leading scholar and theologian of his day and who enjoyed all the comfort and glory of the life of this world, it is a vivid reminder that beyond the sphere of all human life and knowledge there is another reality which man must seek in order to remain faithful to his own intimate nature. The poem begins with these verses:

"Our souls fear our bodies as if they want to separate from them.

The result of our life in this world has been nothing but pain to others and sin.

For all the discussions and debates of our life
We have derived no benefit but senseless noise.

How often have we seen men and kingdoms
All perish quickly and cease to exist!

How was their glory once more exalted than a mountain,

Yet, men perish and the mountain remains the same!"

The Significance and Influence of Imam

Razi: The many-sided genius of Imam Razi, to which the previous pages bear partial witness, makes him one of the most colourful figures in

Islam. Following the example of Ghazali, by whom he was profoundly influenced and whose retreat in Tus he visited, Razi spent a life-time in combating the rationalistic aspect of Greek philosophy. Although not of equal stature to Ghazali in Sufism and ethics, he, nevertheless, exercised as much influence, especially in theology, as did his more famous predecessor. Possessed of a special gift for posing problems and for analysing philosophical questions, he left an indelible mark upon all later Muslim philosophers, especially upon Khwajah Nasir al-Din Tusi, his pupil, who was the reviver of Muslim philosophy after Imam Razi, and was also the most famous of Shi'ah theologians.

Imam Razi's role in Muslim intellectual life, besides establishing the school of philosophical *Kalam* begun by Ghazali, was to intensify the attack against Peripatetic philosophy, thereby preparing the way for the propagation of the metaphysical doctrines of the Ishraqis and Sufis who, like Imam Razi, opposed the rationalism inherent in Aristotelianism. With the method of doubt in which he was the greatest master in Islam, he analysed and criticised Peripatetic philosophy in a way hardly ever equalled by anyone except Ghazali. Yet, he was a theologian also interested in the cosmological, natural, and esoteric sciences.

Imam Razi played an important role in bringing theology closer to the sciences and even to Sufism, with which he flavoured his theological works. In the centuries when the Muslim world was turning away from Peripatetic rationalism toward modes of thought more akin to its own spirit. Imam Razi played a major role in this transformation. He remains as one of the most arresting figures among Muslim theologians, a figure the power of whose thought spread over the whole Muslim

world at the very moment when the Mongol onslaught was putting an end to the Caliphate, to the survival of which his work was to a large extent dedicated.

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Rumi Jalal Al-Din (13th Century)

Jalal al-Din Rumi is the greatest mystical poet of Islam. It can be said without fear of contradiction that in the entire range of mystical literature of the whole world there is none to equal him either in depth or in comprehensiveness and extent. There have been mystics both in the East and the West whose experiences in the realm of the spirit may have equalled the spiritual perceptions of Rumi, but their emotional or intuitional side was not matched by an equally clear and powerful intellect. Rumi's uniqueness lies in the fact that in him reason is wedded to a wide and deep religious experience. The Muslim world has honoured him with the title of *Maulawi-i Ma'nawi* (the Doctor of Meaning), a religious scholar who is capable of philosophising, of penetrating into the meaning of physical and spiritual phenomena and lifting the veil of appearance to peep into the reality behind them. When he argues he is a match for a superb dialectician of the stature of a Socrates or a Plato, but ever conscious of the fact that logic is a poor substitute for life.

He inherited vast and variegated intellectual and spiritual wealth. He surveyed and imbibed the rationalistic outlook of Hellenism sifting the grain from the chaff, separating the kernel from the husk. As a Muslim he was an heir to the spiritual wealth bequeathed to humanity by the glorious line of great prophets from Abraham to Muhammad. We find in him the sturdy ethics of the Israelite prophets, the dynamic view of life of Islam and the all-pervading love of Jesus. He calls his *magnum opus* the *Mathnawi*, the 'Shop of Unity,' wherein the diversities of life are harmonised and apparent contradictions transcended by creative unities.

Nothing that is human or divine is alien to him. He expands with great force and conviction the original thesis of Islam, of the fundamental unity of all spiritual religions despite the contradictory dogmas that narrow theologies have formulated. The windows of his soul are wide open in all directions. Although a believing and practising Muslim, he is temperamentally a non-conformist for he realizes the secondary nature of the form in comparison with the spirit. He is a protestant of Protestants, never tiring in the exposition of his thesis that in the realm of the spirit mere authority without personal realization is of no avail.

Faith in the sense of believing in the unbelievable and undemonstrative realities is repudiated by him in very strong terms. For him God is a reality to be experienced and apprehended as more real than the objects of sense-experience; similarly, the relation of man to God is not a matter merely to be rationalised and moulded into a dogma but to be realized in the depth of one's own being where the human gets into tune with the divine and the finite is embraced by the infinite. It is impossible to put any label on a genius like him.

During his life rigid orthodoxy was externally suspicious of his beliefs and averse to some of his practices which were stigmatized as innovations and aberrations. There was sufficient material in his beliefs and utterances to convict him of heresy before a court of inquisition. His biographers have related an incident in his life which throws light on his catholicity. It is said that the chief of orthodox theologians planned to discredit him by engaging him in a controversy that would expose his heresies. At the very outset Rumi was asked to declare as to which of the seventy-two sects he offered allegiance.

Rumi gave a very unexpected answer by saying that he believed in all of them, meaning thereby that there is some truth in every sect which has been exaggerated and distorted by the fanatical exuberance of the blind followers of its tenets. The theologian was nonplussed, not knowing how to tackle a man of such an indefinite attitude. Piqued by this disconcerting reply the theologian, in an angry outburst, said that it signified that he was a heretic and an atheist. The reply to this was still more disturbing for the theologian: Rumi said that he endorsed even this judgment about him.

Let us start with a short biographical sketch of this remarkable religious genius to note his background and the influences that moulded him. He was born in 604/1207 during the reign of Muhammad Khwarizm Shah whose empire extended from the Ural mountains to the Persian Gulf and from the Euphrates to the Indus. The family had been settled there for several generations. As Balkh was in the Persian domain and Rumi wrote in the Persian language, the modern Iranian scholars claim him as belonging to the Iranian nation. On the other hand, the Turks call him a Turk because after his early youth the family settled in Anatolia which was a Turkish province but was formerly a part of the Roman Empire and hence the great mystic poet is called Rumi which means Roman.

The Arabs might as well claim him as an Arab because at the summit of his genealogical table we find the great Caliph abu Bakr, the first Successor of the Prophet. The spirit of Rumi, the universal mystic, must be smiling at these attempts of racial appropriation. In one of his lyrics he says that heaven is his original homeland, to which he craves to return. In another lyric he asks his fellow-Muslims as to

what he should say about himself. As to my homeland it is not Khurasan, nor any other place in the East or the West and as to my creed I am neither a Jew, nor a Zoroastrian, not even a Muslim as this term is generally understood.

In his ancestry we find great names, great not only as scholars and divines, but also from the mundane point of view. On the maternal side he is a grandson of the great monarch Muhammad Khwarizm Shah who had given his daughter in marriage to the famous mystic Husain Balkhi, Rumi's grandfather. The father of Rumi, Baha' al-Din, was famous for his learning and piety. He lectured from morning till evening on religious sciences as well as on mystical lore and delivered sermons on Mondays and Fridays to crowded audiences. Commoners as well as scholars, aristocrats and royalty gathered to hear him.

The monarch held Imam Fakhr al-Din Razi, the commentator of the *Qur'an* and one of the great dialecticians, in great esteem and sometimes brought him along to hear Baha' al-Din. Razi was reputed to be imbued with Greek dialectics and attempted to prove religious truths by logic. Seeing Razi in the audience Baha' al-Din would pour his wrath on these attempts at the Hellenisation of Islam, but the presence of the monarch and the prestige of the preacher prevented him from defending himself.

Rumi as a young boy must have heard these denunciations from the lips of his learned father. In the *Mathnawi*, when Rumi takes up the cudgel on behalf of personal experience against mere logic-chopping, he points to Razi as a representative of a class of people who want to enter the realm of religious truth walking on the wooden legs of mere argumentation:

"If dialectics alone could reveal the secrets of the spirit, Razi would have certainly reached them, but the feet of the dialectician are wooden and the wooden feet are most shaky."

It is said that Razi got so jealous of the popularity and prestige of Baha' al-Din that he poisoned the mind of the monarch against him by insinuating that, if the influence of this preacher were allowed to develop indefinitely, he would wield a power that would surpass the power of the sovereign. Autocratic rulers in Christendom as well as in Muslim kingdoms have often shown fearful jealousy of religious leaders, be they popes or priests.

There is no wonder that Khwarizm Shah became apprehensive of the growing influence and prestige of Baha' al-Din and his fears were fanned by the latter's rivals in the religious field. It is quite possible that Baha' al-Din left Balkh along with his whole family to forestall an adverse action against him. But there is also another version about his motive to migrate. Shortly after he left Balkh the Tartar invasion overwhelmed the domains of Khwarizm Shah. It may be that Baha' al-Din had seen that it was imminent and so he decided to move away into a safer region. The family moved first to Nishapur and then to Baghdad where Baha' al-Din's stay was prolonged because Baghdad was a cultural centre of the Muslim world and attracted scholars from distant Muslim lands.

A delegation from the Sultan of Rum, 'Ala al-Din Kaiqubad, happened to visit Baghdad during this period; its members were greatly impressed by Baha' al-Din's lectures and sermons. On their return to Anatolia they spoke to the Sultan about the spiritual eminence of Baha' al-Din and the Sultan persuaded him to come over to his realm. Baha' al-Din travelled from Baghdad to the Hijaz and passing through

Syria he stayed for about a year in the town of Aque and then stopped for seven years in Laranda in Zinjan.

Here, in 662/1263, his illustrious son Rumi, now mature in mind and years, was married. It was here that Rumi's son Sultan Walad was born a year later. The Sultan invited the family to settle down in Qunyah capital of his kingdom. The Sultan with his retinue received him at some distance from the town and reaching the city wall he got down from his horse to escort the great divine on foot. Baha' al-Din's family was lodged in a palatial house and the Sultan would visit him very often.

We see from this family background that Rumi grew up in an atmosphere of religious learning in which religious problems were discussed and controversies entered into with great enthusiasm. Rumi must have learnt much from his father and the great scholars who were devoted to him. The most eminent among them was Burhan al-Din Muhaqqiq whose title denotes that he carried on independent research (*tahqiq*). Rumi's father entrusted the education of his promising son to this teacher who inculcated in his pupil the habit of independent thinking. Rumi's education continued after the death of his father and we find him at the age of twenty-five travelling in search of knowledge to great centres of learning like Damascus and Halab (Aleppo).

Rumi lived for some time in the hostel of Helariyyah College. There were very eminent teachers on the staff of this College, one of whom was Kamal al-Din ibn 'Adim Halabi, who wrote a history of Halab, a fragment of which has been published in Europe. Rumi's education covered the whole curriculum: the *Qur'anic* commentary, Hadith, jurisprudence and Arabic language and literature. His

Mathnawi bears ample evidence of this vast learning. It is on account of this intellectual and academic training that his mysticism is not merely emotional. At every step we find him intellectualising his supra-rational spiritual experience. He spent seven years in the colleges of Damascus and we find him still engaged in academic pursuits even at the age of forty. The Holy Prophet Muhammad had started his mission at that age. In Plato's *Republic* Socrates proposed a similarly long process of education for those who would be philosophic rulers of his ideal republic.

Although it is stated in the *Manaqib al-'Arifin* that at the time of the death of Rumi's father his teacher and tutor Burhan al-Din certified his pupil's thorough attainment in prevalent sciences and then launched him on a long course of mystical practices which continued for nine years, yet we do not find any fruits of these spiritual experience in the life of Rumi before his encounter with the mystical and mysterious Shams of Tabriz. Rumi now engaged himself in teaching theology and giving sermons as the learned religious teachers of his time usually did.

His verdict or *fatwa* was sought and quoted about religious questions on which he was held to be an authority. He avoided music as the rigid puritanical orthodoxy of his time did. There is no doubt that his meeting with Shams was a turning point in his life. As to what happened when Shams and Rumi met for the first time, there exist a number of legends that are inconsistent. According to one version, Rumi, surrounded by books and pupils, was engaged in teaching when Shams suddenly dropped in and asked him, "What are these books about?" Taking him to be a man without learning Rumi replied that the questioner could not know what they contained.

At this the heap of books burst into flames. Rumi in great consternation asked him the meaning of this miraculous phenomenon. At this Shams said:

"This is what you cannot understand."

Another version of this legend is that Shams threw the books in a cistern of water and when having touched them; they were as dry as before. Shibli, the eminent modern writer of a book on Rumi, is evidently right in his judgment that these legends are not based on facts because Sipah Salar, who spent forty years in intimate contact with Rumi, relates his meeting with Shams in a simple story unadorned by any legend.

If anything unusual had happened, surely this friend and devotee would not have missed mentioning it. He says that Shams was the son of 'Ala' al-Din and was a descendant of Kaya Buzurg, an Imam of the Isma'ili sect before dissociating himself from it. Shams received his education in Tabriz and then became a disciple of Baba Kamal al-Din Jumdi, who introduced him to mystic way of life. He travelled from place to place living in caravanserais, weaving girdles and selling them for bread. He was staying in a serai of Qunyah when Rumi went to see him.

The impression of this mystic on Rumi's mind was deep and lasting. Sipah Salar says that the two were closeted together for six months in Salah al-Din Zarkub's room, which none but Zarkub was allowed to enter. Now Rumi left off teaching and preaching and spent days and nights only in the company of Shams. It was rumoured that a magician had bewitched the great divine. Rumi's sons and disciples turned against Shams whom they considered to be a charlatan and a sorcerer. Under these circumstances Shams left Qunyah suddenly,

leaving no clue about his whereabouts. After a long time Shams wrote to Rumi from Damascus.

This letter kindled the flame in Rumi's mind again. In the meantime his disciples whose resentment had driven away Shams had repented of their conduct. Rumi's son Sultan Walad in his *Mathnawi* has mentioned this incident in detail because he was deputed by his father to go to Damascus accompanied by some other disciples to persuade Shams to return to Qunyah. The epistle of Rumi written in verse is recorded in the *Mathnawi* of Sultan Walad. This letter shows how deeply Rumi had felt the pangs of separation from his spiritual guide and in what great esteem he held him. Shams accompanied this delegation and returned to Qunyah where he was received with great honour by Rumi and his disciples. It appears that Shams now meant to stay on, having allayed the suspicions of Rumi's disciples by marrying a maid of Rumi's house whose name was Kimiya. A residential tent was pitched for the wedded couple in front of the family residence of Rumi.

Something happened again which turned Rumi's son 'Ala' al-Din Chalpi against Shams and others joined him with the result that Shams disappeared now for good. Rumi's reliable biographer Sipah Salar says only this much that Shams left Qunyah again in indignation and although Rumi sent people to search for him in various places no one could find him. But other biographers of Rumi are in full accord about the conviction that Shams was assassinated by some of Rumi's disciples and the author of *Nafahat al-Uns* mentions the name of Rumi's son, 'Ala' al-Din, as his murderer. The assassination or disappearance of Shams took place in about 645/1247.

It is difficult to assess the mind and character of a man who appeared from nowhere and disappeared without leaving a trace after having influenced so deeply one of the greatest religious geniuses of all times. Could a man of Rumi's mental calibre be the subject of an abiding delusion created by a master hypnotist? The world has valued Rumi as a man of deep spiritual apprehension; a man whose religious life was rooted in a personal experience which could stand the test of reason. We find him acknowledged his debt to Shams in a thousand soul-stirring lyrics. Shams found Rumi an academic theologian and conventional preacher and converted him into an ecstatic mystic in deep personal contact with the ineffable varieties of life. The prosaic Rumi was overnight turned into an ecstatic lyricist, who now found poetry and music better than philosophy and theology as vehicles for the expression of truth.

Rumi identified himself so completely with Shams that the voluminous collection of his mystical lyrics is called *Diwan-i Shams-i Tabriz*. In hundreds of lyrics the inspiration received from this mysterious spiritual guide is acknowledge with vibrating gratitude. The realm of mystical experience is a doubly sealed mystery to the uninitiated, but he has to accept the testimony of Rumi about it, however personal and subjective it may be, when he says with unshakable conviction that in Zarkub's shop, where the guide and the disciple were closeted together in mysterious intimacy, he found a spiritual treasure of indescribable value and ineffable beauty, both of form and meaning. We can say only this much that Shams must have been a man of extra-ordinary psychical power capable of influencing the master mind of his age, whose *magnum opus* of intellectualised and versified religious experience

created a monument of mystical poetry in which eternal love and cosmic reason seem to have achieved perfect accord.

Rumi had no intention of either founding a new sect or initiating a new movement; his devotees and disciples, however, did form a distinctive group after his death, but they developed and perpetuated only some external observances and rituals and degenerated into a community of whirling dervishes. A felt-cap without a seam—the leaders also wrapping a turban round it and wearing voluminous trousers of many folds—became the standard livery of this group which was incapable of comprehending either the depth of Rumi's thought or the spirit of his religious experience. Rumi who was bitterly averse to imitation and blind conformity in religious life became a victim, by irony of fate, of what he had persistently fought against. With Rumi ecstatic dance accompanied by spontaneously gushing forth lyrics was an involuntary expression of a deeply stirred soul.

The imitators of externals adopted it as a regular practice of inducing religious emotion, unconsciously believing, like William James, that the voluntary adoption of the physical expression of an emotion tends to create the emotion itself. The ecstasy-seeking group sits in a circle, while one of them stands up to dance with one hand on the breast and the other arm spreading out. In the dance there is no forward or backward movement but that of whirling around with increasing tempo. When accompanied by music, only flutes and drums are used. There is a trying process of undergoing a discipline of service to others before a candidate for membership could qualify for it. It starts not with the service of men but the service of animals for forty days, obviously

with the idea that if a man can serve animals dutifully with love and consideration he would serve his fellow-beings still better.

After this he sweeps the floors of the lodgings of poor devotees. It is followed by other terms of service of forty days each of drawing water and carrying fuel and other general domestic chores. This is considered to be a cure for man's love of power and privilege of class and caste. At the end he is given a bath to symbolise riddance of lower passions. He takes a vow of total abstinence from all forbidden acts and is allowed to wear the garb of the sect.

Beliefs and Philosophy: Rumi as a philosopher of religion stands shoulders above all those Muslim thinkers who are called *hukama'* in the history of Muslim thought. He compiled no systematic treatise either on philosophy or theology and made no sustained attempt to build a system of either speculative or mystical metaphysics. One cannot put him in the category of philosophers like al-Farabi, ibn Sina (Avicenna), ibn Rushd (Averroes) and even al-Ghazali.

He did not hitch his wagon to these stars with the exception of al-Ghazali, who attempted a monumental synthesis of orthodox Muslim theology and mysticism attempting to bridge the gulf between the two. He is the heir to the ethical monotheism of the Israelite prophets which culminated in the dispensation of Islam, but by the time this heritage reached him it has already been supplemented by Hellenistic thought. But he deepens and broadens all that he inherits. He belongs to no school or sect. He picks up what he considers to be true and discards whatever he thinks to be false, however time-honoured and orthodox the view or dogma may be.

A patient study of his *Mathnawi* reveals him not as a mediocre eclectic but a man with a definite view of the nature of existence. He has a deep-rooted feeling about the basic unity of reality and appearance. For a man like him every thesis and anti-thesis is transcended by a higher synthesis where contradictions are resolved in the ever-advancing movement of life. He talks of mere dialecticians with disdain but does not shun dialectics to sustain a thesis.

You may consider him a free-lance both in philosophy and religion, but if freedom is informed with a basic attitude that never wavers and perpetually returns to itself after numerous digressions and deviations. While dealing with a genius like Rumi one is always conscious of a feeling of injustice towards him.

The best that he has uttered vibrates with life, while an intellectual analysis in relation to life itself is, in the words of Goethe, like grey autumn leaves as compared with the sapful green tree which has dropped them. But this drawback is inherent in all intellectual analyses and theories and one has regretfully to remain contented with it. We will make an attempt to give a brief summary of his beliefs, outlook and metaphysics under a few headings.

The Nature of Existence and Evolution: The ground of all existence is spiritual. It is not easy to define the meaning of the term 'Spiritual,' especially in the world-view of Rumi. For him the ground of being is akin to what we feel in ourselves as spirit or ego. Infinite number of egos emerging out of the Cosmic Ego constitute the totality of existence. In this view even matter is spiritual. The thinker nearest to Rumi in this respect is the German philosopher Leibniz, who centuries after Rumi conceived of existence as an infinity of egos at different levels of consciousness. As in the metaphysics of

Leibniz, Rumi believed God to be a universal cosmic Monad. There is nothing like lifeless matter; matter is also alive in the view of God, though they appear to be dead to us.

In all speculative philosophy, the starting point, the point of departure, is an undemonstrable postulate. So is the case with the thought of Rumi. Assuming existence to be spiritual in the process of creation, he starts with a belief in devolution. There is no satisfactory explanation of why the infinite, self-existent, self-sufficient Spirit should start dropping egos to the lowest level of sentience and consciousness.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam have inculcated a belief in creation *ex nihilo* by a voluntary act of the Creator at a particular moment of time. In Rumi's view there is no creation in time because time itself is created and is a category of phenomenal consciousness which views events in serial time and mystic consciousness diving into the spiritual ground of being apprehends reality as non-spatial and non-temporal. We see here the Neo-Platonic influence replacing the orthodox Islamic concept of creation in time. Instead of creation in time, we have eternal emergence of egos. Rumi has repeated in many places his view of the eternity of spirits.

"I existed when there were neither names nor the things that are named."

We see him moving only one step with Plotinus in conceding that there is emanation instead of creation in time and then he suddenly parts company with him. Starting with initial unexplainable devolution he becomes a creative evolutionist. All beings have emerged from God by a kind of overflow of the divine spirit, but every being or ego is impelled irresistibly by an urge to return to its origin. This urge which

Rumi calls love becomes the evolutionary principle of all existence. Existence, viewed phenomenally, is graded, the egos in one grade being superior or inferior in self-realization.

The essence of all egos or monads is spiritual which may be called divine because they have all emerged from the self-same divine principle. The doctrine of the Fall of Adam is reinterpreted in Rumi's metaphysics. The original state from which the ego fell was not the traditional paradise of gardens and streams but the unitary ground of divinity. The Fall is concerned not only with man or the disobedience of Adam and Eve, but is a universal cosmic phenomenon. One might say metaphorically that monads in the realm of matter and vegetable and animal kingdoms are all fallen-angels striving to return to their original divine ground.

The principle that everything has a natural tendency to return to its origin, holds good in all spheres and applies to every existent. Previous to Rumi we find among Greek thinkers guesses about the biological evolution of birds and beasts and man having been gradually differentiated and developed from fish due to environmental changes and the needs of adaptation, but this speculation was never developed any farther either by materialistic thinkers like Democritus or idealists and realists like Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.

We find a doctrine of graded existence and a theory of development in Aristotle's concepts of form and matter and entelechies. Inorganic matter is organised into different species of plants because every plant realizes the idea of its species. Every realized form serves as matter for the embodiment of a still higher entelechy until we reach God who is pure idea or self-thinking thought unconcerned with the

particularities of phenomenal existence and unrelated to creatures contaminated with matter. Matter for Aristotle is a negative end-concept without a shadow of reality because all reality belongs to ideas and matter as such is bereft of any idea. Aristotle is not a monadologist like Rumi and Leibniz and for him the human ego also has a transitory phenomenal existence; what is real in it belongs to universal reason and whatever is personal or individual has no abiding value or reality.

After Aristotle the doctrine of Emanation and Return is found in Plotinus. In his view also there is a gradation in existence which is a result of more or less distance from the original ineffable One who is devoid of all qualities like the *Nirguna Brahman*, the Absolute of *Advaita Vedanta*. The human souls, according to Plotinus, can rise again to their original ground by discarding material and biological urges. This leads logically to a negativistic, quietistic and ascetic view of life of which we find no trace in Rumi because of the Islamic ethics of integration and the eternal value of the individual. For Aristotle the scheme of graded existence was eternally fixed and there was no idea of the evolution of species. In Plotinus, too, there is more of eternally graded devolutionary states of existences than an eternal urge to develop into higher and higher states which is so clearly depicted in the metaphysics of Rumi.

Rumi touches Plotinus and Aristotle only tangentially and then develops a thesis of his own, not found before him in any speculative or religious metaphysics except that of the Ikhwan al-Safa and Miskawaih. In the whole history of philosophy he is one of the outstanding evolutionary thinkers. He is not a mechanical or biological evolutionist like

Darwin and Spencer. Bergson's creative evolution comes nearest to Rumi. For Bergson, too, life is creative and evolutionary; however, he believes this creative evolutionary process to be without any goal. But how could one say that life evolves unless there is an implicit idea of a goal towards which it moves? For Rumi God is the ground as well as the goal of all existence, and life everywhere is a goal-seeking activity.

Bergson developed no concept of the self, nor is evolution for him a process of self-realization. Rumi tells us why life is creative and evolutionary and defines for us the nature of the creative urge. It was only in the last decade of his life that Bergson in his book, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion* identified the *elan vital* with love and moved from philosophy to religion by accepting the prophets and the saints as individuals endowed with intuition and saturated with love which is the creative urge of evolutionary life.

Rumi has presented his view in a language which conforms partially even with the view of materialistic and biological evolutionists. Like them he says that life has evolved from matter, but for him matter was from the outset essentially and potentially spiritual. This removes the insoluble problem of lifeless and goalless matter evolving out of itself a germ of life which even in the lowest and initial stage is adaptive and goal-seeking. The Odyssey and voyage of the ego's self-discovery and its gradual unfordment are given in Books III and IV of the *Mathnawi* with great definiteness.

"For several epochs I was flying about in space like atoms of dust without a will, after which I entered the inorganic realm of matter. Crossing over to the vegetable kingdom I lost all memory of my struggle on the material

plane. From there I stepped into the animal kingdom forgetting all my life as a plant, feeling only an instinctive and unconscious urge towards the growth of plants and the mother that gave them birth. Rising in the scale of animality I became a man pulled up by the creative urge of the Creator whom one knows. I continued advancing from realm to realm developing my reason and strengthening the organism. There was ground for ever getting above the previous types of reason. Even my present rationality is not a culmination of mental evolution. This too has to be transcended, because it is still contaminated with self-seeking, egoistic biological urges. A thousand other types of reason and consciousness shall emerge during the further course of my ascent; a wonder of wonders!"

The same course is traced in Book III of the *Mathnawi* hinting at higher stages till the ego reaches back the divinity from which it had emanated, a state which cannot be grasped by our present rationality nor could imagination visualise it. No category of reason or phenomenal existence applies to this state: it is ultra-existential. We must note here that it is not an impersonal existence which goes on moving from phase to phase but selves or egos from the very start which are perpetually engaged in self-realization.

Orthodox Islam like Christianity believes in the creation of the universe in time. The souls are believed to be created with the birth of the individuals though after that they are destined to be immortal remaining eternally either in heaven or hell. But, according to Rumi, the category of time does not apply to the realm of the spirit, so the question of the temporal creation of egos is irrelevant.

For Rumi as for al-Ghazali time and space are categories of phenomenal consciousness only. He says about serial time, "You think in

terms of the past and the future: when you get rid of this mode of consciousness, the problem will be solved." There is also a hint in the verses that follow that our concept of time is interlinked with space, an idea which has been mathematically and scientifically developed in modern times by Einstein. Rumi says that in the realm of divine light, which is non-spatial, serial time, divisible into past, present and future, does not exist. Past and future are relative to the individual self. About space there are numerous verses in the *Mathnawi* and Rumi repeatedly points to his conviction, which may either be the result of spiritual experience or an epistemological thesis, that in the realm of the spirit the category of space does not hold and has no relevance. The *Qur'anic* verse about divine light which definitely states that it is non-spatial, *la sharqiyyah wa la gharbiyyah*, supports this view and Rumi's intellect and experience must have been strengthened by this scriptural corroboration.

As the human spirit too is basically divine, as corroborated by the *Qur'an* in which it is said that God breathed His own spirit into Adam, man also, diving into his own real self, can realize the non-spatial nature not only of his own reality but also of all existence viewed as nominee and not as phenomena. He exhorts man to realize this basic fact both about himself and the universe. "You live in space but your reality is non-spatial; close this shop situated in space and open a shop on the other side to which your real non-spatial spirit belongs. The ground of this spatial universe is non-spatial; space is a phenomenal creation of that which in itself is not space." Rumi develops this thesis still further. He says that space is the basis of division and multiplicity, in which the basic unity of the cosmic spirit is infinitely pulverised and atomised. Human egos are also basically

one. It is only material frames in which the selves at the biological level create the illusion of diversity. Here, too, Rumi gets support from the *Qur'anic* teaching that there is a fundamental unity in the multiplicity of human egos.

"It is He who created you of one spirit."

Rumi uses similes to make his meaning clear. He says that sunlight entering houses through many windows is split up by spatial barriers but remains essentially the same.

In another place he says that lamps lightening a hall may be many but the light that emanates from them and envelops all of them negates the illusion of separateness. It is a common trait of Rumi that he first uses logical and philosophical arguments and then invariably tries to enlighten the mind of the reader by similes and analogies, but at the end finding the intellect incurably bound by spatial visualization and fettered by the logic of identity and contradiction, refers invariably to ultra-rational spiritual experience which realizes reality as unity and conceives diversity as mere phenomenal appearance.

Talking of a group of divinized souls, he says that they feel themselves as the waves of the self-same sea whose diversity is created by wind. He relates a spiritual experience in which the spirit transcends our spatially inter-linked serial time and enters a dimension of Being wherein the mutually exclusive diversity of psychological processes is negated and a man's causal thinking, with the problems that it creates and attempts to solve, exists no more.

As it is a spaceless reality that manifests itself into extended and divisible spaces, creating the illusion of separated things and events, so it is a timeless spirit that creates the

categories of serial time with the illusory division of past, present and future. It is possible for the human spirit to enter this non-dimensional dimension of consciousness and reality. Such an experience does not give one knowledge in the ordinary sense; it is a consciousness of wonder.

Concept of God: Rumi followed a monastic concept of God. For him, God. Is One—the Absolute and Perfect Unity. God. reveals Himself in a plurality of forms, *i.e.*, the created beings of the universe which are qualitatively the same. God and His act of revelation cannot be known through rational knowledge. It is through 'kashf' or Divine revelation in the heart that the mystic attains complete knowledge of God.

Rumi was the first Sufi in the Muslim world who developed the theory of spiritual evolution. According to him, the universe is merely an external form of One Reality. God says: "I produced the mirror whose face is the soul and whose back is the universe." Nothing is dead; even matter is spiritual and alive. "The air, earth and fire, the created beings, are dead for me and thee but they are alive in reality." Man appears in his present form, starting from matter or the lowest form of existence and after passing through a number of stages in the realms of minerals, plants and animals. The same one spiritual consciousness disappears at one plane and reappears at the next higher plane in a more developed form. The process of evolution is not complete even at the stage of humanity. Man will also disappear from the scene, giving way to angels. The angels, in turn, will further lead to another new species.

The process of evolution will end with the disappearance of all these species and with the appearance of the Divine Being. Thus, evolution

starts from Divinity and ends with Divinity, proceeding in a circular movement. In *Diwan-i Shams-i Tabriz* Rumi says:

"From that time when you came into the world of created beings, a ladder was set before you, so that you might pass out of it. At first you were inanimate, then you became a plant: afterwards you were changed into an animal: why should this be hidden from you? At last you became man, possessed of knowledge, intelligence and faith. See how that body has become perfect, which was at first an atom from the dust-heap. When you have made your journey from man without question you will become an angel. Then you will have finished with this world and your place will be in the heavens. Be changed also from the station of an angel: pass into that mighty deep: so that the one drop, which is yourself, may become a sea which would hold a hundred seas of 'Uman. Give up this polytheism of yours, say: 'God is One' with your whole heart and soul. If your body has become old, why grieve when your spirit is young?"

In his *Mathnawi* Rumi presents almost the same concept of the evolution of soul. During the process of evolution, the soul goes upwards and adopts a new and higher form, having disappeared at the earlier plane.

"I died in the form of mineral and emerged in the form of plant and then I passed away from the plant life and assumed the form of animal. Being dead in the animal world I appeared in the form of the human being. Hence, why should I be afraid of becoming less through the process of decomposition? Now, at the next stage, I shall get rid of this garb of humanity in order to secure the wings of angels. Then again, I will sacrifice my angelhood to assume a new form which I cannot apprehend. At the end, I shall become non-existent since it was non-existence which proclaimed through the Divine organ: 'Unto Him we shall return'."

The cosmos is also an outcome of the process of spiritual evolution.

"One Substance was boiled and it appeared in the form of water. When it foamed its foam became earth and from its smoke appeared heavens."

The universe thus sprang out of the One Divine Source and creation means manifestation of God.

The whole process of evolution is based on the axiom of 'will to live'. Forms of matter, plant, animal, man and angel pass away and appear because of the latent impulse of emergence. Evolution proceeds on a teleological basis. Such a scheme of evolution brings to our mind the systems of evolution of Darwin and Spencer, developed from a scientific standpoint. Rumi's views concerning evolution undoubtedly provided an impetus to Leibnitz who developed the philosophy of Spiritual Evolution more systematically in the second half of seventeenth century.

The real driving force behind the evolutionary changes is love. It is because of their love for gaining a higher form that species disappear and then emerge with greater force. Love is the source of life; moves the cosmos and brings changes within it.

"By love bitter things are made sweet: copper turns into gold. By love, the sediment becomes clear: by love torments removed. By love the dead is made to live: by love the sovereign is made a slave. This love also is the fruit of knowledge: when did folly sit on a throne like this?— The faith of love is separated from all religion: for lovers faith and religion are God."

This implies that love makes the ego conscious about its upward movement and its spiritual perfection and thus, takes it to a higher plane. For Rumi, creation implies spiritual fall of

Godhead and a distance from the Beloved. The spiritual progress of the soul implies her attempt to return to its abode from which it appeared and love is the means through which the goal is reached.

Rumi distinguished between the 'Transcendent Self' (Ego) and the 'empirical self'. The Ego is the Pure Self whereas the empirical self is the carnal or the unreal self. Those who are ignorant and do not possess 'ma'rifa' or gnosis, fail to distinguish between the higher and the lower self.

"O thou, who is stranger to thy true self, could not recognise others with thy real self. Thou stopest at every form thou assumest and sayest 'I am this'. But, by God, thou art not that."

The Ego is a Divine Spark which is undoubtedly one and the same in the entire region of humanity. Spiritually, all the 'selves' are identical with one another.

"When thou seest two friends out of the many, they will appear as one as well as three hundred thousand. The distinction lies in the animal soul; the human soul is only one."
"Thou art limited to space but thy essence is beyond space. Close the chapter of the unreal self and open the other one. This world of space has been created from spacelessness and it is from the boundless space that this world came into being."

The empirical self is limited to the category of time but the Ego transcends this limitation.

"Thy imagination is related to the past and the future. When it becomes free from these two limits, the riddle is solved."

The Pure Self passes beyond the limit of time because time is the cause of change.

"All changes are the creation of time; one who transcends time transcends every change."

God is the Spiritual Organism whose every unit develops and maintains its individual status only when it participates in the whole. One part of the 'One Spiritual Whole' is nothing if it is not linked with it. Man can retain his individuality only when he regards himself as an element of the Spiritual Whole.

"The part being separated from the Whole becomes useless. The limb cut away from the body becomes lifeless. Unless it is connected to the Whole once again, it is non-existent and remains deprived of life."

As a part of the divine Unit, man not only retains his self, he also works as a medium for the expression of One Divine Being.

"O Thou Whose Essence is hidden, while Thy gifts are manifest. Thou art like the water, while we are like the mill-stone: Thou art as the wind and we as the dust. The wind is concealed and the dust it produces is manifest, to all. Thou art the Spring, we are like a garden fresh and fair: the spring is not seen, but its gifts are evident. Thou art as the spirit, we are as the hand and foot: the grasping and loosing of the hand are by the will of the spirit. Thou art like the reason, we like the tongue: the tongue takes its power to speak from the reason. Thou art as joy and we as laughter, for the result of joy is our laughter. All our actions are a profession of faith, for they bear witness to the glory of the Everlasting God."

The human soul is Divine in essence. It grieves for its painful separation from its original source, *i.e.*, Divine Being. The soul craves for an early union with God and passes the various stages of 'tariqa' or the Divine Journey. According to Rumi, the soul enjoys the spiritual state of 'baqa', *i.e.*, the subsistence in God after realisation of the stage of 'fana', or the soul's passing-away in God. In 'baqa' the soul persists and moves in God. Apparently,

such a state of the Sufi seems to be a paradox, but Rumi has explained this peculiar state of the soul in a number of ways. According to him, the soul of the Sufi retains its spiritual status which seems to be lost in the Universal Soul like the stars which exist in daytime though they are invisible to the human eye because of the brightness of the sun.

Again, as the iron embraces only the qualities of fire and does not become fire, the soul retains its individuality in spite of its having realised the Divine character. Further, as the organs of the body possess their independent status though they do not have any voice due to the control of the mind over them, the soul maintains its individuality though it lives and moves within the Divine Soul.

Rumi probably followed Neo-platonism and Ibn al-'Arabi in his doctrine of the Perfect Man. The Perfect Man is Logos or the First Intelligence. He is the image or copy of God and enjoys the status of the highest rank in the series of creation. He possesses all the Divine qualities and rejoices in the life of Divinity. He is the omnipotent and the omniscient being. His will is the will of God. Hence, he is to be considered as the 'Khalifa' or the Vicegerent who rules over the rest of the creation. He is the 'Qurb' or the Pole of the Universe.

As a Perfect or Deified being, he is a connecting link between God and His creation. His heart is 'Arsh' (the throne of God) and his reason is 'Qalam' (the Pen of God). The Perfect Man is the goal towards which all the creation moves. He can be known through 'kashf', i.e., revelation because reason is imperfect. Rumi considers him to be the Prophet or the true saint. The only difference between the Prophet and the true saint lies in the degree of spiritual perfection.

Such a view of distinction between the two is against the spirit of Islam. The *Quran* differentiates between the Prophet and the saint on two basic issues. Firstly, no Prophethood is possible after Mohammad and this is not the case with the saint. Secondly, the Prophet has been granted Divine qualities by God whereas the saint does not enjoy such a privilege; the saint is still on way to the attainment of spiritual perfection. For Rumi, on the other hand, the Prophet is only a saint at the highest level of spiritualism.

Love of God is the only means of Sufi's return to his eternal destination of 'al-Haqq' and his conversion into the Perfect Man. Love discloses the secrets of Reality and it is through love that the mystic's soul seeks perfect identity with God. Besides, love is a great unifying force in religion. The lovers of God seek unity and harmony among different beliefs and creeds.

Rumi recommended a life of action and taught that God loves those who live an active life. He grants perfect freedom to man in his actions. Man is free to choose between light and darkness, heaven and hell and good and evil. However, his deeds are to be evaluated from the standpoint of reward and punishment. Rumi regards good and evil as relative terms. Evil does not exist by itself; it is only the negation of good and it is on account of the evil that the good can be of any forth. Evil may be considered as the sole inspiring force behind man's spiritual evolution and it loses its worth when he reaches the stage of the Perfect Man.

Love: As we have remarked already, two lines of intellectual and moral and spiritual development running their course independently for more than a millennium had converged in Hellenised Christianity, of which the first

unmistakable evidence is the Gospel of John which identified Jesus with Logos. But after this amalgamation the distinctive features of the message of Jesus were not lost and remained recognisably different. Jesus identified God with love, while Hellenism had made reason the ground of reality. Islam too was an heir to Israelite prophetic outlook and grappled what the Hellenistic thought incorporating some of its elements and repudiating others which were antagonistic to the fundamentals of its ideology.

Islam attempted synthesis of reason, love and law and an integration of the higher and the lower aspects, not sacrificing the lower and annihilating it altogether but transmuting the lower into the higher. It means surrender to the will of God which is not a passive attitude of submission but a continued volitional effort to attune oneself to eternal realities of which the focus is God. Whatever Islam took over as its heritage, it transformed it in the process of synthesis and assimilation, until the product became qualitatively different. In the opening chapter of the *Qur'an* we find God neither as the self-thinking thought of Aristotle nor the top point of the Platonic pyramid of ideas but a conscious and eternally creative will. The basis attributes of God given in this surah are:

- (1) *Rabb al-'alamin* (the Nourisher of all realms and beings),
- (2) *Rahman* and *Rahim* (Creative Love and Forgiving Love) and
- (3) *Malik Yaum al-Din* (the Master of the Day of Judgment).

We see here that love is prior to law and justice and hence is more basic to the nature of God who is the Ultimate Reality. The Western critics of Islam are wont to take original Islam as concerned more with unconditional obe-

dience to the revealed will of God than with an attitude of love towards Him. They forget that this obedience is to be rendered to a being who is essentially a lover; as *Rahman*, He creates out of love, as *Rabb* He sustains out of love and as *Rahim* He forgives out of love.

It is a misrepresentation of Islam to assert that the concept of love is foreign to it and was adopted from Christianity and philosophies of Sufis and mystical metaphysicians. The fact is that what mystics and thinkers like Rumi did was to elaborate the meaning of love, not only making it basic to religious and ethical life but giving it a cosmic significance as a creative, ameliorative and evolutionary urge in all creatures and at all strata of existence. It is stated in the *Qur'an* that God has enjoined love (*rahmah*) on Himself and that it encompasses everything. In another verse the extent of paradise is given as the extent of the heavens and the earth, which means entire existence. The Prophet was asked by a non-Muslim where hell would be located if paradise covered all existence. He said, Where is the night when the day dawns? Meaning thereby that when the love of God becomes manifest it shall be revealed as covering entire existence.

The cosmic significance of love could be derived from the *Qur'anic* teaching but it required acquaintance with other ideologies to help Muslim thought in its elaboration. So far as theories and speculations are concerned, we can discover distinctively pre-Islamic concepts in Rumi. Here, a passage may be quoted from Khalifah Abdul Hakim's book, *The Metaphysics of Rumi*:

"So far as the theories of love are concerned, a part of his arguments and views can be directly traced back to Plato who has had a decisive influence on all mysticism, both

Islamic and Christian, by his conception of a supersensuous Reality, as well as Eros [love] as a cosmical power. Rumi's Love as an experience was not a product of any theory; as something intimately personal, it cannot be a subject of criticism. But the conceptual apparatus that he employs to philosophise about love requires to be understood in its historical connections. The contents of [Plato's two Dialogues] *Phaedrus* and *Symposium*... were not unknown to the thinkers of Islam. Ibn Sina's *Fragment on Love* is mostly a reproduction of the dialogue in [Plato's] *Symposium*... Love as the movement towards Beauty which being identical with Goodness and Truth represents Perfection and the Highest Idea and Love, as the inherent desire of the individual for immortality....; given by Avicenna is a simple repetition of the Platonic theory of Love. The processes of Assimilation, Growth, [and] Reproduction are so many manifestations of Love. All things are moving towards Eternal Beauty and the worth of a thing is proportionate to its realisation [or assimilation] of that beauty."

Newton explained the movement of heavenly bodies by physical gravitational pull and Kant promulgated the nebular hypothesis to explain the origin of heavenly bodies out of incandescent vapour. Hegel explained the ever-progressing dynamism of Nature and Mind as the dialectical unfolding in time of the Eternal Absolute. Darwin presented a biological view of the creation of higher species by the blind urges of the struggle for existence and life's adaption with the environment, Rumi's evolutionary concept comprehends all these partial and fragmentary theories, taking them up in a grand synthesis.

Like Hegel he is a believer in the Eternal Absolute, but to explain the dynamism of all life and history he resorts to cosmic love instead

of the dialectic of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Similarly, Rumi has an intuition of the gravitational pull of atoms and masses of matter but, instead of explaining it by mechanical dynamics, he resorts to love as the fundamental urge which creates attractions and affinities.

"All atoms in the cosmos are attracted to one another like, lovers, everyone is drawn towards its mate by the magnetic pull of love. Heavenly bodies draw the earth towards them in a welcoming embrace."

It is on account of this cosmic pull of love that earth remains suspended in space like a lamp, the forces from all directions pulling it by equilibrated attraction not allowing it to fly away or drop down in space, as if the stellar dome of heaven were a magnetic dome inside which a piece of iron is suspended without visible cords. According to Rumi, the same force that reeates heavenly bodies out of nebulae resulting in stars and planets and systems proceeds further and generates life because love by its essence is creative. As atoms by their affinities congregate in molecules so in a further evolutionary urge they emerge as life cells which first appear in vegetation and then advance towards animality. Hegel said that creation proceeds through a synthesis of the opposites, but Rumi says that these apparent opposites were already akin by the affinity of love. Love originates in God and moves towards God who is essentially a creator: therefore, love as it advances from phase to phase in the upward movement of creations brings into being new forms of existence at every step.

We have already stated that Rumi is a monadologist when he talks of atoms and their mutual attractions he is really talking of egos that are in the process of realizing their

divinely-rooted self-consciousness. It is this urge for self-realization that makes the egos act as they do. As their source is God, so their goal is also God and the process of moving towards this goal creates new perfections at every stage. Everywhere there is life and life is essentially a goal-seeking activity. The lower merges into the higher; it is not a process of progressive annihilation but assimilation. Rumi says that the heavenly movements are not blindly mechanical but are waves in an infinite ocean of love. If cosmic love were not there, all existence would get frozen and shrink into nothingness. The inorganic would refuse to merge and emerge into vegetation and vegetation would not be lifted up into animal life nor would life ascend towards the mind and spirit. The egos like infinite swarms of locusts are flying towards the harvest of life. Without love, nothing would move.

The religion of a mystic philosopher like Rumi is a universal religion which could not be enclosed within any orthodox or dogmatic boundaries. His religion is not the creed of any one particular religious community but being the religion of the universe is a universal religion. It is the religion of glowing stars, of flowing streams and of growing trees. Whose belief, intuition and practice accord with this outlook, he has attained the truth. Religion if it is genuine is not a blind faith about the understandable unknown; it is an ever-present reality perceived and lived. It is the alchemy of life which through the magic of love transforms the lower into the higher. We see in ourselves that bread is transubstantiated into life and mind. Could any narrow scientific intellect explain this miraculous transmutation? In the Aristotelian logic of identity everything remains what it is and in mechanistic materials there is no way of explaining the goal-seeking tendency of life from non-purposive aimless atoms.

Life has an infinite assimilative power; there is nothing that could remain eternally foreign to it. As fire burns even a dross and converts it into a pure flame, so every happening in life is capable of being converted into light and life.

The universe, according to Rumi, is a realm of love. In comparison with love and reason are secondary phenomena. It is love that creates to fulfil itself and reason steps in later to look at it retrospectively, discovering laws and uniformities to seek the threads of unity in the diversities of manifested life. Language was not created by any preconceived grammar, nor do the flowers blossom by any conscious planning or according to the laws of botany or aesthetics. Rational thinking follows creation but does not precede it.

Rationalisation, being a secondary phenomenon, is not by itself a creative force. As Hegel has said, philosophy always comes too late only to contemplate retributively what the dynamism of history has already created and completed. Cosmic love transcends all creeds and all philosophies and so the religion of love could never be completely identified with any orthodoxy, dogmatism, or speculative theory. Rumi says that there is no contradiction between universal love and universal reason, but when the human intellect narrows itself, it begins to take a part for a whole, making the mistake of identifying a fragmentary phenomenon with the whole of reality. Human intellect, divorced from universal reason, remains at the biological and utilitarian level and language which is the outward garb of the intellect possesses no vocabulary for the description of the intuition of cosmic love.

Human consciousness remains generally at the biological level and its perceptions.

affections and conations are governed directly or indirectly by biological needs. This biological instrument Rumi calls *khirad* or particular reason (*'aql-i juzwi*) to distinguish it from universal reason, which is an ally of the intuition of life. The particular reason which exaltingly calls itself scientific reason, capable of explaining all reality and solving the riddle of the universe proves to be utterly useless when faced with the intuition of life and love and, instead of gracefully accepting its inadequacy begins foolishly to deny the reality that it cannot comprehend.

The deep impress of Rumi which has continued to develop through the centuries in modern times produced a disciple of the intellectual calibre and poetic genius of Iqbal. The reasons for this influence may be briefly summed up as follows. Here was a man who, like the great prophets and saints, did not accept religious faith at second hand; for him it was a personal experience more convincing than either logical argument or sense-perception. But religious experience, if it rests in its subjectivity, cannot be communicated; its cannot induce conviction in others who do not have it. Rumi deplores the inadequacy of human speech to convey it and also points to the limitations of sense experience as well as inductive or deductive reasoning of what he calls the particular intellect which deals with reality piecemeal.

But side by side with his ultra-sensuous and ultra-rational mystic experience of the all-enveloping spirit in which every ego lives and moves and has its being, he presented himself to us as an acute logician and a skilled metaphysician. When you add his lyrical fervour and poetic genius to his remarkable capacities, he begins to tower above all those who are

either mere mystics or mere philosophers or mere poets. One finds in him anticipations of Kant who tried to prove phenomenality or subjectivity of time, space and causality, anticipations of Bergson in his criticism of the intellect and in his conception of *elan vital* and creative evolution; and anticipations of Nietzsche in his conviction that present humanity must be superseded in a further advance towards new dimensions of being.

He is an idealist and spiritualist of the highest order. He is fundamentally an evolutionary thinker who conceived of existence not in static but dynamic terms. The unconscious urge to rise to higher levels is implicit in all existence; the inorganic is always ready for being assimilated by the organic; in every entity there is an upward surge from within and a pull from above. The inertia of matter on which Newton based his physics and astronomy is declared to be an illusion, the reality of which is infinite motion or restlessness of what Democritus and the thirteenth/nineteenth-century physicists call atoms but Rumi calls egos. Rumi re-establishes the reality of the world and the dignity of all life, particularly of human life which has become self-conscious and conscious of its divine origin and goal.

All movement is from God unto God. Rumi performs the admirable task of ridding mysticism of quietism and irrationalism. He establishes with all the forces of his genius the reality of free-will which is vouchsafed to man to identify itself freely with the cosmic will. He has brought out the essence of universal religion as creative love. He preaches the infinite potentialities of life because all egos have their origin in the Infinite Self and are restless and nostalgic in order to realize their

infinity. Many creeds and philosophies had declared life to be an illusion, but Rumi declares life at all grades to be an Eternal Reality: it is not life but death which is an illusion. The purpose of life is more life, higher and better.

Nietzsche criticises bitterly all creeds that say 'No' to life and says that there are only two kinds of creeds; those that say 'Yes' to life and those that say 'No' to it. Rumi's is a life-embracing creed. Although one of the greatest mystics of all time, he was not a body-torturing and self-annihilating mystic. In a verse he talks of great souls as great hunters of life trying to capture and assimilate the spirituality of angels, saints and prophets, finally aiming at capturing the cosmic spirit itself for perpetual and eternal enrichment of the self, actualising its infinite potentialities.

He wants you not to gather your garments to prevent them from getting wet but to plunge a thousands times in the sea of life. Fight for spiritual conquest and not flight from life's challenges, is the way of life that he preaches and practises. Only for a sleeping soul life is an empty dream; creeds of illusion are the products of lovers of sleep and worshipers of the night. About the infinity of life and its restlessness he says:

"Human egos have experienced the shaping of universe after universe; could you say which of them mirrors the essence of your self? Is it not that the seven heavens are below the empyrean but our flight is beyond the empyrean? Neither the heavens nor the empyrean could be our goal; we have to fly towards the rose-garden of union with the divine".

For Rumi life is an alchemy perpetually engaged in transformation and transub-

stantiation. You see before your eyes earth, water, light and air being transformed into plant life, plant life turning into animal life by assimilation and animal life, ascending to mind; why couldn't mind be transformed into a divinised spirit? They say:

"copper turns into gold by alchemy, but the copper of our life converts itself not only gold but becomes an alchemy itself with the quality of spiritualising whatever it touches".

The space at our disposal compels us to finish this brief survey of Rumi's outlook on life with two of his lyrics: in one he gives the characteristics of the 'Man of God' and in the other depicts a mystic's search for God through the emblems of various creeds, ending in finding God within himself. 'The 'Man of God' is intoxicated without wine and full without meat; he is struck with wonder and cares not about food and sleep. He is a king in a dervish's cloak; he is a treasure found in a ruin. The constituents of a man of God are not the four elements—earth, air water and fire. He is a boundless ocean of the spirit containing countless pearls. The heaven within him contains numerous suns and moons. He gains the truth by knowledge from God and not from books. He stands above creeds and heresies and he is beyond right and wrong. He has ridden away from Non-Being in glory and majesty, He is hidden, O Candle of Faith! such a 'Man of God' do you seek and find".

Rumi is talking here of the ideal man or the ideal of humanity. He is hidden in the nature of every man. The purpose of life is to reach this perfection. In another verse he has repeated the story of Diogenes moving about in the market-place of Athens with a lamp in his hand in broad daylight seeking Man in a crowd of men who according to him were only

counterfeiting humanity. When he is told that no such being could be found, he replies:

"I am craving to find him who is not found".

Religion has been aptly defined by Hoffding as faith in the conservation of values. According to Rumi's mystical metaphysics, the spirit is the origin and locus of all intrinsic and abiding values. The Real which is manifested in the human spirit is eternal and immortal. He exhorts human beings not to lament the transitoriness of phenomenal life because that which is real can never perish. Things in space emerge and disappear; forms and shapes come and go. The streams of phenomenal life continue to flow and pass away; lament not their vanishing because the inexhaustible eternal source remains undiminished and shall continue to issue in many more streams.

We must note that here we have no blank qualities, no transcendent infinity of a static Absolute, but a perpetually gushing fountain of eternal life, from which all egos quaff as much as they can. Mortality belongs to appearances alone; no life but death is an illusion. Every ego is destined to be immortal by participation in life eternal. The purpose of life is self-perpetuation and self-enrichment not only through the reproduction of the species but by the upward and forward urge of every ego. Life moves by a series of negations and assertions; self-realization cannot proceed without self-abnegation. Every stage reached by an ego has to be negated and transcended so that 'on their dead selves' stepping stones men may rise to higher things'. Rumi says that from the very outset life has placed a ladder before you so that you may rise step by step.

After this he reiterates his fundamental hypothesis that life has advanced from the

inorganic to the organic, traversing the vegetable and the animal kingdom, reaching the stage of reason, knowledge and faith, until man, with his body which was only a part of the earth, evolves a mind and spirit and becomes a whole. But even after having become conscious of infinity, the voyage of discovery through the infinite continues. For a long time it was a journey towards God, but now it will be a journey in God's infinity, from earth to heaven, from humanity to angelhood till the finite embraces the Infinite: man the Son of God comes one with the Father. It is the bodies that become old and decrepit; life remains eternally youthful.

The *Qur'an* says about the creation of man that man's body was made of clay, but the material frame having been perfected, God breathed from His own spirit into him. Rumi in his discourses collected the *Fihi ma fihi* has quoted a tradition of the Prophet wherein it is said that Adam's clay was kneaded in forty days. The *Qur'an* says that God's day is an epoch of a hundred thousand years. This mode of expression is not meant to convey an exact mathematical figure but is an idiomatic or rhetorical expression for an immensely long period. Accordingly, God's forty days might mean hundreds of millions of years. Rumi concludes from this that man's bodily organism too did not come into existence by the creative fiat of God in a moment but is a product of a long process of evolution.

It was after the perfecting of the physical organism that the spirit of the Lord became manifest in man awakening the eternal essence of the human ego. With the emergence of this consciousness the human ego realizes that it is not a product of this evolution but, in its essence is prior to the phenomenal course of

the universe. After this realization the universe with its diversity of objects is viewed not as a cause but as an effect, because the ego pours existence into its own moulds with the categories of time, space and causation. Rumi says that the body is not the cause of the mind but is created by the mind as its instrument for working on the material of phenomenal plane.

What we consider to be the qualities of an independently existing matter exist only in relation to a perceiving mind. In a lyric, Rumi describes his search for God after having realized the nature of his own ego. He moves from creed to creed and dogma to dogma. Not finding Him in temples, institutions and symbols, he returns unto himself and discovers him there in the sanctuary of his own heart. He is not satisfied with any creed until God is directly experienced by him. Here is one of the finest mystical lyrics of Rumi:

"I existed at a time when there were neither the names nor the objects of which they were the names; the names and the objects named came into existence in relation to us at a time when egos were not yet individualised and there was not yet any question of 'I' and 'We'. I searched for God among the Christians and on the Cross but therein found Him not. I went into the ancient temples of idolatry; no trace of Him was there. I entered the mountain cave of Hira (where the Archangel Gabriel appeared to the Prophet) and then went as far as Qandahar but God found I not, neither in low nor in high places. With set purpose I fared to the summit of Mount Causus and found there only '*anqa*'s habitation. Then I directed my search to the ka'bah the resort of old and young; god was not there even. Turning to philosophy I inquired about Him from ibn Sina but found Him not within his range. I fared then to the scene of the Prophet's experience of a great divine manifestation only a 'two-lengths' distance from him," but God

was not there even in that exalted court. Finally, I looked into my own heart and there I saw Him, He was nowhere else".

This is the experience and language of the great mystics of all spiritual religions who were not satisfied with institutional religion and who based their spiritual life on personal experiences and conviction not derived from theologies and philosophies. These experiences are the common heritage of all great souls and the common ground on which great religions meet, disregarding intellectual formation of dogmas and diversities of modes of worship which have made religion a dividing instead of a unitive and harmonising force. Rumi is one of those rare saints and mystics whose intellectual fibre and creative moral and social effort is not weakened by subjective emotional experiences unrelated to the realities of everyday life. In him spirituality, rationality and universal morality have found a healthy synthesis. God, universe and humanity are embraced in a single all-encompassing vision, the vision of creative love. Tennyson ends his 'In Memoriam' with a stanza which sums up Rumi's vision and creed:

"That God, which ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves".

His appeal to the philosophers of religion, epistemologists and metaphysicians is as great as his appeal to the mystics of all religions. Neither modern philosophy nor modern science has left him behind. For about a century now the entire philosophical and scientific thoughts have been dominated by the concept of evolution and it is the evolutionary concept that has been mainly responsible for sabotaging ancient theologies and views of creation, resulting in almost universal scepticism and agnosticism. Theology everywhere has been making an

attempt to save the abiding realities and values of religion by accepting universal evolution as an indubitable fact and recasting old beliefs and dogmas. Rumi performed this task six centuries ago in a manner that can offer guidance to all who want to reconcile religion with philosophy and science.

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EB

Ruzbihan, Sadr al-Din Abu Muhammad (1128–1209)

Sadr al-Din Abu Muhammad Ruzbihan b. Abi Nasri al-Fasa'i al-Daylami Al-Bakli Al-Shirazi, (522–606/1128–1209), was a Persian Sufi author. Ruzbihan was born into a family of Daylami origin in the town of Fasa' (Pasa') in Fars and raised without religious guidance. From early youth, however, he was susceptible to dreams and powerful ecstasies, so that he soon abandoned his early trade as a grocer (whence his name Bakli), was initiated into a branch of the Kadharuni tarika, and travelled in search of religious knowledge.

For 50 years, he preached in the mosque of Shiraz, and he established a ribat there in 560/1165 that continued to be a centre of Sufi training and activity under his descendants for several generations. His predilection for the outrageous ecstatic sayings (shathiyya) of earlier Sufis earned him the sobriquet 'Doctor

Ecstaticus' (shaikh-i shattah). He recorded his spiritual experiences with directness and power, using a prose style of great rhetoric density.

Although the Ruzbihaniyya order did not endure as an institution, his writings, particularly his mystical Kur'an commentary, have been studied, preserved and commented on by a select group of readers in the Ottoman regions (e.g. 'Ayni Simabi), in Central Asia (Djami) and in India (Dara Shukoh), as well as in Persia proper, up to the present day.

Ruzbihan is the subject of two hagiographies written by his grandsons: *Tuhfat ahl al-'irfan* by Sharaf al-Din Ibrahim b. Sadr al-Din Ruzbihan Thani, completed in 700/1300 (ed. Dj. Nurbakhsh Tehran 1349/1970) and *Ruh al-djinn* by Shams al-Din 'Abd al-Latif b. Sadr al-Din Ruzbihan Thani, which was dedicated to the Atabak Nusrat al-Din Ahmad-i Lur (r. 696–733/1296–1333). Among his chief extant writings on Sufism are the following:

- (i) *Kashf al-asrar*, a spiritual autobiography in Arabic written in 577/1181–2 (partial editions by N. Hoca, Istanbul, 1971, and P. Nwyia, in *al-Machriq*, lxiv [1970], 385–406);
- (ii) *'Ara'is al-bayan fi haka'ik al-Kur'an* (several times lithographed in India), a voluminous Sufi tafsir in Arabic building on previous commentaries by al-Sulami and al-Kushayri;
- (iii) *Mantik al-asrar*, an Arabic collection of ecstatic sayings (shathiyyat) with commentary and a lexicon of Sufi terminology;
- (iv) *Sharah-i shathiyyat* (ed. H. Corbin, Tehran, 1966), a Persian translation and expansion of the *Mantik al-asrar* (extracts tr. L. Massignon, in *Kitab al-tawasin*. Paris, 1913, 79–108);

- (v) *'Abhar al-'ashikin* (ed. with full bibliographic and biographic essays by H. Corbin and M. Mu'in, Tehran, 1958, also ed. Dj. Nurbakhsh, Tehran, 1349/1971), a Persian treatise on mystical love;
- (vi) *Mashrab al-arwah* (ed. N. Hoca, Istanbul, 1974), an Arabic treatise on 1,001 spiritual states (ahwal);
- (vii) *Risalat al-kuds* and
- (viii) *Ghalatab al-salikin* (both ed. Dj. Nurbakhsh, Tehran, 1351/1972), Persian treatises for Sufi novices;
- (ix) *al-Ighana*, also known as *Sharh al-hujub wa 'l-astar fi makamat ahl ah-anwar wa 'l-asrar* (lith. Haydarabad, 1333/1915), a commentary in Arabic on the veils that separate the soul from God.

He also wrote poetry in Arabic and Persian, plus numerous other works on standard religious subjects such as hadith, exoteric Kur'an commentary, and Shafi'i jurisprudence, some of which have only been preserved in excerpts in his biographies.

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C. ERNST

S

Saadi Sheikh (1184–1291)

The *Gulistan* (Rose Garden) and *Bustan* (Orchard) of Saadi of Shiraz (1184–1291) are two classics of Sufism which provide the moral and ethical basis of the reading of millions, in India, Persia, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Saadi was at times a wandering dervish, was captured by the Crusaders and made to ditches until ransomed; visited the centres of learning of the East and wrote poetry and literature which has not been surpassed.

He was educated in Baghdad at the great college founded by Nizam, the friend of Khayyam and Minister of Court of the Shah. His affiliation was with the Naqshbandi Order of Sufis, and he was closely associated with Sheikh Shahabudin Suhrawrdi, the founder of the Suhrawardi School, and also Najmuddin Kubra, the 'Pillar of the Age,' one of the greatest Sufis of all time.

Saadi's influence upon European literature is acknowledged very considerable. He is one of the group whose writings gave substance to the *Gesta Romanorum*, source book for many Western legends and allegories. Scholars have traced many of Saadi's influences in literature such as that of Germany.

Translations of his works are first found in the West in the seventeenth century. Like most other Sufi work, however, the interior meaning of Saadi is hardly known at all through his literary interpreters. A typical comment by a recent commentator shows this clearly. It is not so much an opinion of Saadi as an indication of the mind of the author: 'It is exceedingly doubtful whether he was a Sufi by temperament. In him the didactic subordinates the mystic.

In actual fact, the cautionary tales, rhymes, soulful analogies used by Saadi are multi-functional. On the ordinary level they do indeed contribute toward the ordinary sublimation of ethic. But Professor Codrington almost alone among Western commentators sees deeper:

"The allegory in the *Gulistan* is particular to Sufis. They cannot give their secrets to those who are unprepared to receive or interpret them correctly, so they have developed a special terminology to convey these secrets to initiates. Where no words exist to convey such thoughts special phrases or allegories are used".

It is not in the West alone that people expect esoteric knowledge to be handed to them upon a plate. Saadi himself points this out in one of his stories.

He was travelling with some devout companions toward the Hejaz in Arabia. A boy near Beni Hilal Oasis started to sing in such a way that the camel of a scoffer of mysticism began to dance, then ran off in the desert. 'I commented,' says the Shekih, "good Sir, you remain unmoved but that song has affected even an animal'.

His teaching about self-examination refers not only to the ordinary need to practice what one preaches. On the Sufi Way there must be a certain kind of self-examination. This comes at a stage earlier than that at which one can understand the admonitions of a teacher. 'If you will nor reprove yourself', Saadi says, "you will not welcome reprove from another.

Such is the persistence of mechanical dulution of the retired life that a candidate for Sufi studies must first be informed as to the place of retirement. 'Fettered feet in the presence of friends is better than living in a garden with strangers', he remarks. Only under certain circumstances is withdrawal from the world needed. Anchrites, who are nothing more than professional obsessives, have given the impression that the desert or mountains are the places where the mystic must spend his whole life. They have mistaken a thread for the whole carpet.

The importance of time and place in Sufi exercise is another matter which Saadi stresses. Ordinary intellectuals will be unable to believe that thought varies in quality and effectiveness in accordance with circumstances. They will plan a meeting for a certain time and place, will start an academic conversation and keep it going under any circumstances, insensitive to the Sufi cognition that only on 'occasion', according to the Sufi, can the human mind escape from the machine within which it revolves.

This principle, familiar in ordinary life under the guise of "there is a time and a place for everything". is stressed by the *Gulistan* in a typical manner. Tale thirty-six of the chapter on the manners of dervishes seems to be a mere exercise in moral instruction or etiquette. When expounded in the Sufi atmosphere, it reveals fresh dimensions.

A dervish entered a house of a generous man, and found an assembly of literati there. There was a constant interchange of pleasantries and the air was thick with the results of intellectual exercise. Someone invited him to contribute. "You must accept from a smaller intellect only one couplet", said the dervish. The company implored him to speak.

Like a bachelor before the women's bath-house door, I face the table, hungry for food.

The couplet means not only that this was a time for food, not talk; it also conveys that the intellectual prattling was merely a setting for real understanding.

The story continues that the host at once said that very soon meat-balls would be provided.

"For the starving man", replied the dervish, "plain bred in metaball enough".

Those who are impatient to learn without knowing that they are not fitted for learning Sufism in their crude state are often reprimanded by the *Gulistan*, in stories and poetry. How can the sleeper arouse the sleeper? Saadi asks in a familiar Sufi phrase. While it may be true that a man's actions should accord with his words, it is also most true that the observer himself must be in a position to assess these actions. Most people are not. A conference of the wise is like the bazaar of the cloth-sellers. In the latter place you cannot take

away anything unless you pay money. In the former, you can only carry away that for which you have the capacity.

The selfishness of the would be disciple in seeking his own development and interests in another subject that is stressed among the Sufis. A balance has to be struck between wanting something for oneself and wanting it for the community as well. The link between the Sufis and the Brethren of Sincerity, hardly noticed by outside observers, is stressed in Saadi's section on this problem. The Brethren were a society of savants who prepared recensions of available knowledge and published them anonymously, in the cause of education, none desirous of increasing his own repute through this dedication. Because they were a secret society, little was known about them; because 'sincerity' is associated with the Sufis, Sufi teachers were often asked about them. Saadi gives this lesson about the mysterious Brethren in tale forty-three:

A wise man was asked about the Brethren of Sincerity. He said, 'Even the least among them honours the wishes of his companions above his own. As the wise say: A man engrossed in himself is neither brother nor kinsman'.

The place won by the *Gulistan* as a book of moral uplift invariably given to the literate young has had the effect of establishing a basic Sufic potential in the minds of its readers. Saadi is read and enjoyed because of his thoughts, his poems, the entertainment value of his books. In later years, when he comes to be affiliated to a Sufi teaching school, the inner dimensions of the tales can be revealed to the student. He has something upon which to build. This preparatory material is almost non-existent in other cultures.

Secrets revealed prematurely—and there are some in Sufism which can actually be communicated without the whole of the teaching—can cause more harm than good. Unless the recipient is prepared, he can misuse the power of which the Sufis are guardians. Saadi explains this in a story which, overtly, is little more than the amplification of a well-worn proverb:

A man had an ugly daughter. He married her to a blind man because nobody else would have her. A doctor offered to restore the blind man's sight. But the father would not allow him, for fear that he would divorce his daughter. 'The husband of an ugly woman', concludes Saadi, 'is best blind.'

Generosity and liberality are two of the important factors which, when applied energetically and correctly go to prepare the candidate for Sufihood. When it is said, 'You get nothing free,' there is very much more to it than that. The manner of giving the thing which is given the effect of the giving upon the individual—these are the factors which determine the progress of the Sufi. There is a strong link between the concept of persistence and bravery with that of liberality. In ordinary discipleship as known in other systems, where the inner understanding of the mechanism of progress is in disarray, the disciple will think in terms of struggle. He gets nothing without struggle, he thinks; and he is encouraged to think in this way.

But Saadi pin-points the problem in one of his smaller aphorisms. A person, he says, went to a sage and asked whether it was better to be valorous or liberal. He answered:

"He who is liberal does not have to be valorous."

This is a most important aspect of Sufi training. It will also be noticed that the form in which the teaching is couched gives Saadi the extra possibility of pointing out (through the mouth of the sage) that questions put in a certain way—either/or—are not necessarily to be answered in that way.

In his chapter on the advantages of contentment, Saadi conceals Sufi teachings in several stories which are seemingly aimed at those who do not exercise correct etiquette. A number of dervishes, reduced to an extremity of hunger, wanted to accept some food from an evil man, known for his liberality. Saadi himself advises them, in a famous poem:

"The lion does not eat the dog's leavings
Though he dies of hunger in his lair.
Resign your bodies to starvation:
Do not beg base for favours."

The way and position in which this story is given shows to the Sufi that Saadi is warning against the dervish following any attractive creed outside of his own, while he is in a period of trial consequent upon his Sufi dedication. The real Sufi has something within him which cannot be reduced in value by association with lesser men. Saadi has made this theme most attractive in one of his elegant moral tales, showing where real dignity resides

A King was hunting in a wilderness with some courtiers when it became very cold. He announced that they would sleep in a peasant's hovel until morning. The courtiers insisted that the monarch's dignity would suffer if he were to enter such a place. The peasant, however, said, "It is not your Majesty who will lose; but I who will gain in dignity from being so honoured". The peasant received a robe of honor.

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EB

Sa'd al-Din Kashghari (d. 1456)

Sa'd al-Din Kashghari (d. 860/1456), Shaikh of the Nakshbandi Sufi order in Herat, best known as the preceptor of the poet and mystic 'Abd al-Rahman Djami (d. 898/1492). Kashghari piety first showed itself it is said, during the journeys on which as a child he used to accompany his father, a merchant of Kashghar with sayyid ancestry. Thus, when he was twelve years of age, he wept uncontrollably after listening to his father and his associates passionately haggling over the price of some goods for a whole morning. After completing the madrasa curriculum (the sources do not tell us where), Kashghari conceived an inclination to the Sufi path, and travelling to Bukhara he joined the circle of Nizam al-Din Khamush, initiatic heir to Baha' al-Din Nakhshband (d. 791/1391) by one intermediary, 'Ala al-Din 'Attar (d. 802/1400).

Several years later, Kashghari set out from Bukhara on the hadjdj, but as his master had predicted he was unable to proceed beyond Khurasan. In Herat, he made the acquaintance of Shaikh Zayn al-din Khwafi (d. 838/1435) who appears to have attempt to recruit him into his own following, as well as Sayyid Kasmi-i Tabrizi; Shaikh Baha'a al-Din 'Umar; and Mawlana Abu Yazid Puerani. It may have been on this journey that Kashghari decided to settle in Herat; the episodic and staccato nature of

the sources leave the matter unclear. It was in any event, in Herat that Kashghari spent the most influential years of his life, making the city the third chief centre of the Nakshbandiyya after Bukhara and Samarkand.

Despite possessing considerable wealth (inherited, perhaps, from his merchant father), Kashghari took up residence in the Madrasa-yi Ghiyathiyya in Herat, near the Masdjid-i-Djami, and it was in that mosque, which he compared in its sanctity to the Masdjid al-Haram in Mecca, that he met and discoursed with his devotees. These came to include many members of the cultural and literary elite of Herat, above all Djami, who was moved to become Kashghari's disciple by a dream in which the shaikh liberated him from the pangs of a profane love. Jami expressed his devotions to Kashghari not only in the pages he allotted him in *Nafahat al-uns* (ed. Mahmud 'Abidi, Tehran, 1370 sh/1991, 408–10) but also through a number of references to him in his mathawis and, most strikingly, the moving *takib-band* in which he eulogised him (*Kulliyat*, ed Shamas Berelwi, repr. Tehran, 1362 sh/1983, 526–9). Kashghari's circle was, however, by no means exclusively aristocratic in its composition; it also included artisans such as Mir Rangraz 'the dyer'.

Like his master Khamush, Kashghari is said to have been in a near-constant state of ecstatic rapture (*ghalaba*); this would frequently overtake him while he was discoursing and cause him to bow his head and fall silent, creating in the uninitiated the impression that he had fallen asleep. He is also reported—again like his master—to have had the ability to manifest the divine attribute of wrath (*kahr*); however, he succeeded in containing this dangerous power. He does not appear to have left any writings,

but sixteen of his sayings and discourses are recorded in Fakhr al-Din Wa'iz Kashif's *Rashahat 'ayn al-hayat* (ed. Mu'iniyan, I, 210–18).

Some of these, aphoristic in nature, are reminiscent of utterances by Khwaja Abd Allah Ansari (d. 481/1089) which may not be fortuitous, given Kashghari's acknowledgement of Asari as the pre-eminent saint of Herat. From other pronouncements of Kashghari may be deduced a familiarity with the concepts and terminology of Ibn 'Arabi, whom Kashghari greatly admired, like other early Nakshandis.

Kashghari died while performing the mid-day prayer on 7 Djumada I 860/12 May 1456 and was buried in the Khyaban suburb of Herat. The site soon acquired great sanctity and several of his disciples, including Djami, were buried nearby. His tomb was nonetheless neglected during the disorders that came to mark the history of Herat, and ultimately the head stone itself disappeared. The tomb was restored, and the head stone replaced, by Ahmad shah Durrani who also constructed an Iwan nearby. This iwan was rebuilt and provided with two minarets in the late 1950s by Muhammad Zahir Shah, the last king of Afghanistan.

One of the devotees of Kashghari is said to have been told by the Prophet in dream that Kashghari had advanced no fewer than thirty-two people to the rank of saintship (*wilayat*), but none of these appears to have been clearly nominated as his successor. Dajami was manifestly the most prominent of Kashghari's disciples, but being temperamentally averse to assuming the burdens of preceptorship, he encouraged the followers of Kashghari to gather, after his death, around Mawlana Shams al-Din Muhammad Rudji (d. 904–1499).

Important, too, among the disciples of Kashghari was Mawlana 'Ala' al-Din Maktabdar (d. 892/1487), several of whose devotees carried the Nakshbandiyya to places such as Kazwin ad Tabriz in western Persia. In general, however, the initiatic lines descending from Kashghari faded out after two or three generations; it was his great contemporary, 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar of Samarkand, who proved more significant for the long-term transmission of the Nakshbandi order.

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HAMID ALGAR

Sadr Al-Din, Muhammad Yunus Al-Kunawi (1207–1274)

Sadr Al-Din Muhammad B. Ishak B. Muhammad B. Yunus Al-Kunawi was born in 605/1207 and died on 16 Muharram 673/22 July 1274). He was disciple of Ibn al-'Arabi and author of influential works on theoretical Sufism.

Ibn al-'Arabi met Majd al-Din Ishak al-Rumi, Kunawi's father, in Mecca in 600/1203 and subsequently travelled with him to Anatolia. A source from the late 7th/13th century tells us that after Majd al-din's death, Ibn al-'Arabi married his widow and adopted his son Sadr al-Din; the fact that Kunawi himself never mentions this is not surprising, given his extreme reticence concerning personal matters.

The same source (85) tells us that Ibn al-'Arabi entrusted Sadr al-Din Kirmani (d. 635/1238), and this is confirmed by a manuscript letter in which Kunawi says that he was Kirmani's companion for two years, travelling with him as far as Shiraz. By the time he was twenty, Kunawi appears among the listeners to Ibn al-'Arabi's works in a *sama'* dated 626/1229. He seems to have remained with his *shaikh* until the latter's death in 638/1240; his name is recorded in many *sama's* deriving from this period.

Presumably, the *fath Kulli*, or total unveiling of the invisible world, that he mentions as occurring in Damascus (*al-Nafahat al-ilahiyya*), 152–3; partial Persian tr. in Djami,

Nafahat al-uns, ed. Tawhidipur, Tehran 1336/1957, 556–7). Kunawi reports that he did not receive oral explanation from Ibn al-'Arabi concerning most of his works, but instead gained knowledge of them through God's effusion (*al-Fukuk*, ed. Khwadjwi, 240). In his *Manakib al-'arifin* (ed. T. Yazici, Ankara 1959).

Aflaki recounts several anecdotes showing that Kunawi had a highly favourable view of Rumi, and he contrasts Rumi's simplicity with the sumptuous scholarly trappings of Kunawi's circle (e.g., 95–6). Among Kunawi's important students were 'Afif al-Din al-tilimsani, Fakhir al-Din 'Iraki. Sa'id al-Din Farghani and Mu'ayyid al-Din Djandi (d. ca 700/1300), author of the most influential commentary on Ibn al-'Arabi's *fusus al-hikam*. Farghani is *al-rasul* by Majd al-Din Ibn al-Athir with him in the year 673 (H. Ritter, *Autographs in Turkish libraries*, in *Oriens*, VI, 1953, 63–90).

The works ascribed to Kunawi can be divided into those that are unquestionably authentic and those concerning which some doubts remain. The most important works in the first category are the following:

1. *I'djaz al-bayan fi tafsir umm al-kur'amn* or *Tafsir al-fatiha* (published as *I'djaz al-bayan*, Haydarabad-Deccan 1949; and as *al-Tafsir al-suri li'l-Kur'an*, ed. 'a. Ahmad 'Ata'. Cairo 1969). Both printed editions leave out the author's rather extensive marginal notes. This is Kunawi's longest and perhaps most important work.
2. *Sharh al-hadith al-arba'in* (ed H.K. Yimaz, *Tasavvufi hadis serhleri ve Konevinin Kirk hadis serhi*, Istanbul 1990). Kunawi died after commenting on only 29 *hadiths*. The commentary

on *badits* nos 21–2 is extensive and provides important elucidations of Kunawi's teachings on imagination and other matters.

3. *Shah al-asma' al-husna*. A relatively concise explanation of the ninety-nine names of God and their traces on the human level.
4. *al-Fukuk or Fak al-Khutum* (ed. M. Khadjawi, Tehran 1413/1992; printed on the margin of Kashani, *Sharh manazil al-sa'irin*, Tehran 1315/1897–8). A short commentary on the essential themes of Ibn al-'Arabi's *Fusus al-hikam*, focusing on the implications of the chapter headings.
5. *Miftah al-ghayb* (published on the margin of Muhammad al-Fanari, *Misbah al-ins bayn al-ma'kul wa 'l-mankul fi sharh miftah ghayb al-djam' wa 'l-wudjud*. Tehran 1323/1905; partial ed. and French tr. S. Ruspoli, *La cle du monde suprasensible*, diss., Paris IV 1978). This has always been considered Kunawi's key work; it was taught in Persian *madrasas* after students had mastered the most difficult texts in philosophy. At least nine commentaries have been written on it, mostly in Turkey. One of the more interesting is by 'Abd Allah Mulla Ilahi, written on it, mostly in Turkey. One of the more interesting is by 'Abd Allah Mulla Ilahi, written in Persian at the command of Mehmed II Fatih; the author makes several asides to the ruler in the midst of the text in several asides to the ruler in the midst of the text, indicating that he was expecting him to read it (see

Chittick, *Sultan Burhan al-Din's Sufi correspondence*, in WZKM, lxxiii [1981], 37–8).

6. *al-Nafahat al-ilahiyya* (Tehran 1316/1898), a series of about fifty "inspired breaths", along with other miscellaneous texts including at least 17 letters written to various friends and disciples. Many of the passages refer to Kunawi's visionary experiences.
7. *al-Nusus* (ed. S.Dj Ashtiyani, Tehran 1362/1983; appended to Kashani, *Sharh manzil al-sa'irin*, ed cit; and appended to Ibn Turka, *Tamhid al-kawa'id*, Tehran 1315/1897–8). A collection of 21 texts that pertain exclusively to the "station of perfection"; the longest (no. 20), which is taken from the first section of *Miftah al-ghayb* is perhaps Kunawi's most comprehensive exposition of the doctrine that later came to be known as *wahdat al-wudjud*.
- 8–9 *al-Mufawadat* (forthcoming critical ed. by Gurdun Schubert). A Correspondence initiated by Kunawi with Nasir al-Din Tusi Kunawi's first treatise, *al-Mufsiha 'an muntaha 'l-aqfar wa-sabah ikhtilaf al-umam*, addresses the weakness of human reason and poses a series of questions for Tusi; a good portion of the introductory material is drawn from the beginning of *I'djaz al-bayan*. His second treatise, *al-Hadiya*, responds to Tusi's replies (for details on the contents, see Chittick, *Mysticism vs. philosophy in earlier Islamic history*

the *al-tusi al-Qunawi correspondence*, in *Religious Studies*, xvii [1981], 87–104).

Minor works include the following:

10. *al-Ilma' bi-ba'd kulliyat asrar al-sama'* A long letter to 'Alif al-Din al-Tilimsani describing how, when Kunawi was circumambulating the Ka'ba, the meaning of certain verses he had heard suddenly became clear to him.
11. *Nafthat al-masdur wa-tuhfat al-shakur*, or *Rashh al-bal bi sharh al-hal*, containing about 50 pages of intimate mystical prayers. This work was sent by mistake to Tusi along with work no. 8, and he offered polite criticism of it in his response.
12. *al-Risala al-badiya al-murshidiyya*, also called *al-risala al-tawadjudhiyya* and *Risalat al-tawadjudh al-atamm*. This short work, of which a Persian translation was prepared during Kunawi's lifetime, provides practical instructions concerning the remembrance of God (French tr. M. Valsan, *L'epitre sur l'orientation parfaite*, in *Etudes traditionnelles*, lxxvii [1966], 241–68).
13. *Wasiyya* A short last will, which mentions among other things Kunawi's close relationship with Ibn al-'Arabi and Awhad al-Din Kirmani. Kunawi advises his disciples to avoid theoretical issues and concentrate on the practical instructions provided in work no. 12.

His books on philosophy should be sold and the remaining books made into an

endowment, and his own writings should be given to 'Afif al-Din. A second version adds the names of four people to whom money should be given and tells his daughter Sakina that she should be careful to observe her ritual obligations. Several letters and brief Persian treatises are also extant. Works of questionable attribution include the following:

1. *Mir'at al-'arifin fi multamas Zayn al-'Abidin*. A relatively short discussion of cosmology in Kunawi's characteristic style. Text and English tr. in S.H. Askari, *Reflection of the awakened*, London 1981.
2. *Tahir al-bayan fi takir shu'ab al-iman*. This and the following work, both relatively short, are attributed to Kunawi in some manuscripts and reflect his style and concerns.
3. *Maratib al-takwa*.
4. *Kitab al-Lum'a al-nuraniyya fi hall mushkilat al-shadjarat al-nu'maniyya*. Commentary on a diagram that Ibn al-'Arabi is said to have drawn up to illustrate the general direction of future events in Egypt.
5. *Tabsirat al-mubtadi wa-tadhkirat al-muntahi*. A Persian work that is most likely by one Nasir or Nasir al-Din (tr. in Chittick, *Faith and practice of Islam*, Albany 1992; discussion of authorship at 255–62).

In contrast to Ibn al-'Arabi, Kunawi focuses on a relatively small number of issues, thereby singling them out as the most essential teachings of his master. His mode of exposition is in no way indebted to Ibn al-'Arabi or to anyone else (a point he sometimes stresses e.g. *I'djaz*, 47; *Nusus*, 22). His major themes are

perhaps best summarised in the last section of *Miftah al-ghayb*, in which he proposes a series of questions that he then sets out to answer (282–3): What is the reality of the human being? From what, in what, and how did he come into existence? Who brought him in to existence and why? What is the goal of his existence? Briefly, Junawi answers these questions by describing the modes in which *wudjud* may and may not be known, the manner in which existent things are differentiated within *wudjud* through the influence of the divine names under the influence of any specific attributes.

Every other created thing manifests specific names of God and is dominated by either oneness or manyness. Although this theme is also found in Ibn al-‘Arabi’s writings, it is not so clearly presented as the key doctrine. Ibn al-‘Arabi roots his teachings in the Kur’an and the *Hadith*, but Kunawi employs a more abstract vocabulary that is much more reminiscent of texts on philosophy, and he highlights a number of technical terms that play no special role in Ibn al-‘Arabi’s teachings, even though they become basic points of discussion in later works. These include *al-hadara al-ilahiyya al-khans*, *kamal al-djala’ wa l’-istidjla’*, *i’tidal*, and *ta’ayyun*.

The key term *wahdat al-wudjud*, although found in at least one passage of Kunawi’s works, has no special technical significance for him. In the works of Farghani based Din Ardabili, the ancestor of the dynasty, who claimed descent from the third Imam Husayn b. ‘Ali. This ancestral claim parallels that of the contemporary Hasani Sharifs of Morocco, who were then using *al-Hasani* among their own titles. Perhaps both dynasties emphasised their illustrious descent in order to embrace

the Ottomans, who had no claim to such prestigious ancestry.

The legends which proclaim the ruler’s Shi‘i allegiance are in Persian. The better known of these are *Ghulam-i Imam Mahdi ‘alayhial-salam* used by Tahmasb I and Muhammad Khudabanda; *Banda-yi Shah-i Wilahat* used by ‘Abbas I. ‘Abbas II Safi II-Sulayman and Husayn, and *Ghulam-i Shah-i Din* used by Tahmasb II. Poetical distichs in Persian incorporating the name of the ruler within their texts were employed by ‘Abbas I, Safi I, ‘Abbas II, Safi II-Sulayman, Husayn, Tahmasb II and ‘Abbas III. At the end of Safawid power when Tahmasb Kuli Khan, the later Nadir Shah controlled Tahmasb II and ‘Abbas III, anonymous distichs were also inscribed in the name of the eighth Imam, ‘Ali b. Musa al-Rida. Such distichs were also used by the Zands and early Kadjars, who avoided placing their own names on the coinage while a Safawid pretender still existed. These secular legends are usually inscribed in *nasta‘lik*, the script in which poetry was usually written.

State control over the monetary system was exercised by the *Mu‘ayyir al-Mamalik*, the State Assayer, who reported directly to the ruler. Under him were the local chief assayers and *darrabi bashi*, masters of the mint, who were jointly responsible for ensuring that the gold and silver were of the right alloy and that the manufacture of the blank flans and their striking into coin proceeded according to the regulations in force. The management of the mint was farmed out to local concessionaires who were responsible for collecting and remitting the seignorage, *wadjibi*, charged for refining metal, manufacturing gold and silver thread for weaving carpets and luxury cloth, and for striking coins. The raw metal was delivered to the mints in the

form of bullion and foreign or obsolete coins. Seignorage varied widely from 2% to 20% of the metal value based on what local commercial and political circumstances could bear.

Under the Safawids, the main state mints were located in Isfahan and Tabriz, whenever the latter was not under Ottoman control. Other main urban centres that witnessed more or less continual minting activity were Hamadhan, Kashan, Kazwin, Shiraz and Yazd, as well as those in the main shrine towns of Ardabil and Mashhad. The ports of Rasht in the north and Huwayza in the south were chiefly concerned with restricting foreign coin as it entered the Safawid dominions, while the almost continuous wars were financed by the *Urdu* (army) mint as well as those located in the north-western fortress towns of Eriwan, Gandja, Nakhciwan, Shamakhi and Tiflis, whenever these were not held by the Ottomans.

Besides these towns, both Isma'li I and Tahmasab I operated many local mints which varied greatly in their importance and in their production of coin. Initially they served to reinforce the ruler's authority throughout the country and to spread the observance of the Twelver Shi'i doctrines to areas where they may have been only lightly observed before the Safawid conquests. However, like the Ottomans, the Safawids found that a large number of small and remote mints gave only a marginal return to the state treasury and were often wide open to local manipulation and malpractice. Thus during the economic hardships and inflation of the 11th/17th century most of them were closed down unless a locally powerful governor could maintain their existence either as a matter of local prestige or to meet exceptional local needs.

Although Safawid coins have survived in large numbers, no systematic effort has been

made to study them within their political and economic contexts. They are usually treated, quite correctly, as the first section of the modern coinage of the Shahs of Persia. The standard works on the Safawid coinage need to be updated because of the many discoveries that have been made since they were published.

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Sadr Al-Din Musa (1305–1391)

Sadr Al-Din Musa was the son and successor of Shaikh Safi al-Din Ardabili and the founder at Aradabil of the Safawi order which stemmed from Shaikh Zahid Gilani (d. 700/1301). Shaikh Sadr al-Din was born in 704/1305 from Safi al-Din's second marriage with Bibi Fatima, daughter of Shaikh Zahid, and died

in 794/1391–2, according to the *Silsilat al-nasab-i safawiyya*, hence dying aged 90 having directed the Safawi order for 59 years. Although the hagio-biographical and historical sources concerning him have to be treated with caution, they allow us to trace the essential features of his long career as head of the order.

After the death of his eldest brother Muhyi al-Din in 724/1324–5, Sadr al-Din replaced him in his function as khalifa, and replaced his father, as his spiritual and material heir, when the latter fell ill before his death, although it seems that Safi al-Din's sons were at odds with each other, above all regarding their father's material legacy. Being then 30, Sadr al-Din achieved the succession without any overt opposition, and at a point when, after the II Khan Abu Sa'id's death (736/1335), the Mongol clan of the Copans/Cubans of the Sulduz tribe were disputing over the succession with the Djalayir tribe, and Ardabil, the dar al-irshad of the Safawiyya, changed hands several times. Originally, favoured by the Copanid Malik Ashraf, he fell out with him and had to flee from Ardabil with his khalifas and murids to ilan; it was the protection of the Khan of Kipcak, Djagilni Beg Mahmud, of the Golden Horde, who gave protection to Sadr al-Din and the Safawiyya.

When the Jalayirids led by Uways secured control over Adharbaydjan in 761/1361, the situation of the order improved. Uways allotted Ardabil as a soyurghal to his son Ahmad, and the latter confirmed and renewed in a farman the established fiscal privileges and revenues of Sadr al-Din and the order (document of 773/1372 ed. by Masse, Kazwini, Bayani, etc.). Despite the influence and respect which Sadr al-Din enjoyed, the hagio-biographical sources and the documents do not show that he claimed the title of sayyid or that he was considered as

such during his life-time, although there were later falsifications allegedly proving an 'Alid descent for the Safawids, one of the bases of their claim to dynastic legitimacy.

After his eldest brother's death, Sadr al-Din is presented as the closest and most favoured of Safi al-Din's sons, with other sons relegated to the second rank. He was certainly influential on the material plane, and it is with him that the family's ambitions in acquiring extensive estates and other landed property take shape. Only a small part of these were constituted as wakf proper, the remainder being acquired in full personal ownership (milk) or in the shape of family wakf and transmissible to the family's descendants.

These acquisitions were purchased from the amirs or from other Turco-Mongol and Mongol nobles, and from other notables; sometimes they were obtained by questionable means and this gave rise to litigation and conflicts, in particular between the Djuwayni and Safawi families. As well as the revenues accruing from his direction (tawliya) of these sources of wealth, Sadr al-Din must have had a substantial personal fortune, especially as his mother died soon after his father, as did his brother Abu Sa'id and his two half-brothers 'Ala' al-Din and Sharaf al-Din.

His properties in the region of Ardabil included villages and shops, and some of these were acquired to the detriment of local notable families. His sons Shihab al-Din and Diya' al-Din were equally active in amassing properties. Apparently, through a sense of politics as by family sentiment, Sadr al-Din extended his care and control over the whole of the Safawi family.

With these riches, Sadr al-Din contributed extensively to the growth of the Ardabil shrine, which became a complex worthy of the order's

prestige and importance. The construction of Safi al-Din's tomb, completed towards 1344, is said to have taken ten years. The Dar al-Haffaz was built on the site of a demolished zawiya and the building (O perhaps, reconstruction?) of various buildings, whose original functions are uncertain, is attributed to him, including one called a cini-khana in Shah 'Abbas I's time, a cilla-khana and a shahid-gah.

With the respect behind him of the Mongol and Turkmen authorities, Sadr al-Din continued his father's work for the extension of the Safawiyya order, in particular, by sending out khalifas to places like in particular, by sending out khalifas to places like Georgia. The most famous of these khalifas, a controversial figure on account of his heterodox, Hurufi doctrines was Shah Kasim al-Anwar, his envoy to Khurasan, who also had links with Shah Ni'mat Allah. According to an apparently late tradition, Sadr al-Din is said to have made the pilgrimage in 770/1368–9 and to have brought back from his visit to the Prophet's tomb in Medina a banner allegedly belonging to Fatima and two tambourines used ritually at Ardabil. He is said to have asked the Sharif of Mecca for his genealogical tree.

But as with his father and other Safawi shaikhs, he has left no work behind for us to get an idea of the range of his knowledge. Like his father, too, Sadr al-Din was a mediocre theologian but endowed with great charisma and famed for his Sufi teaching. This fame seems to have gone beyond the Turco-Persian world, for his contemporary Ibn Khaldun honours him with the title of shaikh al-shuykh ('Ibar, Beirut, 1951, V, 1171).

On his return from the Pilgrimage, Sadr al-Din is said to have appointed his eldest son

Khwadja 'Ali as his khalifa and na'ib and to have entrusted to him before his death the spiritual direction and teaching of his disciples (sajdjada-yi irshad wa tarbiyat-i 'ibad). It seems nevertheless that another son, Sahiab al-Din, acted as shaikh of the Safawiyya for some time after his father's death, according to some documents. There may conceivably have been more division between irshad and tawliyat. Whatever the case, it was, according to the official Safawid version, Khwadja 'Ali who, probably because of his influence and 'meetings' with Timur, was considered as his father's successor after the latter's death in 794/1391–2. Sadr al-Din was buried at Ardabil near his father.

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Safi Al-Din Ardabili (1252–1334)

Shaikh Abu 'l-Fath Ishak Safi Al-Din Ardabili, son of Amin al-Din Djibra'il and Dawlati, was born 650/1252–3 and died 12 Muharram 735/12 September 1334 at Ardabil,

onymous founder of the Safawid Order of Sufis and hence of the Safawid dynasty, rulers of Persia, 907–1148/1501–1736. Traditional hagiographical accounts depict Safi al-Din as being destined for future greatness from infancy. As a boy, he spent his time in religious exercises, experienced visions involving angelic beings, and was visited by the *abdal* and *awtad*. As he grew up, he could find no *murshid* (spiritual director) at Ardabil capable of satisfying his religious needs. When he was twenty years old (670/1271–2), he travelled to Shiraz to meet Shaikh Nadjib al-Din Buzghush, who had been recommended to him as a *murshid*.

On his journey south, he continued to seek a spiritual director in the various towns through which he passed, but still without success, and on his arrival at Shiraz, he learned that Shaikh Nadjib al-Din had just died. He was then advised that the only person capable of analysing his mystical state (*hal wa ahwal*), his visions (*waki'at*) and his spiritual stations (*makamat*) was a certain Shaikh Zahid Gilani. Safi al-Din eventually found a Shaikh Zahid at the village of Hilya Kiran on the Caspian in 675/1276–7 and at once realized that the Shaikh, then sixty years of age, was the *murshid* he had been seeking.

Shaikh Zahid treated Safi al-Din with extra-ordinary favour. He gave his daughter Bibi Fatima in marriage to Safi al-Din and his son Haddji Shams al-Din Muhammad married Safi al-Din's daughter. Safi al-Din had three sons by Bibi Fatima: Muhyi al-Din (died 724/1223–4); Sadr al-Milla wa 'l-Din, who succeeded him as head of the Safawid order; and Abu Sa'id. Before his death in Raddjab 700/March 1301, Shaikh Zahid designated Safi al-Din to succeed him as head of the Zahidiyya order.

This caused great resentment among some of Shaikh Zahid's followers and especially on the part of his elder son, Djamal al-Din 'Ali and his family. Shaikh Zahid's younger son, Haddji Shams al-Din's Muhammad, who was in any case Safi al-Din son-in-law, was placated by grants of land and other property. There is evidence that Safi al-Din connived at the expropriation by his son-in-law of certain *wakfs* controlled by Djamal al-Din's son, Badr al-Din Djamal; the Mongol Il-Khan Abu Sa'id intervened in 720/1320 to restore the rights of Badr al-Din. On the other hand, Shaikh Zahid's descendants were not immune from the usurpations of Mongol amirs.

Under Safi al-Din's leadership, the Zahidiyya order, under its new name Safwiyya, was transformed from a Sufi order of purely local significance into a religious movement based on Ardabil, whose religious propaganda (*da'wa*) was disseminated throughout Persia, Syria and Asia Minor and even as far away as Ceylon (H.R. Roemer, *The Safawid period*, in *Camb. Hist. Iran*, vi, 192). Even during his lifetime, Safi al-Din wielded considerable political influence and his designation of his son Sadr al-Din Musa to succeed him makes it clear that he was determined to keep this political power within the Safawid family.

After his death, his mausoleum at Ardabil became an important place of pilgrimage. Though he maybe regarded as the founder of the Safawid dynasty, which promulgated Ithna 'Ashari Shi'ism as the official religion of the state, Safi al-Din himself was nominally a Sunni the Shafi'i madhhab. However, given the syncretised religious climate of the period of Mongol rule in Persia, too much emphasis should not be placed on this.

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Safi, Fakhr Al-Din (1463–1532)

Safi [Ali b. Husayn Wa'iz Kasifi] was born on 21 Djumada I 867/11 February 1463 and died in 939/1532–3), author, preacher and prominent Nakshbandi Sufi and son of the famous Kamal al-Din Husayn Wa'iz. Born in Sabzawar, he was brought up and educated in Herat. His mother was the sister of Djami. Among his early teachers were Djami and Radiyy al-Din 'Abd al-Ghafur Lari. He was early attracted by Nakshbandi ideas and travelled to Samarkand in 889/1484 and again in 893/1487–8 to study with Khwad 'Ubayd Allah Ahrar, chief of the Nakshbandi order. In 904/1498–9, he married the daughter of Khwadja Muhammad Akbar b. Sa'd al-Din Kashghari.

After the death of his father in 910/1504–5, Fakhr al-Din 'Ali succeeded him as leading preacher in Harat. In 938–9/1531–2 he was confined for a year in Harat when the city was besieged by the Ozbegs. When the sieg was broken by the forces of Shah Tahmasp in 939/1532–3, he took refuge with Sayf al-Muluk Shah Muhammad Sultan, the shar of Ghardjistan, but in the same year that area was attacked and he returned to Herat, where he soon died and was buried in the city. Some have suggested that he became a Shi'i later in life, but nothing definite in this regard can be stated. His works are:

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- (2) *Lata'if al-tawa'if* (ed. A. Gulcin Ma'ani, Tehran 1367/1988–9);
- (3) *Hirz al-amani min fitan al-zama* (Lucknow 1290/1873);

- (4) Kashf al-asrar, also called Tuhfa-yi khani (Bodleian cat. 2749; Ivanow, cat ASB [Curzon Coll.] 648);
- (5) a mathnawi entitled Mahmud wa Ayaz (Hadjdji Khalifa, iv, col, 445);
- (6) Anis al-'arifin (Isma'il Pasha Baghdadli, Hadiyyat al-'arifin, ed. Bilge and Inal, Istanbul, 1951-5, i, col. 743).

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W.L. HANAWAY

Samman, Abu 'l- Hasan (d. 905)

Abu'l-Hasan Sumnun (d. about A.D. 905) was the most learned Shaikh of his time. He was a contemporary of Junayd and Nuri and was renowned for his overwhelming love of God. 'Attar says about Sumnun: "He, being fearless in love, being out of senses, that moth of the candle of Beauty, that man having been distressed by the dawn of Union, that man—the restless lover of God, Sumnun". He was among those spiritualists who regard station of gnosis on the path of God.

Love, for Sumnun, cannot be described in language because it is a mystical experience which transcends all possible symbols and expressions. He says:

"A thing can be explained only by what is more subtle than itself: there is nothing subtler than love: by what, then, shall love be explained?"

God never extinguishes the flame of love. It takes the lover close to the Beloved at every stage of self-annihilation. Hujwiri says:

"He (Sumnun) asserts that love is the foundation and principle of the way to God, that all 'states' and 'stations' are stages of love and that every stage and abode in which the seeker may be admits of destruction, except the abode of love, which is not destructible in any circumstances so long as the way itself remains in existence".

The path of love, a grace of God is full of distress. Love of God is full of affliction "so that every common man may not claim for love and may run away seeing its agony".

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EB

Al-Sarradj Abu Nasr (d. 988)

Al-Sarradj Abu Nasr 'Abd Allah b. 'Ali, Sufi author originally from Tus in Khurasan, who lived towards the middle of the 4th/10th

century and died in his home-town in 378/988. The bio-biographical and geographic literature ('Attar, *Tadhkira*, ed. Nicholson, ii, 182-3 al-Dhahabi, *Ta'rikh al-Islam*, cited by Nicholson in *The Kitab al-Luma'*, p. III; Ibn Taghribirdi, *Nudjum*, iv, 152; Djami, *Nafahat*, no. 353; Ibn al-'imad, *Shadharat*, iii, 91) gives hardly any precise information about his life and upbringing.

We do, however, know the names of some of his teachers and sources of information e.g. amongst others, Dja'far al-Khuldi (d. in Baghdad 348/960) and Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Salim of Basra (d. 356/967), the leading light of the Salimiyya school. The fact that he frequented the company of this last and that he cites him does not, nevertheless, allow us to count him amongst the partisans of the Salimiyya (see Nicholson, *op. cit.*, pp. XI-XII); the lively discussion which he had with Ibn Salim on the validity of the *shatahat* attributed to Abu Yazid al-Bistami (*Luma'*, ch *Tafsir al-shathiyyat*) testifies all the same to his independence of mind.

From the text of the *K. al-Luma'* it appears that al-Sarradj travelled widely, since he cites, on occasion, conversations which he apparently had not only in Persia but also in 'Irak, Syria and even Egypt. Above all, our sources mention the remarkable consequences of his spiritual elevation. Thus, invited during Ramadan to direct the education of the dervishes in the Shuniziyya mosque at Baghdad, he is said not to have touched for a month the food which was brought to his cell (*Tadhkira*, ii, 182; *Nafahat*, no. 353; Hudjwiri, *Kashf al-mahdub*, ed. Zhukovski, 417).

'Attar, and Djami following him, further report that al-Sarradj, carried off by a moment of ecstasy, plunged his face into a flaming

brazier without suffering any pain or leaving any trace on his face; on the contrary, it was completely radiant. But in fact, we know hardly anything further on his life and, in particular, have no information at all on his possible successors on the mystical path.

As for his disciples, we know only one name, that of Abu 'l-Fadl of Sarakhs, the future master of Abu Sa'id b. Abi 'l-Khayr (Muhammad b. al-Munawwar, *Asrar al-tawhid*, ed. Dh. Safa, 27; *Nafahat*, no. 354). This is a remarkable dearth of information about one who was called "the peacock of the poor" (*tawus al-fukara'*) and whose authority and competence were widely recognised.

In fact, the personality of al-Sarradj is completely hidden behind the *K. al-Luma'* "Book of shafts of light", his main and probably only work, since, despite an affirmation of existence by Djami, no other title attributed to him is known to us. This work involves a treatise of considerable value, both from the richness of its documentary information on the Sufism of the first Islamic centuries and also from the quality of the religious thought which informs it. Al-Sarradj presents there the bases of knowledge understood in a mystical sense, contrasted with the Islamic religious sciences known at the time.

He details in it the main stages and states of the mystical path; underlines the importance of the revealed sacred text and the prophetic example by highlighting the ways of interpretation followed by the Sufis; describes the customs (*abab*) of Sufis and cites the particularly significant texts of the great masters. The precision of his definitions in the technical lexicon of Sufism is most valuable. He also deals with the tangible and

controversial aspects of the Sufi life, such as the status of miracles (*karamat*), the nature of ecstasy, the lawfulness of listening to music (*sama'*), the orthodoxy of the paradoxical utterances (*shatahat*) attributed to certain *mashayikh*; and the doctrinal errors of several currents of thought claiming a connection with Sufism. Each chapter forms a little, autonomous treatise, in which the author cites abundantly *hadiths* and, especially, the dicta of the great masters of Sufism. His own points of view are not concealed at all but are fitted in fairly discreetly behind the teachings of the great figures in the tradition.

The importance of the *Luma'* was appreciated as soon as it appeared. Subsequent authors, like al-Kushayri in his *Risala*, found in it substantial bases of documentation, as did even Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, who drew upon it for several elements in his writings on the behaviour of Sufis (see esp. the *Ihya'*, Book ii, *K. Adab al-sama' wa 'l-wajd*). The *Luma'* also contributed to the legitimisation of Sufism as an Islamic science in its own right. Al-Sarradj showed himself quite firm about the essential point: true Sufis are not merely in complete conformity with Islamic orthodoxy but they themselves make up its spiritual elite.

It is not, then, a question of an apologia, in the strict sense of the term, or of a purely defensive justification of Sufism, but it goes beyond that to an argued and assured statement of the harmonious integration of mysticism within the bosom of Muslim religious life. Being moderate and aiming at a consensus of opinion, al-Sarradj's language in the *Luma'* thus forms a particularly clear and vivid example of the conception which the Sufis had of themselves towards the middle of the 4th/10th century.

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P. LORY

Sha'ban Weli (d. 1568/9)

Sha'ban Weli a mystical brotherhood arising out of the Khalwatiyya at Kastamonu in northern Anatolia towards the middle of the 10th/16th century. Its *pir*, Sha'ban Weli, born at Tashkopru in this same region, was initiated into the Khalwatiyya precepts by the *shaikh* Khayr al-Din Tokadi of Bolu on his return from a period of study in Istanbul, and died in 976/1568–9 at Kastamonu, where he directed a group of his disciples after spending twelve years at the side of his spiritual master. The main source on the origins of the Sha'baniyya is the work of one of Sha'ban Weli's successors, 'Omer Fu'adi (d. 1046/1636), the *Menakib-i Sherif-i Pir-i Khalwati hadret-i Sha'ban Weli*. This work on the life and miracles of the founder was printed at Kastamonu in 1294/1877 in a volume also containing the same author's *Risale-yi turbe-name*, which deals with the building of Sha'ban Weli's tomb at the beginning of the 11th/17th century. 'Omer Fu'adi is also said to have written an enlarged version of the *Menakib-name*, unfortunately lost. Sha'ban Weli himself left behind no works.

For almost a century, the new order's network seems to have remained an Anatolian one. However, in the capital, one of the

founder's *khalifas*, Shaikh Shudja' (d. 996/1588) exercised a great influence, much criticised by the sultan's entourage, over Murad III, who had become his disciple. According to a still extant *kitabe* of 988/1580, this same Shudja' had the mosque-*tekke* of Sha'ban Weli at Kastamonu renovated. We know many details about the building of the saint's tomb, completed in 1020/1611, thanks to the work of 'Omer Fu'adi mentioned above.

The order was at various times given fresh impetus by the great *shaikhs* who were regarded as founders of the branches of the Sha'baniyya, and from the latter half of the 11th/17th century enjoyed a vast expansion throughout the Ottoman empire. At an early date, there was 'Ali 'Ata' al-Din Karabash Weli (b. 'Arabgir, 1020/1611, d. on returning from the Pilgrimage in 1097/1686), founder of the Karabashiyya, called al-Atwel "the very tall" on account of his height and Karbash, "black head" because of the order's characteristic black cap.

Initiated at Kastamonu, he was *shaikh* at Cankiri in central Anatolia, and then, from 1079/1669, at Uskudar (he also spent some time in exile on Lemnos). Karabash Weli left behind numerous works on mysticism. One may note a commentary on Ibn al-'Arabi's *fusus al-hikam* (the *Kashif-i esrar al-Fusus*); a *tarikah-name*, a treatise on the interpretation of dreams (*ta'bir-name*); a treatise on the 40 days' retreat (*Risaleyi iusul-i erba'in*); and one on the *dhikr* made by whirling (R. *fi djewaz-i dewrani l-sufiyye*). He is said to have had many *khalifs* who spread the Sha'baniyya in his new form. This last affected not only Anatolia but also Rumelia and the Arab provinces.

The network issuing from the order which took shape in the Arab provinces from the end of the 12th/18th century under the impetus of

the spiritual successors of Mustafa Kamal al-Din al-Bakri, notably the Kamaliyya, Hinfiiyya, Dardiriyya and Sammaniyya branches and their ramifications, can be considered as independent of the Sha'bani networks of Anatolia and Rumelia, even if certain of their members preserved the common mystical tradition

Four other personalities mark the evolution of the Sha'baniyya up to the middle of the 19th century. The first was Muhammad Nasuhi (d. 1130/1718), one of Karabash Weli's *Khalifas*. He was *shaikh* of a *tekke* built for him by the Grand Vizier Damad Hasan Pasha at Uskudar in the Dog handjilar quarter, an establishment considered at the close of the Empire as the *asitane*, main centre, of the order in Istanbul. He was also the author of several works, including a Kur'an commentary and a *diwan* of poetry.

The second was Mustafa Cerkeshi (d. 1229/1814), disciple of a *shaikh* of the region of Safranbolu, who exercised his functions at the little town of Cerkesh, to the south-west of Kastamonu. More than Muhammad Nasuhi, he seems to have set his mark on the brotherhood. He lightened the burden of the rules made by Karabash Weli, reducing the precepts for members from twenty to three: to be linked with a spiritual master, committing oneself to him totally, to accept from this master pardon (*tawba*) and initiation (*talkin*); and to perform *dhikr* unceasingly. Cerkeshi was also the author of an epistle said to have been written at the request of Sultan Mahmud II (*R. fi tahkik al-tasawwuf*), and he appears moreover in recent works as the second *pir* of the Sha'baniyya.

The third person mentioned as the founder of a branch of the *tarika* was a *khalifa* of the preceding person, one Hadjdji Khalil Geredeli (d. 1247/1831-2 and buried in the village of

Gerede, near Bolu). He is said to have been illiterate (*ummi*) and to have been invited by the sultan to install himself in the capital, where he assumed direction of the *tekke* of the *Zeyrek* mosque. The fourth and last person considered as founder of a branch of the Sha'baniyya was Ibrahim Kushadali (d. 1845), *Khalifa* of Beypazarli Shaikh 'Ali, a disciple of Mustafa Cerkeshi. He had numerous disciples (including some provincial governors and some women) and gave a particular imprint to the order, notably by rejecting residence in a *tekke*, a mode of life which he considered to be in a state of degeneration (when the *tekke* which he headed in Istanbul was burnt down in 1833, he refused to rebuild it and settled down in a simple *konak*). He was certainly influenced by *malami* doctrine, but equally, he placed the *shari'a* in the forefront, insisting on the practice of *rabita* (liaison of the disciple's heart, in imagination, with that of his *shaikh*) and on that of *khalwa*.

Under the impulse of these different persons, the Sha'baniyya gradually became that branch of the Khalwatiyya with the most centres in the Ottoman capital. It even exceeded those of the Sunbuliyya in the last decades of the 19th century, with 25 *tekkes*, of which about ten were on the Asiatic shore, mainly at Uskudar. The *tarika* likewise spread vigorously in northern Anatolia, in a *zone* extending from Istanbul to Tokat, above all in the triangles Kastamonu-Bolu-Ankara and Kastamonu-Yozgat-Tokat. In Rumelia, where it had spread strongly since the 11th/17th century (Ewliya Celebi mentions its presence in the Bulgarian lands ca. 1650), it had a special spurt of growth in the second half of the 19th century, notably in Bulgaria (at Nevrokop/Goce Delcev and Trnovo), at Iskece/Xanthi in Thrace, at Bitola in Macedonia, and also in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where *tekkes* were founded from ca. 1865

onwards at Sarajevo, Severin, Bijeljina, Donja Tuzla and Visegrad under the stimulus of the *shaikh* Muhammad Sayf al-Din Iblizovic. It may be noted that Ya'kub Khan Kashghari, who was one of the disciples of Muhammad Tewfik Bosnewi, *khalifa* of Ibrahim Kushadali (as well as being also affiliated to the Nakshbandiyya and Kadiriyya), is said to have contributed to spreading the order in India; but it does not seem to have put down durable roots there.

Today, the Sha'baniyya, which has not survived in the Balkans, is represented uniquely in Turkey, where it is the most active branch of the Khalwatiyya. In Istanbul itself, there are at least fifteen mosques where Sha'bani dervishes meet for *dhikr*, generally on Thursday or Sunday evening. For the ceremony, each adept wears a *khirka* and a fine-textured white turban falling on to the back. The *dhikr* unfolds in three phases: seated in a circle, in darkness the dervishes first recite the brotherhood's *wird*, then the *dhikr* properly speaking, characterised by repetition of the three formulae *La ilah illa 'llah*, *Allâh* and *Hu*, and then ending by standing up in a *halka*. According to recent publications attesting the activities of the Sha'baniyya in Turkey, these belong to the Cerkeshiyya branch and consider Mustafa Cerkeshi as their second *pir*.

In Kastamonu there exists a "Sa'ban-i Veli Association of Kastamonu" which looks after the ancient centre of the order. This consists of a much-visited complex, including a mosque which until 1925 served also as a *tekke* and in which one can still see a series of small cells intended for spiritual retreat, a *turbe* enshrining Sha'ban Weli's tomb and those of his successors, a library, and ablutions fountain, a kitchen, two houses, a cemetery and a spring whose water is sought after for curative purposes.

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N. CLAYER

Shabistari, Mahmud (d. 1320)

Muhammad Shabistari, so called after the name of Shabistar, a village near Tabriz in

Adharbaijan, was born about the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century and died about 720/1320. Little is known of his life. His *Gulshan-i-Raz* (The Garden of Mystery) is a poetical exposition of the doctrine of the Unity of Being. It was written in 710–1311 in response to certain questions about mystical philosophy asked by one Amir Husaini from Khurasan.

Mahmud Shabistari distinguishes between rational knowledge and gnosis in his mystical philosophy. Rational knowledge is attained through the intellect and is related to the empirical world. It is imperfect because it cannot transcend the world of the contingent beings. As such, it fails to comprehend Truth (*al-Haqq*) or Necessary Being. The intellect cannot contemplate on Divine Glory just as our eyes cannot look at the sun. The mystical knowledge or gnosis (*ma'rifa*), on the other hand, is gained by the illuminated soul of the Sufi.

Gnosis is the only means for the realisation of perfect identity with God; it is experienced when God reveals Himself in the heart of the Sufi. It is expressed through mystical symbols on the path of Love which cannot be understood through human language.

"The Divine world is infinite: how can finite words reach unto it? All these mysteries, which are known only by direct experience... how can they be explained by human speech? When the gnostics interpret these mysteries, it is by symbols that they are interpreted."

Love alone unveils the secrets of Godhead in the heart of the devotee of God.

"Wine and lamp and the beloved are symbols of the One Reality, Who in every form, is manifested in His glory. Wine and lamp are the light and the direct experience of the knower. Contemplate the Beloved, Who is

hidden from no one. Drink for a while the wine of ecstasy: perhaps, it may save you from the power of self and lead the essence of the drop into the ocean."

Mahmud Shabistari was a great exponent of the Sufi doctrine of 'wahdatu'l-wujud' or the Unity, of Existence. For him, God is the Absolute Existent Being or the Perfect Unity. He is the Creative Unity, is manifested in all things and thus becomes the cause of His own revelations. But all His forms are ultimately the same Reality.

"Unity is like a sea... look and see how a drop from that ocean has found so many forms and has been given so many names, mist and water and rain and dew and clay, plant, animal and finally, man in his perfection. All come from one drop, at the last as at the first; from that drop all these things were fashioned. The phantoms pass away: in one moment there remains—in all places—only the Creative Truth. At that moment of time you come near to Him: parted from self, you can join the Beloved. In God there is no duality. In the Presence 'I' and 'we' and 'you' do not exist. 'I' and 'you' and 'we' and 'He' become one... Since in the Unity there is no distinction, the Quest and the Way and the Seeker become one."

God is One (*al-wahid*) because the multiplicity in itself is illusion. The existence of all things means the existence of One Reality. In '*Gulshan-i raz*', Mahmud Shabistari writes:

"One, though in counting it be used of necessity, yet, becomes no more than one by the counting. How can you doubt that this is like a dream: that beside Unity, duality is just a delusion? The differences that appear and the apparent multiplicity of things come from the chameleon of contingency. Since the existence of each of them is One, they bear witness, to the Unity of the Creative Truth."

God can be called Absolute Unity in Existence in the sense that He reflects Himself in 'not-being'. God is 'Being' by virtue of His 'being' and He is also 'Being' through the medium of 'non-being' because:

"Not-being is the mirror of Being, that is, of Absolute Being. In it is reflected the glory of the Creative Truth. When not-being is placed opposite Being, in an instant the reflection appears in it. Not-being is a mirror and the world and the reflection and man are like the reflection of an eye... the eye of the Hidden One."

The knowledge of Truth that Being is everything and 'not-being' as such is an illusion is revealed only to the Sufi in his mystic ecstasy (*wajd*).

Mahmud Shabistari, like Ibn al-'Arabi, does not accept the Christian theory of God's incarnation (*hulul*). God's embodiment in the form of man implies otherness between God and man. When there is no duality, the question of God's incarnation does not arise.

"Incarnation and communion spring from the 'other'. Neither does Truth become a creature, nor is a creature united with Allah".

Mahmud Shabistari accepted the Neoplatonic theory of emanations and attempted to put it in a religious form in his cosmology. Following the Traditions (*hadith*), he believed that God created the universe because He wished to be known. God reflected His Godhead in 'not-being' and then appeared in His various forms including that of man. The first emanation from the One Absolute Being is the Universal Reason. The second is the Universal Soul. The third is 'Arsh' or the highest heaven, *i.e.*, the ninth heaven. Following the descending order of the heavens, the third emanation created the fourth emanation or the

eight heaven. The fifth emanation is called the seventh heaven. In the sixth emanation, we have the sixth heaven. The seventh emanation may be named as the fifth heaven. The eighth emanation stands for the fourth heaven. The ninth emanation is to be called the third heaven. The tenth emanation means the second heaven. At the eleventh emanation, we have the first heaven. It created the twelfth emanation which is the region of the four elements and the world of plants, animals and men. The four elements—water, air, fire and earth compose the bodies of plants, animals and men. Thus, the existence of everything in this scheme of creation means the expression of One Absolute Unity. Divinity declines as the Divine Light goes further and appears in the form of a new heaven.

Man occupies a central place in the system of creation. He is the mirror in which Godhead is reflected in the true form. His only mission is to realise his identity with God. Hence, the existence of man is two-fold, *i.e.* his being in the descending order and then his existence in the ascending order. On the descending side he attains mental or sensuous faculties. His is at his lowest when he involves himself in animal instincts. Man's ascending process towards Reality starts when he comes out of the veil of his empirical self or his 'I-ness'. His consciousness of the pseudo-self is an obstacle in the contemplation of Divine Qualities. Mahmud Shabistari thus laid stress on the mortification of the self. He says:

"Who is the traveller on the road to God? It is that one who is aware of his own origin. He is the traveller who passes on speedily: he has become pure from self as flame from smoke. Go you, sweep out the dwelling room of your heart, prepare it to be the abode and home of the Beloved: when you go out, He will come

in. Within you, when you are free from self, He will show His Beauty... When you and your real self become pure from all defilement, there remains no distinction among things, the known and the knower are all one."

Again,

"To become a haunter of taverns is to be set free from self: egotism is infidelity, even though one seems to be devout. The tavern belongs to the world beyond compare, the abode of lovers who fear nothing. The tavern is the place where the bird of the spirit makes its nest: the tavern is the sanctuary of God Himself."

On the ascending side towards God, i.e., the '*tariqat*' or the Divine Path, man has to attain spiritual perfection. Mahmud Shabistari has also described the various stations (*maqamat*) on the mystical journey to God. Repentance is the first stage and implies soul's turning from that which is against Godhead. 'Poverty' and 'love' are the other important stages as they lead to the purity of soul and the feeling of oneness with God (*uns*).

The last station on the Path is '*fana*' which implies soul's absorption in God. Perfection is reached when the soul experiences the state of '*baqa*'. Here the Sufi is named 'Perfect Man' because he abides in the world of Divine Deed. This means that the Sufi travels three Journeys— Journey from God, Journey to God and Journey with God.

The Sufi's return to the present world as a Perfect Man (*Insanu'l-kamil*) is a significant aspect of Mahmud Shabistari's mystical philosophy. The Perfect Man comes to the world of humanity to serve it after having realised perfect identity with God. He lives in the world though he does not belong to it. He is called Prophet when he reveals his spiritual

perfection to mankind and he is named 'Sufi' when he veils the accomplished fact of his identity with God. But the mission of both is to serve humanity from the moral as well as the spiritual aspects. They guide human beings on their way to God (*tariqat*) serving as the Shaikh or the Pir or the Spiritual Master. They are perfect in spirituality because the Divine Essence and the Divine Attribute are identical for them. Their soul experiences the state of '*al-wahid*' or complete identity with God from the negative standpoint which implies that their soul is annihilated in the Universal Soul and from the positive side which means that their soul rejoices in permanency in the Divine Soul.

As a true follower of the panteistic theory of '*wahdatu'l wujud*' or the Unity of Being, Mahmud Shabistari accepts the theory of determinism. In his moral philosophy he refutes the concept of man's freedom of will. According to him, God is responsible for every human deed for He is the only Existent Being. The world is merely an appearance or a deception and man as such is non-entity. God does everything and man is to be considered as an instrument of God having been completely determined in his actions. Mahmud Shabistari writes:

"Seeing that your being is all one with non-being
Say, when comes this free will of yours?"
"How O foolish man! can free will appertain
To a person whose essence is nothingness."

The exposition of the doctrine of the Unity of Being in the book adds nothing to what had earlier been said by ibn 'Arabi, Mahmud, however, is much clearer and much more precise than his spiritual teacher. Being, by its very definition, he says, is existent and Non-Being, non-existent. There is nothing in

existence except the One. The contingent and the necessary were never separate; they existed from eternity as one. If you look at one side of the One, it is one and if you see the other side it becomes many — the only difference being that the aspect of unity is real, while that of plurality is illusory. Reality is one but its names are many and it is this plurality which becomes the cause of multiplicity.

Essence as such is beyond our knowledge or comprehension. But, according to Shabistari, this inability on our part to know God's essence because of His nearness to us. Essence as absolute light is as invisible to the eyes as Non-Being which is absolute darkness. Nobody can look at the sun directly. But it can be seen as reflected in water. Relative non-being is like water. It serves as a mirror of the Absolute Light in which is reflected the illumination of *Haqq* (truth). This relative non-being is the latent reality (*'ain al-thabitah*) of ibn 'Arabi's system, which reflects the divine light in accordance with its natural propensities. The divine light as pure light was a hidden treasure, but when it was reflected in the mirror the treasurer became manifest. But, in this process, the essence that was One became many.

Shabistari then describes the process of descent of the One after the manner of ibn 'Arabi. The first manifestation of the essence is the universal soul (*nafs al-kulli*). Then come Throne (*'arsh*), the heavenly Chair (*kursi*), seven heavenly spheres, four elements, the three kingdoms of minerals, vegetables and animals. The last in the series is man who is the acme of creation. Though temporally the last in the series, is man who is the acme of creation. Though temporally the last in the series, man is logically the first, as tree is potentially prior to the seed. All the world was created for him

while he was created for himself, as the embodiment of God's highest manifestation. But he possesses certain baser elements which, however, are essential for his moral progress. A mirror, to be able to reflect things, must have one side totally blackened. If it were all crystal, it would cease to serve as a mirror.

As man is the final cause of creation, everything is made to obey his command. All things are manifestations of the different names of God, but, being the reflection of the Named, man comprises within himself all the names; therefore all the creation is within him. He is the most marvellous creation of the Lord and owes everything to Him: his power, knowledge and will are all God's.

Reason is perfectly useless according to Shabistari. Its is a long, winding, and arduous path. A philosopher is like a cross-eyed man he argues the existence of the Necessary, as distinct from and other than the contingent. Arguing on the basis of who sees duality everywhere. He starts with the objects of the world on received as real. On this basis of a continuous series of causes and effects, Shabistari asserts that the Necessary Being is the Primal Cause of the process of creation. The whole process of reasoning, according to him, is wrong. There is no possibility of the knowledge of God through the category of contingency as the latter does not similarity to the former. "It amounts to discorving the burning xun with the help of the dim light of a tiny candle". The best method therefore, is to give up logical reason and enter the valley of gnosis. Knowledge gained through discursive reason leads one to sleep, while gnosis awakens one from slumber. Like Abraham, one must go beyond the divinity of the stars, the sun and the moon which, according to him, represent

sense-perception, imagination and reason, respectively.

In the sixth question of *Gulshan-i-Raz* the Shaikh explicitly rejects the usefulness of reason in the mystic search for truth. He holds that there is "a way" beyond reason by which man is able to know the secret of reality. The intuitive power of man is hidden within him as fire is implicit in the stone. When this fire blazes forth, all the world becomes bright and illumined.

Discussing the value of knowledge in the tenth question he says that by knowledge he does not mean the device by which people gain worldly power and prestige; for that is contrary to the spirit of a true mystic. Knowledge is useful only when it leads one to right action, action that springs from the heart. Shabistari also suggests a study of both the sources of knowledge mentioned in the *Qur'an* — the external world (*afaq*) and the internal world of self-consciousness (*anfus*). But in practice the mystics' study of the internal world has always led them to emphasise the illusory character of the external world.

The account of moral qualities given by Shabistari is a mere reproduction of Platonic and Aristotelian theories. Wisdom (*hikmah*), moral purity (*'iffah*), bravery (*shaja'ah*) and justice (*'adalsh*) are the main moral qualities. He discusses briefly the Aristotelian principle of the mean. Paradise is the result of following this middle path, while adopting either of the extremes would lead to hell. When moral purification is attained, man is vouchsafed divine light (*tajallis*) which illumines his soul and raises him to the highest level. Saints and prophets are the persons who fall in the category of the illumined souls.

This manifestation (*tajalli*) of God is not only in things that are good but also in things which, in common usage, we call evil. As God is the only being and the only cause of everything, so all things without distinction manifest His light. The logical position of pantheism is that good and evil are all alike and, as manifestations of God, stand on an equal footing. But when we come to the ordinary common-sense view, we distinguish between them and attribute good to God and evil to Satan.

Like all other pantheists, Shabistari is completely deterministic. He holds that the so-called sense of freedom possessed by man is due to his consciousness of selfhood as an entity distinct from God. Man is by nature a non-existent and, therefore, it is meaningless to attribute freedom to him. Believers in freedom of choice are Zoroastrians who make a distinction between the god of good and the god of evil. To attribute power, will and action to man is wrong and in this matter, according to him, both the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites have gone astray—the former in saying that man is free in his choice and the latter in making man responsible for his deeds due to the power of 'acquisition' attributed to him.

According to Shabistari, man is not created for exercising moral responsibility, but for some other purpose. He does not explain what that other purpose is. His commentator, Lahiji, however, adds that it is to serve as a polished mirror for the manifestation of God's essence, attributes and names. Can we ascribe any freedom to the mirror in reflecting objects? For everyone of us, actions were pre-determined. God's actions are inscrutable. "Can you explain," he asks, "why one man is born Muhammad and another abu Jahl?" Man's

dignity lies in being under compulsion and not in having a share in free-will.

But then, why is man held responsible for his deeds? Is it not injustice? The Shaikh thinks that it is not injustice but an argument in favour of God's absolute power and arbitrariness. Again, the object of making man responsible for deeds over which he has no control is to compel him to renounce this world for ever, as he is elementally incapable of fulfilling the obligation of following the right path and obeying God's Law, i.e., *Shari'ah*.

What are the steps by which an individual reaches the stage of perfection? He is born, according to him, as the acme of creation, the purest of the pure, and the highest of the high. But due to his descent into the phenomenal world, he comes down to the lowest level. His state at this stage is directly opposite to the state of unity. But due to illumination which he receives through his intuitive powers or his rational capacity, man realizes his weakness and then sets on a journey backward. It is travelling from contingency to necessity, from plurality to unity, from evil to good.

There are three stages in this journey. The first is called absorption. Here the light of God shines through his actions so that the mystic regards the action of everything as illusory. Nothing besides God possesses any causal power. At the second stage the divine light shines through God's attributes and so the Sufi regards the attributes of everything else as merged in God. The last stage comes when the mystic receives illumination from the very essence and sees the real state of affairs. For him nothing is existent except He and not the being of all things is derived solely from Him. When he reaches this stage, he becomes perfect and attains a state of union with his Lord "so

much so that neither angels nor prophets can equal him. The whole circle of existence is covered and man reaches the point from where he started".

The religious Law (*Shari'ah*), the mystic Path (*Tariqah*) and Truth (*Haqiqah*)—all go to form the perfect man. *Shari'ah*, according to the Shaikh, is like the protecting shell of the almond. It is useful to a certain stage. When the stage of perfection is reached, the shell becomes useless and is better thrown away. Nevertheless, a perfect Sufi needs religion—not for himself but for others.

Shabistari follows the general trend of mystic writers in describing the nature of saintship (*wilayah*) and prophethood (*nubuwwah*). Saintship is a more general category than prophethood. Saints so-called and prophets are all saints in the first instance. A saint is a follower of the prophet in Law and in this he attains the highest position and becomes equal to the prophet in realizing union with the Lord. With the death of the Holy Prophet the first cycle of saintship, a cycle in which prophethood and saintship were both manifest in the world, came to an end.

After the Final Prophet, saintship continued and the new cycle began to take its shape. One day, the seal of saints will appear, who shall be the acme of saintship and with his appearance, the cycle of the two worlds will come to an end. He will be the whole, of which all the previous saints were parts. Like the 'Seal of the Prophets', he shall be a blessing to the whole world. He will succeed in bringing peace and security to man; justice and equity will reign. The word 'seal', according to ibn 'Arabi, does not signify a mystic with whom saintship will come to an end, but with Shabistari, the seal of saints, like the 'Seal of

Prophet,' would terminate saintship forever. The last of the saints is the 'seal' with whom the world will come to an end.

This world of matter, however, being the locus of God's manifestation (*tajalli*) cannot come to an end at all. There shall be no time when the manifestation of *Haqq* can be said to have ceased. The present world and the world to come will meet and there is no dividing line between the two. The next world is something ever in the making. What we usually call this world and the next are mere names, for what Shabistari, following, ibn 'Arabi, calls the ever-new process of creation, an enduing cycle of annihilation and re-creation.

In the life to come, man would be without body but it would be something subtle and transparent. Our deeds and mental disposition of the present life would take concrete shape and become materialised in some tangible form. Good disposition will take the shape of light (paradise) and bad the Shape of fire (hell).

After death, the individuality of man shall vanish at last and many shall be dissolved into one. Man shall be vouhsafed the beatific vision, but it will not be something external; it will be a manifestation within himself.

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EB

Shahriyar, Kazaruni, Shaikh Abu Ishak, Ibrahim b. (963-1033)

Kazaruni, Shaikh Abu Ishak, Ibrahim b. Shahriyar, founder of a Sufi order variously known as the Murshidiyya, Ishakiyya and Kazaruniyya. He was born in Kazarun, near

Shiraz in Fars, in 352/963, and died there in 426/1033. He left his birthplace only once, in 388/998, to study *hadith* and to perform the *hadjj*. His initiation into the Sufi path was at the hands either of Ibn Khafif of Shiraz (d. 371/981), or of one of his disciples, Husayn Akkar. Several features give a distinctive aspect to Kazaruni's life and work, among them his proselytisation among the unconverted population of Kazarun and its environs: he is reputed to have converted no fewer than 24,000 Zoroastrians and Jews to Islam, thus establishing the Muslims as the majority in the area (Farid al-Din 'Attar, *Tadhkirat al-awaliya*, 244–54; Mahmud b. 'Uthman, *Firdaws al-murshidiyya fi asrar al-samadiyya*, 416). In this endeavour, he faced and vanquished the hostility of Khurshid, the Zoroastrian governor of Kazarun.

He was also concerned with extending the frontiers of Islam, and organized the annual dispatch of *ghazis* to fight on the the Byzantine frontier, an activity that earned him the title of *Shaikh-i ghazi*. The *khanakah* that he established in Kazarun had an important social function, and provided regular charity for the poor and for travellers. Sixty-five similar *khanakahs* were established elsewhere in Fars by Kazaruni's disciples during his lifetime, and formed the nucleus for the later expansion of the order.

All the branches of the order were to show the same charitable concern for the poor that had marked Kazaruni's life, and the distribution of soup at one Ishaki *khanakah*, that at Bursa, continued sporadically into fairly recent times (Mehmed Shems el-Din, *Yadigar-i Shemsi*, 220). By the 8th/14th century, the order had spread westwards into Anatolia and eastwards as far as China. In Anatolia, the followers of

Kazaruni were known as Ishakis: they had centres in Erzurum, Amasya, Konya (founded 821/1418; Abdalbaki Golpmarh, *Mevland'dan sonra Mevlevilik*, Istanbul 1953, II) and Bursa (founded 884/1479: H. Adnan Erzi, *Bursa'da Ishaki dervislerine mahsus zaviyenin vakfiyesi*, in *Vakiflar Dergisi*, ii (1942), 423).

It may be presumed that, drawing upon the example of their founder, they played a great part in the conquest and Islamisation of Anatolia. From Anatolia, the Ishakiyya spread into Rumelia (there was a *tekke* at Edirne: see Ewliya Celebi, iii, 454) and south to Aleppo (W. Caskel, in *Isl.*, xix, 284 f.). The eastward expansion of the order to India and China seems to have seaborne, and connected with the protection afforded to voyagers by Kazaruni's *baraka*, and after his death, by the soil from his grave.

A gift of money would be vowed to the Kazarun *khanakah* as guarantee of safe passage, and the sum was then collected by agents in foreign ports: Ibn Battuta, ii, 88–92; iv, 10,3 mentions Calicut Cambay and Kolam in India, and Zaytun (Canton). This system appears to have been formalised by 'Umar b. Abi 'l-Faradj al-Kazaruni (d. 704/1304). The soil from Kazaruni's grave was reputed to be able to calm stormy waters when cast into the sea, as well as having the properties of a panacea and a talisman.

The central *khanakah* at Kazarun was suppressed by the Safawids at the beginning of the 10th/16th century (Mirza Hasan Fasa'i, *Farsnama-yi Nasiri*, Tehran 1314/1896, 249), and the Anatolian branch of the order appears to have faded out in the following century, although traces of it persisted much later. Mention may also be made of a derivative of Kazaruni's order, the Ruzbihaniyya, founded

by Ruzbihan Bakli of Shiraz (d. 606/1209): this was restricted to Fars and did not last for much more than a century.

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H. ALGAR

Shams al-Din, Hadrat Pir (1165–1277)

Hadrat Pir Shams al-Din was born in the town of Sabzawar. His father's name was Hadrat Pir Salah al-Din and his mother's name was Fatimah bin Sayyid Abd al-Hadi.

Our twenty-ninth Imam. Hadrat Mawlana Imam Shah Qasim Shah, appointed Pir Shams al-Din as *pir* and ordered him to preach wisdom and spread the Isma'ili faith in lands outside Iran. Kissing the hand of the Imam, he left with

his blessings and arrived at Badakhshan where he began his duty to preach. Revealing the Imam of the time (*zamana na imam*) to the people, he accepted their allegiance to Hadrat Mawlana Imam Shah Qasim Shah on his behalf and initiated them into the religion of Isma'ilism.

From Badakhshan he passed through Ghazni, Cinab and other towns and, trekking through the Hindukush and Pamir mountain ranges, he reached Kashmir. At every town that he passed through, he kept up his duty of preaching. During his journey, he endured many troubles and afflictions. Suffering hunger and thirst, he arrived in India (Hindustan) where, in order to teach and preach, he had to learn and master many different Indian dialects.

One day, he came to a town called Anal where he found Hindus singing *garbis* on the occasion of Dasera. Pir Shams al-Din mixed in with them and began to sing his own *garbis*. These *garbis* were filled to the brim with the philosophy of Isma'ilism and the revelation of the Imam of the time. Over ten days, he sang twenty-eight *garbis*. Their effect was so profound that the local *pandits* hurriedly wrote them down and countless Hindus discarded their sacred threads (*janoi*) which piled up into a huge mound at the feet of Pir Shams al-Din. [Then], accepting the faith of Islam, they all gave allegiance to the Imam of the time, Imam Qasim Shah.

In the same village, there lived a pious woman by the name of Emnabai. She, too, was inspired with feelings of devotion for the *pir* and invited him to dine at her home. The master, Pir Shams al-Din, accepted her request and entered her house to eat. When the meal was laid before Pir Shams al-Din, however, he refused to eat the food. To test Emnabai, he said:

“We do not want this cooking! We shall eat only if you cook a meal with water that has been fetched in an unbaked pot drawn up from the water-well with a rope made of raw cotton.”

Emnabai was faithful (*imani*) and she followed Pir Shams al-Din’s instructions. She fetched water from the well and then cooked and fed him. Pir Shams al-Din was greatly pleased with this [proof of] devotion and gave Emnabai many blessings. Thus, Emnabai passed the test.

In the year 715 A.H., Pir Shams al-Din went to the delightful land of Kashmir to preach when a band of ruffians belonging to a tribe called Cangad captured him with ropes (made of cactus). Pir Shams al-Din, however, showed no fear toward these people and prayed before the presence of God Almighty. Immediately, a change came over them and they all sought Pir Shams al-Din’s protection. The Cangad tribe numbered some two lakh strong and they all became followers of Pir Shams al-Din. Thereafter, other citizens of Kashmir also became followers in great numbers, among whom could also be found [some of] its kings.

In this way, Pir Shams al-Din spread the teachings of the *da‘wah* in Tibet, Kashmir, Gilan, Yarkand, Askard, Punjab, Multan and other countries and showed the people the true path of the Isma‘ili faith; to a few special individuals, he also gave guidance about the ‘divine secret’ or the ‘divine essence.’

However, the major portion of Pir Shams al-Din’s followers were the Hindus, especially the people known as Cakkas who were famous for their heroism and splendour and whose chiefs had reigned over Kashmir and the Punjab for about 280 years.

In those times, as a result of the king’s oppressive orders to his provincial governor,

Pir Shams al-Din and his Isma‘ili followers suffered endless hardship. To safe-guard the lives and possessions, Pir Shams al-Din had to change his method of spreading the *da‘wah* and, instead, preached his message in disguise. The Hindus called this path the Shamsi sect (*samsi mat*) and its followers believed Hadrat ‘Ali to be the epiphany (*mazhar*) of God Almighty.

Giving [religious] guidance to this region in such manner, Pir Shams al-Din eventually reached Karachi and from there he proceeded to Multan.

In Muttan, he took up residence in an ancient mosque where a group of people had gathered to pray. He joined the group for prayer and the *imam* leading the prayer began. In the middle of the prayer Pir Shams al-Din suddenly sat down. Once the prayer was over, people rushed to the Pir demanding an explanation for his irreverent attitude. Pir Shams al-Din gestured to them to sit down and said:

“As long as the *imam* who led the prayer was remembering Allah, I performed the prayer with him, but I sat down in the middle of the prayer when his attention starved from Allah’s recollection and idly wandered to other places.”

Everyone was astonished by this answer. They urged him:

“Please stand forward as the *imam* who leads the prayer and make us pray.”

The Pir consented to their request. As the prayer commenced, lights came alive in all their hearts and, when those in prayer bowed, the minarets of the mosque began to bow, too. Witnessing this, the people became frightened and midway through the prayer fled outside the mosque. When Pir Shams al-Din completed his prayer and came out, the people asked, “What

happened?" In reply, Pir Shams al-Din recited the following verse of a *ginan*:

My mind is the prayer mat and the judge; and
my body is my mosque; Sitting in it, I perform
the *namaz*; indeed, [is there one] who knows
my submission?

After hearing the above words, their hearts became filled with respect for Pir Shams al-Din. But when the Sufi of Multan, Baha' al-Din Zakariyya, heard about this incident, he began to fear for his fame. Thus, he ordered his staunch disciple Khan Muhammad Seyyid Hakim Shahid to make sure that Pir Shams al-Din would not be able to enter Multan by hauling in all the rafts and boats onto the city's shore. And thus it was done.

When Pir Shams al-Din arrived at the river bank and did not see any boats, he constructed one from a piece of paper. Sitting in it, he asked him companions to hold on to his fingers and the boat began to move; but it unsteadily lurched to and fro. Seeing this, he asked:

"Is there anyone who carries material possessions?"

Shahzadah Muhammad presented him his mother's jewellery which she had given him for his journey. The Pir threw it into the water and the boat began to glide forward smoothly. Baha' al-Din Zakariyya was sitting in the balcony of his palace when his eyes fell upon a boat that was half-way across the river. He promptly swore for it to stop dead in its tracks and the boat abruptly came to a halt.

Pir Shams al-Din peered in all four directions to search for the cause of this event and then he saw Baha' al-Din Zakariyya sitting in his balcony. Immediately, he understood the gist of the situation and cast a glance towards Baha' al-Din. When this divine glance fell upon

him, two horns burst forth from Baha' al-Din Zakariyya's temple and his head got stuck in the balcony. The boat began to move forward at full speed. Baha' al-Din was petrified by this miraculous feat and dispatched his sons Sadr al-Din and Shaikh al-Din to Pir Shams al-Din to ask for forgiveness.

Pir Shams al-Din arrived at the ancient mosque before the two got there. They prostrated at his feet and pleaded for mercy. Accepting their imploring pleas, Pir Shams al-Din recited a prayer on behalf of their father and the horns on Baha' al-Din Zakariyya's head disappeared. However, the marks left by the horns have remained imprinted upon the foreheads of his progeny. The balcony where Baha' al-Din sat still exists in Multan.

During the time that Pir Shams al-Din resided in Multan, it so happened that, one by one, the sons of its ruler began to die. The king could not control his grief. He summoned all the saints, *sufis* and learned men and said:

"It is your calling that you are close to God Almighty and thus have I showered you with many priceless favours and gifts. So today, in return I wish you to revive my son. If you are truly near God, you will be able to accomplish this task. If you fail in it, surely I will crush you up in the oil-mill."

Hearing this, they could not contain their fears and they rushed to Pir Shams al-Din, pleading him to rescue them from the jaw of earth. Pir Shams al-Din felt pity on them and, consenting to their request, arrived by the side of the dead prince. Gazing at the corpse, he said:

"*kum be-idhan alla!*" which means "By the command of Allah, Rise!" But this had no effect, so the Pir said again, "*kum be-idhani!*" which means "Rise by my command!" Immediately the prince came alive."

The king was supremely delighted by this miracle. However, since the learned men had been forced to look down in shame, they issued an order (*fatwa*) charging that Pir Shams al-Din, was sinful for having accomplished this feat by his own command and not by the will of God. They decreed that by religious law, the punishment for this sin was to be as follows: to strip off the Pir's skin while he was still alive. This injunction turned the people against the Pir, but, as Pir Shams al-Din, was a divine personage capable of miracles, he promptly covered his body with a black blanket and, by his own hand, peeled the skin off his body and threw it before the learned men.

Seeing this, everyone was stunned and began to tremble. Yet, even after this scene, since he had been branded a sinner by the *fatwa* and due to the religious command against having any relations or contact with him, people did not associate with the Pir.

After a great deal of time had elapsed, Pir Shams al-Din, suffering from hunger, begged the people for some food. However, nobody paid any attention to him. A butcher took heart and gave him a piece of meat. Pir Shams al-Din, began to ponder on how he would cook the meat. Taking it along with him, he went outside the city of Multan and, by his own powers, brought the sun down to cook it.

The people of Multan began to sizzle under the sun's unbearable heat and many of them scurried to the Pir, fell at his feet and begged for forgiveness. The Pir was merciful and, since by this time the piece of meat had been cooked, he ordered the sun to go back to its original place, which it did. The site at which the sun descended was henceforth called Suryakand. It exists even now and each year a huge festival is celebrated there.

Pir Shams al-Din, arrived in Kashmir where there was a large sect that worshipped the sun. As long as the sun shone, they were absorbed in prayer and other religious ceremonies, but, once the sun had set, they were not afraid of committing sinful deeds. For, these people believed that, when it was dark, the sun was asleep and could not see their sins and, therefore, sins committed in darkness were not to be counted as sins. The Pir enlightened these deluded people and showed them the true path of the Isma'ili faith. They came to be known as the Shamsis.

At present, the Shamsis in the Punjab, who are very great in number, [are descendants of those who] were originally enlightened by Pir Shams al-Din and [now] they openly practice the Isma'ili faith. In order to spread the Isma'ili faith, the master, Pir Shams al-Din, endured all kinds of obstacles. In India, wherever he went to give wisdom, he composed *ginans* and *garbis* in beautiful language to disclose the true religion, thus winning many followers.

Pir Shams al-Din, was married to Bibi Hafizah Jamal, the daughter of his uncle, Sayyid Jalal al-Din. She bore him two sons: Hadrat Nasir al-Din and Hadrat Sayyid Ahmad Zindapir. When Pir Shams al-Din, departed this temporal world, the Imam of the time entrusted the title and position of *pir* upon his son, Nasir al-Din, who is our twenty-fourth *pir*. His name is cited in the genealogy of the *pirs* as Pir Nasir al-Din.

During his service of Hadrat Mawlana Imam Shah Qasim Shah, Pir Shams al-Din lived for a long time in the town called Tabriz. This is why he is often known as Pir Shams al-Din, Tabrizi. Moreover, as he was born in the town Sabzawar, he is also known as Pir Shams al-Din, Sabzawari. The people of Egypt and Syria

know him as Shams Maghribi. After he had lived in Kashmir, he was also called Shams al-Din Iraqi. In the *du'a*, he is addressed as Pir Shams Cota.

Here, it is extremely important to clarify that the great Sufi saint Hadrat Shams Tabrizi who was Jalal al-Din Rumi's spiritual guide and who lived during the time of our twenty-eighth Imam, Hadrat Mawlana Imam Shah Shams al-Din Muhammad, was not the same person who was our twenty-third *pir*, Pir Shams al-Din Sabzawari, who was also called Pir Shams Tabrizi. These were two different individuals, Pir Shams al-Din died in Multan in the year 757 A.H.

Even today, we still sing the *ginans* and *garbis* composed by Pir Shams al-Din with great devotional fervour. In addition to their insightful verses and their lofty philosophy of the Isma'ili faith, these *ginans* and *garbis* are saturated with the complete and clear-cut teachings on the obedience to and recognition of the Imam of the time.

After reading this short life-history of Pir Shams al-Din and studying his *ginans*, it is essential that the teachings expressed in them be put into practice life so that our faith remains strong and firm. [We pray] that we should be able to gain a true understanding of the Isma'ili faith; that we should have no hesitation in obeying the orders of the Imam of the time; and that the living Imam, Mawlana Sultan Muhammad Shah Datar, should perpetually keep alive in each one of us feelings of loyalty. May Mawla bless every Isma'ili with true guidance. Amin. Salawat.

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Shams, Pir (1165–1277)

Pir Shams was born in Ghazna in 1165 C.E. and buried in Ucch in 1277 C.E. Now, there are several dates mentioned in the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams that advance his life by at least half a century. The realiest date appears in the fifth verse of *Surbhanaji Vel*, which states that Pir Shams visited his disciple Surbhan in s. 1175, that is, 1118 C.E. The next date occurs in the *ginan* sequence called *Jodilo* (see translation in the Anthology). Verse 25 of *Ginan* number 77 (henceforth, the *ginan* number and verse will be cited as follows: 77:25) states:

In the year Samvat 1178 on the last day of the month of Kartik, The Guru established himself; the day was Tuesday. 77:25.

Zawahir Noorally interprets this verse to mean that the Pir established his centre of preaching on this date (1111 C.E.). The verse occurs in the context of a story about the Pir's conversion of a Hindu town and the date given marks the time when the king and his subjects were initiated into Satpanth. The next two dates are cited in *Candrabhanaji Vel*; it notes that Pir Shams came to Cinab in s. 1200/1143 C.E. and that Candrabhan converted to Satpanth on s. 1207/1150 C.E.

Now what is to be made of these dates, one of which includes the day and month as well? Why was it so important to record the date of these stated conversions and meetings with the disciples? If these dates are to be trusted, how do we account for the dates preserved in the *shajara* which place Pir Shams a century later? It is rather difficult to answer these questions. There is no obvious reason to suspect that these dates were concocted. Could the dates be markers of events associated with *da'is* who preceded Pir Shams? Either Pir Shams did, in fact, preach in India during the

first half of the twelfth century he did not, in which case, one can only speculate that perhaps he had a predecessor whose activities have been attributed to him. The connection of these dates with his two disciples only serves to complicate matters further.

If the dates are trust-worthy it would mean that the main activity of Pir Shams in Sind immediately preceded the Ghurid invasions of the Isma'ili areas in Multan which began in 1160 C.E. and which ended with Muhammad Ghori's capture and slaughter of the Isma'ilis in Multan's capital, Ucch, in 1175 C.E. Whether Pir Shams was born in Ghazna in 1165 C.E. and came to India in 1202 C.E., or whether he was already in India by 1118 C.E., both the *shajara* and the *ginan* dates imply that his activities in Sind preceded the fall of Alamut. In other words, in all likelihood his activities and preaching took place at a time when the Nizari Isma'ili *da'wah* was still a vigorous political operation. If this were the case, has some memory of this context been preserved in the *ginans* attributed to him? Is there any evidence in the *ginans* that indicate directly or implicitly that Pir Shams was engaged in political activity?

Place Names: To answer this question, let us examine a few *ginans* in the Anthology attributed to Pir Shams that refer to places in the general area associated with Isma'ili presence in Sind, namely, Multan, Cinab, Ghazni and Ucch. This discussion and analysis will limit itself to those details that may be of relevance to the life and work of Pir Shams or of his time and will focus on accounts centred in and around Multan. Nonetheless, it will sufficiently demonstrate that there is a great deal of rich material embedded in the *ginans* that may be of some historical value.

Twelve *ginans* in Anthology make reference to Multan and a town called Cinab, which most likely refers to Multan itself (since Multan is 'the city on the Cinab river'). What is most striking about this group of *ginans* is their battle and fort imagery and the secret alliance that exists between a Queen Surjadevi and Pir Shams through his two disciples. According to these *ginan* narratives, Pir Shams came from the region of Alamut (Daylaman) to Multan where he settled.

From Multan, the Pir proceeded to Ghazni taking along with him two youths, Candrabhan and Surbhan. These two disciples accompanied Pir Shams wherever he went and they feature regularly in his various adventures. In fact, upon closer inspection of the various stories, they function typically as mediating or messenger figures between the Pir and his opponents or allies.

The constant presence of these two diminutive figures, which, from a literary standpoint, act as a foil to heighten the stature of the Pir, signals their importance in the narratives. Candrabhan and Surbhan were the Pir's two arms, so to speak, inasmuch as he instructed them to communicate messages to his devotees or to teach new recruits the beliefs and practices of Satpanth. But, lest their significance be missed, several *ginans* simply declare the 'fact' that they were his true disciples (*dasa*) and devotees (*bhakta*). For instance,

"Two brothers Candrabhan and Surbhan
were the disciples (*cela*) of Pir Shams
Of a common ancestor, they were devotees
(*bhagat*)
Of the present age (*kalyug*)."

The authorisation of their status is significant particularly since it is clear that they

actually function in several narratives as the Pir's surrogates. An interesting *ginan* which recounts a dialogue between Pir Shams (in the form of a parrot) and one of his female devotees (a queen called Surjadevi) confirms this special connection between the Pir and his two disciples. She asks him to tell her about the appearance and approach of the 'two travellers' whom he is sending to her. Pir Shams replies:

"O Queen, both of them live with me;
They will come reciting the *ginas* of the Guru;
As for their caste, they are servants/devotees
(*dasa*)."

Surjadevi then says she will bring together her circle of eight to this meeting and beseeches him to teach all. The Pir then speaks of a place (of happiness) that existed before there was either earth or sky:

"Queen Surja asked, "What is the key to that
place, O Swami
Reveal to us some sign, some name by which
to realize it."

This theme of secret signs and keys is pervasive throughout and creates the impression that a special code existed which the characters used to communicate messages. It is possible, for instance, that the various unknown characters named in the *ginans*, as well as the repeated reference to mythical characters, represented some kind of secret code language. In any case, the Pir assures her that his disciples will come and show her the path. It is worth stressing that Pir Shams seems to be in secret communication with the queen and reveals to her the signs by which she will recognise his messengers, who, in turn, will give her the 'key' to release or freedom. Further, the queen appears to have collected together a small group of followers who await further instruction from the Pir.

Another *ginan* narrative describes just such a promised meeting between the Pir's disciple and the queen Surbhan has been sent to Surjadevi who lives in the home of a demon-king. His mission is thus fraught with danger, for he has entered the 'demon's land' or enemy territory to meet his master's devotee (*dasi*) [10:1]. The queen emerges from her private quarters when Surbhan announces he has been sent by the Guru. She urges:

"Standing on my feet, I, the Queen plead!
O Swami, have mercy upon us!
Carry us safely across to the other shore.
"If you [promise to] recollect Shah Pir,"
[replied Surbhan]
We will assure you and give you our word of honour."

He teaches her that to attain 'the other shore' (that is, security, peace, salvation, happiness), she must swear an oath of allegiance and repeat 'Shah Pir,' an epithet of the *imam*. As the messenger is about to depart, Surjadevi's group appears and entreats him quickly to return to 'Deliver us to the other shore!' Tension and intrigue surface in this poem. In addition to religious salvation, the metaphor of crossing over safely to the other shore may imply release from a temporal state of fear and insecurity. We learn that the queen is married to a 'demon' in the city of Cinab [10:16] and that she is a secret follower (and, possibly, an informant) of Pir Shams. The appeal that the queen and her small gathering make for assurances to be delivered across to the other shore may be both literal and symbolic. That is, this may be a plea for imminent rescue as well as eternal salvation. At any rate, the disciple takes a pledge from the queen and promises that:

"You will attain the supreme boon of Heaven!
You will enter that glorious City of Immortality (*amrapuri*)!"

"Surbhn read aloud from the scriptures (*sastra*)
Pir Shams had made such a promise (*kol*)."

And what was this promise? That Pir Shams and the *imam* or Shah, as the latter is generically titled in the *ginans*, would come to the fort in Multan and liberate them. This promise and prediction of the arrival of the Shah or *imam* is reiterated in several *ginans*. The common motif that runs through them all is that the Shah, bearing his sword, Dhulfikar and mounted on his horse, Duldul, would arrive in Multan from the West (several *gainans* are more specific and refer to Iraq or Daylaman) with a large army equipped with powerful weapons to attack and vanquish the evil-doers, capture their forts and instal the rule of the righteous. For instance,

In the city of Delhi, Saheb Raja will capture the fort and rule; When the Saheb arrives, the wicked will flee and the pious will rule. The Shah will come to Multan in Jambudvipa with the Pandavas Attacking the wicked, the Shah will expel them and himself rule. In face, the Shah, who promises freedom from the oppressor, is none other than the awaited tenth *avatar* of Vishnu.

Naklanki [*avatar*], the bearer of light, has become manifest!

He, the Shah, rides on the mount of Duldul.

As pledge, the Shah will bring justice:

His hands will seize the three-edged sword.

There is a strong emphasis on the expectation of the Shah's arrival, the promise of justice and the inevitable expulsion of 'wicked infidels.' The battle imagery and the promise of victory against the unjust underscores the political dimensions of the role of the Shah as *avatar*. Succour is to come, not only in terms of the state of spiritual freedom,

but as concrete victory over an oppressive enemy. In one *ginan*, a curious interjection records:

"The Shah has sent us a message
He has captured the fort and razed it to the ground."

To continue with the drama of Queen Surjadevi, what precisely was her mission? What were the disciples of Pir Shams conveying to her and vice-versa? We can surmise that the messages were not restricted to religious teachings from an episode where the relations between king and queen reach a climax. The queen has a confrontation with her husband, the so-called demon-king referred to in the *ginans* as Kalinga, who stands for an enemy of the Pir of the *da'wah*. It would seem that Surjadevi has attempted for some time to convince her husband-king to 'convert' to their side, for she says:

"O King! For ages ad ages I have kept on telling you
That you, O Kalinga, are performing evil deeds!

However, having had no success, she warns her king:

Flee! Flee, O demon Kalinga! My Master is coming from the West.

Ninety battalions will be crushed under his horse's shoe!

Alas! When your army is conquered before your very face.

Who will rescue you then, I do not know.

From the West will beat the laps of many drums.

They will beat to signal the thunders of war!

My Shah will cry out his orders across the three worlds;

They will instantly herald him as the Sultan.

Harken! Horses vigorous in step and chariots the speed of wind!

And elephants all beautifully decked out for the Shah,

Wielding thirty-six weapons, the man who is Nakalanki will mount.

And in fourteen worlds will resound the hail: Victory! Victory!

Not to be outstripped by his queen, the king replies angrily:

O Queen! I have three times as many forts all in splendid shape!

Indeed, within their walls the gods earn their living....

My army has more than a million strong, nay infinite is its number!

By contrast, a trifle indeed is the army of your Shah!"

Clearly, this was no puny sovereign and the forces and wealth of his kingdom appear to have been substantial. Somewhat foolhardily, Surjadevi continues to challenge him with praises of the Shah who will soon come to destroy him. The king must have been generous, for, instead of promptly punishing her for treason, he merely rages at her disloyalty, woefully crying:

"O Queen! You eat, drink and make merry at the expense of my wealth.

And then you dare to swear, "My Shah is his and my Shah is that!"

Oh! Is there such a one here in this city of Cinab

Who can bring my Queen back to her senses?"

In a fit of temper, the king mounts his stride and rides off to fight the Shah. There is no indication in the poem itself who wins, but another *ginan* predicts that at the crooked fort at Cinab, "Kalinga will be beheaded." [39:14] Another verse says:

"At Cinab, yes at Cinab, you can hear the tenth demon [cry];

Surja's husband did not return. O Brother, so be it."

We surmise from references to a large following at Cinab and its chaste woman, Surjadevi, that, according to Satpanth tradition, the Shah had been victorious over the demon-king. We may never know whether this actually happened, but the account may still hold political significance. For, it is plausible that the narrative marked an event in the emergent period of the *da'wah* in India when a local Hindu kingdom was wrested away by the Sumrahs who received the help of reserve forces from Alamut.

An interesting question is why did the queen have such strong Isma'ili sympathies in contrast to her husband—king? Quite possibly, this may have been an instance of the practice of inter-marriage to gain political alliances. An arranged marriage of an Isma'ili woman (such as the daughter of a Sumrah chief) with a Hindu king would have been one way to create social and political connections and to rally support around the Isma'ili cause without undue strife. It would seem, then, that this method did not always work. At any rate, the above narrative is an important testimony, even if couched in the form of a heroic religious tale, that when the *da'wah* did not succeed by peaceful means in striking up alliances to advance its cause, on occasion, it may have had to engage in warfare with local Hindu kingdoms.

While it is not possible to present and analyse all the details in the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams, what becomes quickly apparent is the abundance of allusions, nuances, metaphors and narrative episodes that communicate the following themes which suggest the context in which the *dawah* operated and the Isma'ili message was spread: secret missions; conspiracy and alliances; promises of victory and reward; relief from

oppression; help as military enforcements; tithe to support the cause; plotted rebellion; the Shah as refuge and saviour; tests of faith; loyalty and sacrifice as pre-requisites to salvation. To illustrate, several *ginans* eulogise the need for and examples of self-sacrifice or martyrdom:

“Tear out the roots of evil, O Brother; and the soul will stay pure!
Sever your head and submit it willingly to the Guru;
Then, the Gurunara will become your helper.
For the sake of my soul, I have relinquished all;
I have come to take refuge in you.
Hear, O Brother! Listen, O Friend!
What did he do for the sake of his soul?
O Friend, he cut off his head and sacrificed it,
Yes, he cut his head off.”

These verses may indeed reflect a readiness to sacrifice oneself to the Guru or *imam's* cause. They are balanced by frequent assurances that one's true reward lies in the attainment of eternal life in the hereafter. The kingdom of the Saheb is *savaga* (heaven), *amarapuri* (City of Immortality) and *vaikuntha* (abode of Visnu).

“If you follow our orders, you will attain the City of Immortality;
There you will gain endless happiness and protection of the Lord.
Those who followed the Guru's words attained Heaven (*vaikuntha*);
Recognise our devotees, for they are our servants.”

But equally, there are many assurances that salvation is not only heavenly but earthly, inasmuch as military help is anticipated from the Shah who lives in the West and who promises a just and liberated society. In addition to the verses noted above with reference to Surjadevi, the following oath is note-worthy:

"Yes Sir! There 'Ali will come with Dhulfikar
from the West;
No one will dare challenge him face to face."

Yes Sir! There Pir Shams, the soldier of 'Ali,
says:

"The sky will thunder with hundreds of
weapons of the Shah!
The Saheb of countless wanderers will mount
his horse—
And nothing will be able to arrest his speed."

Now what can be made of these patterns?
Should one simply interpret these stories of
conflict and battle as part of the narrative ethos
found within Hindu Epic and Puranic
literatures? Were these tales merely the
exaggerated claims proliferated by Hindu or
Muslim rulers to valorise themselves and
promote their own interests? To be sure, there
is ample evidence in both Muslim and Hindu
epic literature of such tales that brag about the
heroic strength and deeds of a king.

Nonetheless, it may be unwarranted to
dismiss the accounts in the *ginans* merely as
fantastic tales modelled after the epic tradition
and created mainly for self-authentication and
for the pious edification of converts. Just as it
is evident that Hindu concepts and symbols are
deliberately used in the *ginans* to convey a
message of faith that, in the final analysis, leads
the believer to the saviour figure of the *imam*
(as Shah, Saheb, Guru, or Swami), it may be
argued that the motifs and imagery drawn from
the Hindu epic literature could have been self-
consciously used as a vehicle to couch and thus
to preserve in memory, actual events and
incidents that occurred in the early *da'wah* in
Sind.

Although the *ginan* traditions is permeated
with Hindu concepts, myths and sentiments
found within the Indian milieu, the tradition as

a whole possesses a remarkable internal
consistency and integrity which suggests that
the composers of this literature were not
randomly adopting and embracing indigenous
beliefs and practices. On the contrary, the
resulting syncretism of their work, as I have
argued elsewhere, is not a careless hodgepodge,
but a carefully crafted alliance and synergy of
ideas.

Accordingly, it would be inappropriate
completely to discount as incredulous the *ginan*
narratives just because of their similarity to the
idiom of the Hindu epic tradition. Such a view
has led some scholars prematurely to conclude
that there can be nothing of historical value in
the *ginan* literature. The narratives may be
neither historical nor mythical *per se*, but this
does not preclude the possibility of considering
them as allegorical or symbolic in nature. That
is, they could allude to historical situations of
real conflict that existed in the early *da'wah*,
albeit in the dramatic form of an idealised
character set that represents friends and foes.

Approached from this perspective, the
ginan narratives suggest that there was perhaps,
much more complexity at the ground level of
the *da'wah's* activity than has been thus far
recognised. Although one cannot conclude from
Surjadevi's story that Isma'ili *da'is* and
preachers regularly worked on local rulers
through their wives, the occasional application
of this strategy is not inconceivable. Such an
approach of gaining influence, striking alliances
and seizing control of kingdoms was not
unknown at the time.

There is a very interesting incident which
demonstrates the reverse of the process, that
is, a Hindu queen is enticed by the prospect of
being Queen of the Kingdom by marriage to a
Muslim monarch if she agrees to conspire

against her Hindu husband—king. In Henry Raverty's translation of the *Tabakat-i Nasiri*, he states in his notes that, after Multan was captured from the Isma'ilis in 1175 C.E., the Ghurid Sultan Mu'izz al-Din went on to seize Uch. He then gives Ferishta's account of the battle as follows:

As he knew that to overcome that Rajah in battle and capture the fort would be arduous, he dispatched a person to the wife of the Rajah, who was despotic over her husband and cajoled her and promised, saying:

"If, by your endeavours, this city shall be taken, having contracted marriage with you, I will make you Malikah-i-Jahan..."

Raverty notes that the Rajah was chief of the Bhati tribe and that according to Ferishta, the ploy worked and the Sultan did marry the queen's daughter. Both queen and daughter were made Muslims and sent to Ghazni for further instruction, where they died unhappy, 'from not having obtained the enjoyment of the Sultan's society.' It is impossible to reach any conclusions with this information, save that Muslim rulers used this tactic of the promise of marriage with some success.

The question has been raised earlier whether the *pirs* dispatched from Persia themselves composed the *ginans* or whether they had their local disciples compose them. The accounts of the disciples of Pir Shams seems to suggest that they may have played a key role in shaping the *ginan* tradition. In several *ginans*, the Pir instructs his disciples to teach his devotees and new followers the practices and doctrines of Satpanth. Other *ginans* bear testimony that they did:

"[Surbhan] related to her the Guru's wisdom (*ginan*)

And they meditated on its teaching (*veda*)...

"We will impart to you the principles of religion (*dharma*),

But lady, you are the mistress in a demon's house." 10:4

Hari came to the province of Daylaman and then settled in Multan;

Vimras, Hari's devotee recited *ginans* in honour of the Guru. 14:3

"Come to Multan both of you, O King and Queen!

I will send you two messengers after six months have passed." 28 68

They all bowed at the Guru's feet and confessed all to him:

"Show us, O Swami, all about the fellowship of truth." 68:10

"Our devotees are examples of wisdom (*ginan*)—

they will teach you;

They are Vimras and Surbhan; they will give support of the truth."

It is possible that the actual names of the disciples, Candrabhan and Surbhan, are pseudonyms which convey this idea of composition. Candrabhan may literally refer to 'one who knows *chand* or meter.' and Surbhan to 'one who knows *sur* or melody.' Certainly, this would help to explain the teachers' familiarity with the Hindu material. At the very least, the composers of the *ginans* may have been well-acquainted with Hindu ideas and mores. It is also conceivable that the early *pirs* used their disciples not only as messengers, teachers and composers, but also as translators of their own messages.

There are several accounts in the *ginans* that relate the conversion of Hindu chiefs and kings, followed by their subjects. For instance, a narrative set in a town called Bhotnagar describes episodes leading to the allegiance of a Gaekwad king called Devsingh. Another

narrative describes rulers who are devout followers of the Pir, for instance, Raja Manasudha and Rani Radiya in a town called Prem Patan.

The preponderance of references to people of power and high social status, that is, to rulers and kings, in the *ginans* is striking. Nanji thinks that the conversion of rulers should be interpreted at a symbolic level and not as a testimony of historical actuality because in contrast to the earlier Fatimid *da'wah* in Sind, the Nizari *da'wah* in the Indo-Pak sub-continent was, subsequent to the fall of Alamut, quietist and non-political in orientation. This view is interated by Christopher Shackle and Zawahir Moir who go on to firmly assert a position that this investigation counters namely that after the destruction of Multan by Mahmud Ghaznawi:

"While it seems probable that the practice of *taqiyya* would have allowed an Ismaili tradition to continue locally, *this never resulted in any subsequent attempt to regain local political power on the Fatimid pattern* (emphasis mine)."

On the contrary, if the Nizari *da'wah* had begun its activities in the Indo-Pak region well before Alamut's fall, it may still have been sufficiently active in Sind politically to establish a vassal state or to reclaim the stake of its predecessors, the Fatimids. The preponderance of relations with rulers and their conversions in the *ginans* suggests that there is more to these narratives than legitimation and the pious edification of converts. Given the historical context, it is possible to recognise in these stories covert messages of political alliance. If the Nizari *da'wah* had seriously entertained political ambitions right until the moment of Alamut's destruction, it is reasonable to expect

that it would have continued to channel its energies into winning the favour and support of local chieftains wherever it could.

Assuming that the early beginnings of Satpanth were both political and religious but that after Alamut's devastation, Satpanth was forced underground and had to adopt a more inward, spiritual and quiescent expression, do the *ginans* reflect this change and, if so, how? I have argued thus far that there are a number of *ginan* narratives, particularly the ones associated with Multan, that indicate a situation of tension, intrigue and promise of imminent help. These poems preponderantly focus upon actual battle scenes and on the victory expected through the impending arrival of the Shah, who is represented as the saviour—, *avatar*. It is clearly this promise of success that is at the bottom of many alliances made with the Pir, who gives repeated assurances and pledges of military aid. The practical dimensions of these promises are, however, very easy to miss since they are couched in the language of religious salvation.

It is, in fact, possible to detect a slight difference between those *ginans* in which liberation is clearly associated with victory over an enemy and those in which it refers primarily to religious salvation. That is, there are *ginans* in the Anthology of Shams, specifically, the series of songs called the *Garbis* which, unlike the *ginans* connected with Surjadevi, promise salvation almost exclusively in terms of the hereafter. A different strategy is used in these *ginans* to make the case for the Shah compelling.

Whereas in the above *ginans* the appeal of the Shah rests in the military prowess by which he will vanquish oppressors and evil-doers, in the *Garbis* the case is built up in

terms of a litany of souls that were saved by the Shah and his *pirs*. Salvation in this context is unambiguously a spiritual freedom, not a political liberation (an echo of Hasan II's declaration of *Qiyamah*). Since the language of salvation is found in both instances, it is not surprising that the shift in focus from political to spiritual would be imperceptible, for the political foe is depicted as the devil— who could be viewed both as a real oppressor and enemy or as the personification of evil as such.

With the passage of time and as the tradition relinquished its political aspirations, it is likely that these numerous allusions to military aid in the *ginans* came to be interpreted purely in symbolic terms as representing victory over evil. Thus, the memory that the earliest allegiances were inspired by promises of worldly as well as spiritual victory would have been submerged.

To make this point, we take a brief look at the *Garbis*. A caveat should be made, namely, that internal evidence in this cycle of twenty-eight *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams suggests that they may either belong to a later date or have acquired later additions and interpolations. The most obvious of this is the presence of the names of *imams* and *pirs* who lived between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries. They are Imam Qasim Shah (d. ca. 1370 C.E.) [or Qasim 'Ali Shah? (d. ca. 1750 C.E.)], Imam Islam Shah (d. ca. 1440 C.E.), Pir Sadr al-Din (d. ca. 1450 C.E.), Pir Hasan Kabir al-Din (d. ca. 1500 C.E.) and Imam Shah Nizar (d. 1722 C.E.). For instance:

"Who holds authority at present?
We disclose his name— Shah Nizar! 82:14
Serve the light of the Satgur!
Know he is Lord Qasim Shah." 83:17

One *ginan* cites the names of two *imams*:

"O Careless Ones! Believe in the Light of
Qasim Shah
He is the legitimate heir, the true *imam* in this
age of Kalyug. 92:7
O Careless Ones! Divine light shines in Sri
Islam Shah!
Recognise the Lord when you see him."
92:9

In all such references to the *imam*, it seems that the purpose of the verses is to identify the name of the current *imam*. It is possible that the existence of three different names which came to co-exist in this manner is a result of manuscript transmission, that, whereas one name was crossed out and rewritten, the other was not. In any case, the presence of these names raises questions about the printed version of the *Garbis*.

The main purpose here, however, is to show that there is a subtle but significant reorientation in the *Garbis*' approach to the meaning of salvation and in the justification for following the *imam*. Briefly, the *Garbis* consist of a sequence of twenty-eight folk songs ranging from eighteen to twenty-two verses each. The word *garbi* has several meanings. In Gujarat, the *garbi* is a popular folk dance akin to another dance form called the *rasa*, in which dancers move around in a circle singing and keeping rhythm by clapping their hands and feet.

Originally, the word *garbi* referred to an earthen pot with holes on the sides which was used by Hindus as a receptacle for lamps celebrating their deity's luminous presence. Typically, devotees would sing and dance circling around the lamp pot to honour the deity of which it was the receptacle. Women often danced with the pots on their heads. The actual

songs sung on such occasions were also called *garbis*.

The *Garbis* attributed to Pir Shams form a narrative about conversion. Woven into the narrative are long sections of instructions and exhortations so that only eight poems actually describe any dramatic actions or scenes. Briefly, the story of the *Garbis* is as follows. Pir Shams comes to a town called Analvad to find the villagers celebrating the festival of *norta*. This is most probably the festival of Navaratri, which literally refers to the 'nine nights' of worship and devotion to the Hindu goddess: Durga or *Mata Bhavani* (the fearsome Mother.) The scene is a veritable spectacle of festivities, with five-hundred Hindus dancing and thirty-six *pandits* chanting the Vedas.

The Pir watches them worship and adore their idols and is angered by the image worship. As a strategy to stop it, he decides to join in the dance and to sing his own *garbis*. Night after night, he returns to sing and dance, all the while admonishing the Hindu worshippers for paying homage to idols made of mere stone. Instead, he preaches to them the principles of *sat panth*, the True Path. Finally, one night a *brahmin* called Sankar leaves the *garbi* dance in disgust. (The narrator has a gloss that poor Sankar lacked *punya* or merit.) The rest of the crowd, however, remains to listen to the Pir because (again the narrator explains) it has realized the secret, namely, that he, Pir Shams, is a saint (*deva*—lit., god). The first ones to realize this truth are the remaining thirty-five *brahmin pandits*. Their hearts transformed, they abandon their religious scriptures (*puran*) and there is great rejoicing as they beat their seven drums and cry *jay! jay!* (Victory! Victory!). The villagers, meanwhile, are stunned by this spectacle.

The Pir (referred to as Guru) continues singing his songs of wisdom (*ginans*) and, soon enough, word spreads and the princes of the land arrive and join in the dancing. News of the spectacle reaches the king who, with his ministers, comes to hear the much talked-about Guru. Impressed with the latter's miraculous conversion of the *brahmins*, the king, too, prostrates himself at the Guru's feet. Again, the villagers are astonished. In this manner, then, the priests, king, queen, town-folk and various religious ascetics such as the *jogis*, *sannyasis* and *viragis* all prostrate themselves at the Guru's feet and abandon their gods (*deva*) and scriptures (*Sastra*).

A small mountain of strings piles up as the *brahmins* break off and discard their sacred threads. The dancers throw away their *garbi* lamps, which they have worshipped all these nights, into the sea. The Guru then makes them drink holy water (*paval*) to purify them of past sins. He appoints a leader (*mukhi*) to oversee this new religious community, which is blessed by the sudden vision (*didar*) of the Lord (*nar*) Qasim Shah. Their hearts are filled with divine light (*nur*) and the story ends with a scene of general rejoicing with the Pir's songs of wisdom (*ginan*) and circle of dance (*garbi*).

Now, what is of interest here is the method by which *Satpanth* is made attractive in the *Garbis* to this society of Hindus. It is important to note that the *Garbis* construct a religious frame-work for conversion and that the poems focus upon the superiority of the religion that the Pir is offering to them. Several elements ultimately combine into defining this True Path, or *Sat Panth*, as the Pir calls it in the *Garbis*. The configuration of religious elements in the context before the Pir's arrival undergoes a major change by the end of the narrative, but without dramatic upheaval.

In the first instance, there is the festival of Navaratri, the nine days before the celebration of Dasera, when the Goddess Durga, here referred to as *Mata Bhavani* (fearsome Mother), is worshipped. Hindus, gathered in a temple compound in a town called Analvad, are worshipping *sakti*, the female principle of the Lord Siva. There is, besides the *garbi* lamp pot, a stone and clay image of the goddess in the temple that they adorn and worship. Their ritual is characterised by revelry and dancing (*garbi*) to the accompaniment of song (*git*), as well as the recitation of heroic tales (*katha*) by the *brahmin pandits* from their sacred scriptures (*sastras*).

Interestingly, all these elements that initially stand out in the narrative are the very ones that are finally rejected (see illustration). As the Pir recites his *garbi* songs, he invokes by way of association other elements intrinsic to the Hindu milieu, including Hindu theories of salvation and Hindu mythology. In other words, the Hindu worldview remains present in the new path that the converts adopt. Common religious motifs such as the ideal of salvation or liberation from rebirth (*mukti*); the attainment of bliss in heaven (*vaikuntha*); the destruction of the effects of past deeds (*karma*); the accumulation of merit (*punya*); the saving powers of deities, saints and *avtar* figures; and the traditional veneration for sacred word and scripture (*sastra*); all these familiar notions are invoked.

But, although many aspects of the Hindu worldview are retrained, they are deliberately used as the scaffolding for a new concept of faith. Satpanth *also* rejects, reorganises and redefines these and other elements internal to the Hindu context. Thus, the Guru tells the Hindus to throw away their idols, which are

mere stones, but he entices them with the hope of salvation by conjuring up the image of millions of gods and godlings such as the *yaksas* and *meghas*, the *kinnars* and *devas* who are all in heaven (*vaikuntha*) attending upon and serving the *guranar* or *satguru* who is none other than the *avatar* or Vishnu, the bow-wielder (*sarangapana*) identified as 'Ali, the first Shi'ite *imam*. Likewise, the Pir exhorts the Hindus to pay heed to the *Sar* or essence of their *sastras* whose last *Veda* is the *Qur'an*, the message of which he has conveyed in the *ginans*.

While retaining the prominence of the *Vedas* and *Puranas*, the *Garbis* reject their pertinence and pronounce them to be archaic, whereas their essence has been freshly expressed in the *ginans*. The *Qur'an* is proclaimed as the conclusive *Veda* and the *ginans* as the inspired words of the *pirs* capture the bit of the *Qur'an's* teachings. Satpanth is, therefore, the True Path and the crowning phase of Hinduism (a claim not much different from the *Qur'anic* assertion of itself as the last Revelation and of Islam as the perfection of the religion of the *ahl al-kitab* or People of the Book).

In a process much like the *lexique technique* employed by Kabir in his popular phase, *rama rahim krsna karim*, the *Garbis* succeed in creating an emotional and cognitive bridge by the juxtaposition and association of Hindu and Isma'ili concepts. The coexistence of vocabulary such as *avatr* and *nur*, *puran* and *kuran*, *sat dharma* and *din* by their very proximity construct a religious language mutually recognised by Hindus and Satpanth Isma'ilis alike.

In all this, what should have become abundantly clear is that the exclusive focus of

the *Garbis* is religious conversion, practice and salvation. The Hindus who accept the Pir's teaching are portrayed as consciously renouncing their former idols, sacred texts, priests and rituals of worship and voluntarily adopting Satpanth as their new religion (*dharma*) with its own locus (*satgur—avatar*), its own set of rituals (the drinking of holy water or *paval*, the paying of tithe or *dasond* and the congregational prayer or *satsang*). Yet, although this True Path is taught in the *Garbis* as a new path, it is also presented as a continuation of an ancient one. That is, Satpanth is shown to be rooted in and vindicated by the primordial Hindu tradition of which it is considered to be the ultimate expression.

Finally, what makes this work a rather good specimen of an inward orientation and quiescent stage of Isma'ilism is that not only has it little war imagery, but that salvation is truly understood as the salvation of souls. To illustrate:

The *imams* are from light; they are ever present in the world. 82:15

Listen to this true wisdom and serve [them]; 82:16

Then you will reach the other shore and attain Heaven (*svarga*). 82:17

This focus on the salvation of souls is under-scored by lists in the *Garbis* of those persons and souls saved by the *avatar—imam*; they include figures in Hindu mythology such as Dhruva, Hariscandra and the five Pandava brothers. There are a number of verses that repeat the following claim and promise:

Rather, serve Saheb, the Creator, with firm faith—81:06

He who saved in this age of Kalyug twelve crore

devout souls. 81:16

He who in this last period will save countless brave believers. 81:17

Moreover, the *imams*, who have saved countless souls and rewarded the true and righteous, were none other than the famous *avatars* of Hindu mythology. Among these saviour figures are also *pirs*, namely. Pir Sadr al-Din and Pir Hasan Kabir al-Din.

Five crore [were saved] by Prahlad who recited the name of Narsimha. 89:07

Seven crore [were saved] by Hariscandra who was saved by Sri Rama. 89:08

Twelve crore pious [were saved] by truth in this age of Kalyug. 89:11

Their rescuer was Pir Sadr Al-Din; he saved them all by himself. 89:12

Numerous will come together with Pir Sadr al-Din, some twelve crore 91:11

Countless crore will come with Guru Hasan Shah who upheld the Vedas. 91:12

This kind of enumerative list of souls saved, that is, ferried across to the other shore (*pahele par*), occurs several times in the *Garbis*. An image is created of a heaven filled with divine light (*nur*) where the 124,000 prophets are also gathered [91:13]. The interiorisation of salvation as eternal life in a heavenly abode of bliss is emphasised by the repeated use of the symbol of divine light or *nur* which would fill the pure souls.

The gathering is filled with the saints (*awliya*) who bear divine light. 94:12

The gathering radiates with the *Gurunar* who is full of divine light. 94:13

O Hindus! On and on why wander in circles? Drink in the pure light. 96:10

O Hindus! He who lives in Kahat city is the Saheb—giver of boons. 96:13

O Hindus! Attaining heaven (*vaikuntha*) you will reign in eternal bliss. 96:14

The theme of promises made by the Pir in the Multan *ginans* continues in the *Garbis*, but this promise is no longer in the form of receiving military aid from the West nor being rescued by the Shah. Rather, the promise is reconceived as the act of showing the path to and revealing the true reality of the Shah. Thus, the *Garbis* declare,

We have come up to your door, [now] recognise us! 101:12

We have kept our promise, [now] what have you to say? 101:13

Countless of souls have not been saved, why remain with them? 101:14

The *pir* made a promise and he came—see how he showed them the path! 106:14

The *pir* explained this word by word to those who would accept Satpanth. 106:16

They were saved, man and woman, when Pir Shams spoke his thoughts. 106:17

Accordingly, the ultimate object of religion as depicted in the *Garbis* has become the attainment of the divine vision (*didar*) and reality of the *imam*. Thus, the Pir declares

Who enters the religion of Satpanth attains freedom and the divine vision. 99:15

If your earning are honest and pure, you will enter Heaven's (*svarga*) gate. 105:16

O believers, attain the divine vision (*didar*) and your sins will vanish. 105:18

Salvation in the *Garbis*, therefore, is primarily a spiritual reality and the one who holds the key to this state of eternal bliss is the *avatar*—*imam*, the path to whom only the *pirs* could reveal.

To conclude, then, if the narratives in the *ginans* can be construed to mirror reality at some level, mistily reflecting clues about social, cultural and historical context, it seems that some interesting patterns emerge upon closer

inspection of the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams. There is sufficient evidence to argue that the *ginans* display an unusual degree of interest in historical memory. This effort at realism goes to the point of citing specific dates, places and historical personalities. For instance, there is an unusual verse in the *ginan* titled *Janaza* (coffin or corpse) which records that the day that the Pir departed Multan was a Thursday, the 17th day of Vaisakhi [25:23].

One explanation of this mysterious record suggest that it marks the day when the Pir died and that, since then, a fast has been observed on Thursdays. Other verses in the same *ginan* describe how his followers wept when his time to depart neared and how they then carried his coffin off to Ucch where he was buried [25:21, 24].

It is also possible to detect contrasts in the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams. We have noted that the *ginans* associated with Multan are consistently connected with fort and battle imagery and predictions of victory over a menacing demon-king. The imagery of conflict in Cinab (possibly another name for Multan) is portrayed in great detail in the *ginans*. Delhi, too, is cited in one *ginan* and this remnant may have some remote connection with the unsuccessful revolt (referred to in the previous chapter) of the Isma'ilis in 1236 C.E. headed by a Nur Turk during the reign of Illutmish's daughter, Radiyya. There are scattered references to Ghazni where the Pir first came to preach as a Muslim *faqir* from Daylaman. *Ginans* that refer to Ucch generally concern the conversion activities of the Pir and his disciples. The contest between the Sufi saint of Ucch, Baha al-Din Zakariyya and Pir Shams, who cursed the former with a pair of horns, is related in another *ginan*.

What, if anything, can be made of all this material? What is the source of these allusions and motifs? Could it be possible that they were derived from the environment experienced by the early *da'wah*? The unusually consistent battle imagery, the abundant place names and the repeated promises made in the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams depict a period of real tension and peril. It seems very likely, therefore, that many *ginans* associated with his name originated during a period of political conflict. The recurrent forecast that the Shah would come from the West to seize Multan and save Cinab with well-armed battallions signals that the area was then under the control of the 'wicked,' that is, the opponents of the *da'wah*. Except for Baha' al-Din Zakariyya, the opponents identified in the *ginans* are mainly Hindu including a figure who evidently was considered to be a rather powerful Hindu monarch.

It we do allow, for the sake of discussion, that these allusions in the *ginans* had some connection with the Isma'ili troubles in Multan, firstly, they must refer to a time when the Isma'ili troubles in Multan, though under serious threat, also had a high probability of gaining back control of the region. The promise of reinforcements from Alamut and the predicted outcome of the Shah's sovereignty, could only have been made when Alamut was still in power and when the local Hindu and Sindhi allies of the Isma'ilis, such as the Sumrah dynasty, were still an effective force. After the decline of Alamut in 1256 C.E. and the fall of the Sumrahs by the end of the fourteenth century, pretensions to Isma'ili sovereignty would have been meaningless.

Based on the above clues, there appears to be some reason to speculate that the Nizari

da'wah did attempt to rally the support of Hindu kingdoms but that some chieftains remained disinterested in striking up alliances. These activities of the *da'wah* may have coincided with or shortly preceded the waves of Ghurid incursions against the Isma'ilis of Multan that took place from 1160 C.E. till 1175 C.E. when Muhammad Ghori supposedly stemmed Isma'ili influence in the area. Yet, as long as the Nizari state under Alamut existed, the Isma'ili mission in Sind could have entertained realistic hopes that Multan eventually would be won back. This would, in turn, place Pir Shams well enough within the time of Alamut rule to account for his confidence in offering military reinforcements and predicting actual victory.

Ansar Khan points out that during the 13th and 14th century, the Isma'ili Sumra chiefs were dominant in Sin and, therefore, concerted efforts were made to win back the lost territory in Multan. This period is somewhat later than our own analysis would suggest, but it supports the drift of the internal testimony in the *ginans* apropos political conflict. That is, while Muhammad Ghori may ostensibly have put an end to Isma'ili rule in Multan in 1175, the Isma'ili control over the region. In an earlier discussion of battle imagery surrounding Multan and Cinab. I suggested that the positive forecasts found in the *ginans* could only have been made had confidence existed that the Isma'ilis possessed sufficient political force to regain power over the area.

In sum, the above points combine to suggest that Pir Shams was an Isma'ili *da'i* who came to Western India from Ghazna in Sabzawar and that he worked to establish Isma'ili affiliations in Sind from a basis in Multan during the Alamut period at a time when

the Isma'ili alliance with the Sumrahs was secure. The tomb in Ucch, Multan, most likely belongs to this Isma'ili *pir*.

As for the dating of Pir Shams, it has been noted that the dates that are cited in the *ginans* (1118 C.E., 1143 C.E. and 1150 C.E.) differ from the dates given in the genealogy or *shajara* (1165–1276 C.E.) preserved by the keepers of his shrine by almost half a century. These dates may be associated with the activities of earlier *da'is*. However, the fact that they have been mentioned in connection with the two disciples of Pir Shams complicates matters. That these dates may not be completely reliable is suggested by the inconsistency between the fact that, on the one hand, the *ginans* constantly refer to these two disciples as the 'two youths' and, on the other hand, the dates posit a gap of some thirty-two years between the time when Surbhan allegedly received Pir Shams (1118 C.E.) and when Candrabhan converted (1150 C.E.).

The dates given in the *shajara*, though they over-extend the life of Pir Shams (perhaps, to make it coincide with that of the Sufi saint and rival of the Isma'ili *da'wah*, Baha' al-Din Zakariyya, who died in 1277 C.E.), appear to be worth serious consideration for the following reasons. Firstly, since the birth date of Pir Shams given in the *shajara* is 1165 C.E. this would mean that the life and activities of Pir Shams followed the declaration of the *Qiyamah* in 1164 C.E. If Pir Shams did play a seminal role in the articulation of Satpanth Isma'ilism and this appears to have been the case, the declaration of the *Qiyamah*—which effectively disengaged the formalities and ritual accountment of the faith from its essential principles—would have made this innovative articulation of Satpanth both possible and permissible.

Given the internal evidence of alliances and political conflict attached to his activities in Multan, as well as our knowledge of the history of Sind in the twelfth century, it seems reasonable to suggest that the major activities of Pir Shams took place in the latter half of the twelfth century. The testimony preserved in the *ginans* alluding to political conflict, for imagery and victory over an insurgent Hindu king suggest the possibility that Pir Shams was engaged in the region around the time of the Ghurid invasions which culminated in Isma'ili massacres in 1175 C.E. The allusions in the *ginan* narratives depict a situation both of conflict and difficulty (hence the plea for 'biberation') and a promise of help, victory and security. The time between the Ghurid attacks on Sind and the fall of Alamut would have been filled with a similar tension and ambiguity. On the one hand, the Isma'ilis in Sind, with their Sumrah base, were under attack, but, on the other hand, their centre in Alamut represented a well-known and established power base which held forth the promise of liberation.

It has been shown that the *Garbis*, which are also attributed to this *pir*, seem to capture a quieter phase of the Satpanth Isma'ili *da'wah's* activity. Not only do these poems associate Pir Shams with historical persons who lived between the fourteenth and eighteenth centuries, but, in contrast to the Multan-Cinab narratives, they attach a clearly other-worldly, religious significance to salvation. It is likely that as the area of Multan was increasingly subjugated and as Sufi orders such as the state-affiliated Suhrawardi *tariqah* gained ground in the region, the Isma'ilis migrated south towards Lower Sind and Gujarat. The setting of the narratives in the *Garbis*, a place called Analwad—which may be the town Anhilwad in Gujarat—is in consonance with the fact that the subsequent

centre of Isma'ili activity moved away from north-western India and towards the regions of Malwa, Kathiawad and Gujarat.

The *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams that refer to his activities around the Multan area also contain allusions that suggest that he preached during the eve of the growing presence of rival Sufi *ta-riqahs* in Multan. While it is unclear whether Pir Shams actually confronted the Sufi saint, Baha' al-Din Zakariyya, the legendary contest between the two records the threat that institutionalised and state-affiliated Sufism may have posed to the Satpanth *da'wah* during this period. That the Isma'ilis did not utterly relinquish their political ambitions in the region is evidenced by their unsuccessful attempt to seize control in Delhi, the political center of North India, in 1236 C.E. under the reign of Queen Radiyya. Whether she was the same Queen Radiyadevi who is mentioned in the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams is impossible to ascertain; however, this may be a clue that his life extended to this period and that Pir Shams had some connection with this uprising.

It is inevitable that there is much by way of speculation here, given the nature of our sources and the lack of other historical information on this figure or the Isma'ili *da'wah* in Sind at the time. Based on the preceding analysis of the *ginans* attributed to Pir Shams and what we know about the historical context in the Indian sub-continent and Persia between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries and pending the discovery of further materials, we may tentatively conclude the following. The Pir Shams of the *ginans* in the Anthology translated here was a *pir* of the Nizari Isma'ili *da'wah* who played a critical role in advancing the latter's political aspirations in Sind, as well as

in setting and articulating the religious foundations of Satpanth Isma'ilism. Most likely, this figure hailed from Sabzawar, came to India as a youth and lived between the mid-twelfth and mid-thirteenth centuries. His principal area of activity radiated from a base in Multan and he lies buried in Uch in a tomb popularly known as 'Shah Shams.'

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Shaqiq (d. 810)

Shaqiq of Balkh was a pupil of Abu bin Adham. He developed and perfected the doctrine of *tawakkul*. The story of his conversion to Sufism is revealing. Once in the course of his trade he went to Turkestan and visited a temple of idol-worshippers. Shaqiq told the people there that their Creator is omnipotent and omniscient and they should therefore, be ashamed of worshipping idols which are powerless in providing them anything. The idol-worshippers told him: If your Creator is omnipotent and all-knowing, why have you come into this distant land for seeking livelihood? Can He not provide you in your own town? On hearing this Shaqiq gave up the world, went to Khurasan and became an ascetic.

Shaqiq interpreted *tawakkul* as negation of earning one's living: He once remarked that the efforts put in man seeking livelihood are the result of his ignorance of God's ways of dealing with men and, therefore, to work hard in order to win bread is unlawful (*haram*).

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Shirin Maghribi, Muhammad (d. 1406/7)

Muhammad Shirin Maghribi was a celebrated Persian Sufi poet. His full name is given by Hafiz Husayn Karbala'i Tabrizi (*Rawdat al-Djinnat wa djannat al-djannat*, ed. Dja'far Sultan al-Kurra i, Tehran, 1344/1965, i, 367, 566), as Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad b. 'Izz al-Din b. 'Adil b. Yusuf Tabrizi. In literary and Sufi circles, however, he is better known as Mulla Muhammad Shirin Maghribi.

According to Djami (*Nafahat al-uns*, ed. M. Tawhidpur, Tehran, 1336/1957, 613), he was born in the village of Ammand near Lake Urumiya and died aged 60 in 809/1406–7. But a chronogram composed by 'Abd al-Rahim Khalwati (d. 859/1454; 'Mashriki'), which Ibn Karbala'i cites (*Rawdat*, i, 73–5), commemorates Maghribi's death as 810/1407–8, and this is probably more correct.

Maghribi should be accounted as the most important Persian Sufi poet—after Iraki (d. 688/1289), Kasim-i Anwar (d. 837/1433) and Mahmud Shabistari (d. ca. 740/1399–40)—of Ibn 'Arabi's school in the late 13th/early 14th century. The primary theme of his poetry (see *Diwan-i Muhammad Shirin Maghribi*, ed. I. Lewisohn; Tehran-London, 1993 containing 1223 lines of Arabic poetry, 199 Persian ghazals, two *tardji bands* and 35 *ruba'iyyat*) is the 'Unity of Being' (*wahdat al-wujud*).

Although the imagery of romantic Persian poets such as Salman Sawadji (d. 778/1376)

and Humam Tabrizi (d. 714/1314) also fills his verse, lending it a particular brilliance and graceful beauty, it is as an exponent and exegetic of the theomonic doctrine of Ibn 'Arabi that his poems achieved their principal fame. In his own introduction to the *Diwan* (*ibid.*, iv, 15–16) the poet admits that

“the composer of this type of poetry in accordance with true visionaries and visionary men of Truth says the same thing which the author of the *Tardjuman al-ashwak* [Ibn 'Arabi] says.”

Since both Djami (*Nafahat*, 613) and M. Murbakhsh (*Silsilat al-awliya'*, ed. M.T. Danish Pazuh, in S.H. Nasr (ed.), *Melanges offerts a Henri Corbin*, Tehran, 1977, no. 60) customarily referred to Ibn 'Arabi as 'Ibn al-Maghribi', it is apparent that the poet adopted 'Maghribi' as his *takhallus* in honour of the Shaiykh al-Akbar, thus, when Ibn Karbala'i (*Rawdat*, i, 367)—citing a certain ['abd al-Rahim Bizzazi, one of the poet's disciples—speaks of him as *al-Maghribi madhhab* ('Maghribi in religion'), it is obvious that he is alluding to the poet's Akbarian persuasion; and it is to this same connotation that Rida Kuli-Khan Hidayat in the *Madima-i fusaha* (Tehran, 1339/1965, i, 57–8) alludes in stating that “Maghribi's creed in the Unity of Being and his particular mystical sensibility is the enjoyment of contemplate vision (*madhhabish wahdat al-wujud-ast wa mashrabish ladhdhat al-shuhud*)”.

After his celebrated *Diwan*, Maghribi's other works listed by Ibn Karbala'i include:

- (1) *Asrar-i fatha* (not extant);
- (2) *Risala-yi djam-i djahan-nama* (consisting mainly of selections from Farghanis commentary on Ibn Farid's

Ta'yya entitled *Masharik al-daran*, ed. Dj. Ashtiyani, Tehran, 1979; this *Risala* has been published by Mir-'Abidini in his edition of Maghribi's *Diwan*, Tehran, 1979);

- (3) *Durr al-farid fi ma'rifat al-tawhid* (a work still extant, see *Fihrist-i Kitabkhana-yi Sipahsalar*, ii, 682, wherein it is said to be in Persian, treating in 3 chapters the divine Unity, Actions and Qualities);
- (4) *Nuzhat al-sasaniyya* (evidently not extant and not listed in Munzawi's *Fihrist-i makhaha-yi farst*, Tehran, 1979). Other works ascribed elsewhere to Maghribi include a *Nasihah-nama* (mentioned in Munzawi's *Fihrist*, ii, 1706) and *Ira'at al-daka'ik fi sharh-i Mi'rat al-haka'ik*, on which see H. Ethe *Catalogue of Persian manuscripts in the India Office Library*, i, no. 2914, fols. (4b-113b).

Maghribi had five *silsila* affiliations according to Ibn Karbala'i (*Rawdat* i, 67–9) as follows:

- (1) Baha' al-Din Hamadhani;
- (2) Ibn 'Arabi;
- (3) Sa'd al-Din
- (4) Isma'il Sisi, and
- (5) 'Abd al-Mu'min al-Sarawi,

although his principal master was Sisi who counted among his proteges and disciples three of the greatest Sufi poets of the 8th/14th century, sc. Kamal Khudjandi (d. 803/1400), Kasim-i Anwar and Muhammad 'Assar Tabrizi (d. 792–3/1390–1). Sisi was a Kubrawi *shaikh*, having been disciple, either directly or indirectly, of 'Ala' al-Dawla Simnani (d. 736/1336).

Maghribi was said to have experienced an illumination during an *arba'in* held under Sisi's direction, and recorded his enlightenment in a *ghazal* (on which, see Lewisohn, *Mohammad Shirin Maghrebi*, in *Sufi*, i, [1988], 33). Sisi's other important disciples include Zayn al-Din Khwafi (d. 838/1435), whose connection with Maghribi is discussed by H.T. Norris, *The Mir'at al-talibin of Zain al-Din Khawafi of Khurasan and Herat*, in *BSOAS*, liii (1990), 57–63; and Lewisohn, *A critical edition*, 75–9.

As a poet of the Akbarian school, Maghribi follows very closely the imagery and thought of Shabistari and Sa'd al-Din Farghani. Maghribi's poetic style was imitated by Shah Ni'mat Allah (d. 834/1431) and Muhammad Lahidji ('Asiri', d. 912/1506–7, the latter author quoting extensively from Maghribi's *Diwan* throughout his famous *Mafatih al-'djaz fi sharh-i Gulshan-raz* in order to illustrate Shabistari's symbolism and doctrine.

Many of the images and expressions of Maghribi's poetry have become proverbs in Persian and his influence can be seen in the writings of many of the Persian *Ishraqi* philosophers up to the present day. Quotations from his poetry, for instance can be found scattered throughout the writings of the 19th-century *hakim* Mulla Hadi Sabzawari (d. 1289/1873).

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L. LEWISOHN

Suharwardy Yemani Sylheti, Shaikhul Mashaikh Hazrat Makhdum Ghazi Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujjarad (1271–?)

Shaikhul Mashaikh Hazrat Makhdum Ghazi Shaikh Jalaluddin Mujjarad Suharwardy Yemani Sylheti was one of the greatest saints and Mujahids who came to the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent as pioneers for preaching and establishing Islam in the 13th century. Popularly and devotedly called Hazrat Shah Jalal Mujjarad was a Turkistani and was born in Turkey in 1271 A.D. His ancestors had migrated to Turkey from Yeman.

His father, Hazrat Mohammad Bin Mohammad Ibrahim, was a great Shaikh of his time and belonged to a famous Quaraish family of Yeman and was martyred during a Jihad. The mother of Hazrat Shah Jalal was a descendent from a Sayed family. Having lost his parents during infancy, Harat Shah Jalal was brought up by his maternal uncle, Syed Ahmed Kabir Suharwardy, in the holy city of Mecca Muazzama, where he was given religious teaching and made to follow and practice religious and mystical practices.

Ultimately Hazrat Shah Jalal became the disciple of his maternal uncle who was now satisfied that he had perfected himself in spiritual knowledge and practice. At this stage Syed Ahmed Kabir ordered and instructed Hazrat Shah Jalal to wander in the world with the sole object to preach Islam and gave him a

handful of dust with the instructions to settle in that part of the world where he would find the soil of the dust of similar colour. Smell and taste and that is the area where he should settle down. With the parting words of Syed Ahmed Kabir

“Whereever you find soil of the same colour, smell and taste fix your abode there. Go and I surrender you to Allah.”

On leaving Mecca, Muazzam Hazrat Shah Jalal proceeded to Yeman accompanied by twelve of his disciples and one of them was assigned the specific job of testing the dust wherever the band of the dervishes went. The King of Yemen to whom the spiritual status of Hazrat Shah Jalal became known invited him and tried to test his spiritual status by offering him a glass of *Sherbat* with poison mixed in it. Hazrat Shah Jalal immediately detected the test to which the King was putting him to through intuition. Hazrat Shah Jalal drank the glass containing poisoned *Sherbat* with the words:

“Good Or Bad Every Thing Is Ordained For Everybody. One Gets What One Thinks Of.”

Nothing happened to Hazrat Shah Jalal, but the King died. The crown prince instead of becoming a King preferred to become a dervish and discarded the crown, giving preference to becoming a simple ordinary man of God.

After travelling through the Arabian desert on foot and crossing through Iran and Afghanistan the band of Mujahids reached Delhi where Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya was residing (the great saint of the Chistian system). After staying in Delhi for few days as the guest of Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya, Hazrat Shah Jalal proceeded to Satgaon in Bengal through Bihar. Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia had presented two pairs of pigeons of dark colour as a gift of brotherly reverence. Satgaon was under Muslim rule.

At this time there was a Hindu ruler by the name of Gour Govinda and Sylhet was his capital. It so happened that a Muslim by the name of Burhanuddin who lived in Sylhet sacrificed a cow on the occasion of the birth of his son and the beef was picked up by a kite and dropped in the compound of the temple of the Hindu King. The Hindu Ruler got infuriated and out of hatred and malice and revenge got the son of Burhannuddin killed and cut off his right hand. Burhanuddin came to Gour and pleaded to Sultan Shamsuddin Feroz Shah, telling the Ruler about the cruelty and inhuman treatment that he had met at the hands of King Gour Govinda.

Immediately the Sultan despatched his forces under the command of his nephew Sikandar Ghazi to take revenge of the poor victim Burhanuddin by challenging the authority of the Hindu King and his merciless treatment to Burhannuddin. At the banks of the river Brahmaputra both the forces of Sikandar Ghazi presenting justice and King Govinda presenting cruelty met each other in battle. Inspite of repeated assaults.

Sikandar Ghazi could not succeed in defeating the Hindu Ruler due to a number of reasons climatic as well as military strategy because the Hindu Ruler fired some sort of crude missile; and further the rainy season had come to which the Turkish soldiers were not accustomed to fighting. Puzzled and disillusioned and discouraged, Sultan Shamsuddin prayed to God to give him the power, faith and guidance so that he could avenge the treatment of cruelty given to Burhanuddin.

It was at this time that Hazrat Shah Jalal who had now 311 disciples was sought after by Sultan Shamsuddin as he had heard from

his advisers and Generals about the great spiritual status of the saint. Ultimately and finally the forces of Sultan Shamsuddin under Sikandar Ghazi joined the band of Hazrat Shah Jalal and his 311 followers and the great forces of Islam—saints and soldiers marched on to meet the evil forces of King Gour Govinda. The forces crossed—the Brahmanputra river and reached Comilla, then went to Chaowki Parganah near Nabi Ganj at the southern border of King Gour Govinda's dominion. After passing the night at Fatehpur the Mujahids reached the bank of the river Barak. The Muslim forces were also commanded by General Syed Nasiruddin.

Great tactics and strategy were displayed by the Hindu King; but with the spirit of Jihad, the Muslim forces through faith and effort managed to defeat the Hindu King who fled to his fort palace near Gurdwar. Hazrat Shah Jalal immediately asked the Azan to be said and after performing Prayers entered the town of Sylhet. The first act of the Mujahid was to hoist the green flag of Islam with the crescent and star on it on the Hindu Commander-in-Chief's Castle on the hill. The great saint stayed for two years at Kakkatura in the Chowki Dighi Mohalla.

Surprisingly enough, Hazrat Shah Jalal after testing the soil of Sylhet found it identical to the one given to him by his *Pir-o-Murshid* and maternal uncle, Syed Ahmer Kabir Suharwardy. In accordance with the instructions of his Shaikh, he settled down at Sylhet and gave up his wandering life. He died on the 20th of Zilquad, 740 A.H. or 18th May, 1340, at the age of 69. The mortal remains of the great mystic and Mujahid lie buried in the soil of Sylhet. After going through the life of great saint no better words can be found in his memory than the following couplet:

"*Mulk-e-Khuda Tang Neest
Pai Mura Lang Meest*"

The spiritual lineage of Hazrat Shah Jalal in as follows: Hazrat Mohammad Mustafa (S.M.), Hazrat Ali, Hazrat Hassan Basri, Hazrat Habib Azami, Shaikh Dawood Tayee, Shaikh Ma'arof Karkhi, Shaikh Sarri Sukhti, Shaikh Mamshad Sindri, Shaikh Amed Dinuri, Shaikh Ambia, Shaikh Aziuddin Suhawardy, Shaikh Shahabuddin Suharwardy, Shikh Mkhudum Bakaiddin Zakaria, Syed Jalal Surkh Bukhari, Syed Ahmed Kabir Suharwardy and Hazrat Shah Jalal Mujjarad.

No greater tributes or any act of devotion can be performed than to follow in the foot-step of this great saint and Mujahid who has left a living example of Faith and effort in the name of God.

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EB

Suhrawardi, Maqtul Shihab Al-Din (12th Century)

Shihab al-Din Abu Hafs 'Umar Al-Suhrawardi (539-632/1145-1234), was one of the most important Sufis in Sunni Islam. He was born and grew up in the town of Suhraward, later destroyed by the Mongols, in the Persian province of Djibal, to the west of Sultaniyya. He should not be confused with other persons carrying the *nisba* 'al-Suhrawardi', in particular, not with his contemporary the mystic Shihab al-Din Yahya al-Suhrawardi al-Maktul, put to death in Aleppo

in 587/1191 because of his heretical ideas in religious and political matters.

Abu Hafs 'Umar al-Suhrawardi came in his youth to Baghdad, where his uncle Abu 'l-Nadjib al-Suhrawardi, himself a famous Sufi, introduced him to the religious sciences and made him also familiar with the duties of a preacher. Abu Hafs followed his uncle's courses both in the Nizamiyya and in the latter's *ribat* on the shore of the Tigris, a much-visited centre of the Sufi way of life. He often mentions his uncle in his main work '*Awarif al-ma'arif*' (e.g., ch. 30, section on humility). Another important teacher of Abu Hafs in Baghdad was the Hanbali Sufi and jurist *shaikh*, 'Abd al-Kadir al-Jilani.

The close relationship of the still quite young al-Suhrawardi with the famous *shaikh*, who was already approaching the end of his life, was significant for al-Suhrawardi's later attitude towards religio-dogmatic questions. 'Abd al-Kadir is said to have dissuaded al-Suhrawardi from occupying himself with *kalam* and to have warned him in particular against the use of *kiyas*. In doing so, he is said to have mainly talked him out of reading al-Djuwayni's *K. al-Shamil* and al-Shahrastani's *Nihayat al-akdam*, both leading works of Ash'ari theology. Al-Suhrawardi was not a Hanbali, as 'Abd al-kadir was, but a traditionalistic Shafi'i, which was rather typical in Baghdad. With respect to al-Suhrawardi's spiritual career, it is important to note that his later violent attacks against the *mutakallimun* corresponded to an initial personal interest in their doctrine.

After his uncle's death in 563/1168, al-Suhrawardi followed "the path of seclusion". He preached and headed mystical meetings in Abu 'l-Nadjib's *ribat*, which soon extended to several other places in Baghdad. He was a

trained orator, one of the most successful traditionalist preachers in the Abbasid metropolis. He put his audience into ecstasies, so that many cut their hair or were spiritually transported away from the world. His pulpit was made of clay, as prescribed by the ascetic way of life.

Al-Suhrawardi maintained friendly relations with Mu'in al-Din al-Cishti, the founder of the Indian Cishtiyya order which, in its early period, orientated itself completely on al-Suhrawardi's *'Awarif*. He maintained a particularly close relation with Nadjm al-Din al-Razi, known as al-Daya, a *murid* of Nadjm al-Din al-Kubra, whom he had met in 618/1221 in Malatya while the latter was on his way from Khwarazm to Asia Minor. Daya submitted his *Mirsad al-'ibad* to al-Suhrawardi, who expressed his unrestricted approval and gave him a letter of recommendation for the Rum Salduk Sultan 'Ala al-Din Kaybubad I in Konya.

It was during this period of insecurity and fear that Shaikh Suhrawardi lived. He died in 624/1226 eight years after the death of Chingiz Khan. These events must have influenced the mind of the Shaikh; hence the note of pessimism often met with in his work *'Awarif al-Ma'arif*, in which he expresses with a sad heart the decline in moral character of his contemporaries. He passed the major part of his life at Baghdad where he now lies buried. He founded the school of mysticism which is known as Suhrawardiyyah after his name. His work *'Awarif al-Ma'arif* is a standard treatise on mysticism extensively used in all mystic circles.

In Islam, the attack of Sufis and theologians upon the rationalistic aspect of Aristotelian philosophy weakened its hold at

the very time when that philosophy was gaining strength in the Christian West and was replaced in the Muslim world by two elements, the doctrinal Sufism of Muhyi al-Din ibn 'Arabi and the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* or illuminative wisdom of Shaikh al-Ishraq Shihab al-Din Yahya ibn Habash ibn Amirak Suhrawardi, both of which aimed at an effective realization of the 'truth' and replaced the rationalism of Peripatetic philosophy by intellectual intuition (*dhaug*). Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi is often called al-Maqtul, meaning he who was killed, since he was put to death for certain indiscreet formulations. We, however, refer to him as *Shaikh al-Ishraq* by which name he is universally known among his disciples.

Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, whose *ishraqi* wisdom has played such a great role in the intellectual and spiritual life of Islam and especially of Shi'ism, was born in Suhrawardi, a village near the present city of Zinjan in northern Persia, in 549/1153.

He studied at first with Majd al-Din Jili at Maraghah and later with Zahir al-Din Qari at Ispahan. Having finished his formal studies, he began to travel through Persia, meeting various Sufi masters and benefiting from their presence and teachings. During this period he spent much time in meditation and invocation in spiritual retreats. He also journeyed during the same period through the regions of Anatolia and Syria and acquired great love for the cities of these countries.

On one of his journeys, he went from Damascus to Aleppo and met Malik Zahir, the son of Salah al-Din Ayyubi, the celebrated Muslim ruler. Malik Zahir became much devoted to Shihab al-Din and asked him to stay at his Court. It was here that the master of *ishraq* fell into disgrace with the religious

authorities into the city who considered some of his statements dangerous to Islam. They asked for his death and when Malik Zahir refused, they petitioned Sala al-Din himself who threatened his son with abdication unless he followed the ruling of the religious leaders. Shihab al-Din was thereby imprisoned and in the year 587/1191 at the age of 38, he was either suffocated to death or died of starvation.

Many miraculous features have been connected with the life of Suhrawardi and many stories told of his unusual powers. His countenance was striking to all his contemporaries. His illuminated and ruddy face and dishevelled hair, his handsome beard and piercing eyes reminded all who met him of his keen intelligence. He paid as little attention to his dress as he did to his words. Sometimes he wore the woollen garb of the Sufis, sometimes the silk dress of the courtiers. His short and tragic life contains many similarities to the life of Hallaj, whom he quoted so often and to that of the Sufi poet 'Ain al-Qudat Hamadani who was to follow a similar career a few years later.

The writings of Suhrawardi are numerous despite his short and turbulent life. Some of them have been lost, a few published and the rest remain in manuscript form in the libraries of Persia, India and Turkey. Unlike his predecessors, ibn Sina and al-Ghazali, he was never translated into Latin and, therefore, never became well-known into the Western world. Yet, his influence in the East can almost match that of ibn Sina and any history of Islamic philosophy written without mentioning him and the school of *Ishraq* is, to say the least, incomplete.

Histories of Muslim philosophy written by Westerners, like Munk and de Boer, usually end with ibn Rushd because the authors have

considered only that aspect of Muslim philosophy which influenced Latin scholasticism. Actually, the seventh/thirteenth century, far from being the end of speculative thought in Islam, is really the beginning of this most important school of *Ishraq*. Suhrawardi's writings came to the East at the same time as Peripatetic philosophy was journeying westward to Andalusia and from there through the influence of ibn Rushd and others to Europe.

There are altogether about fifty titles of Suhrawardi's writings which have come down to us in the various histories and biographies. They may be divided into five categories as follows:

1. The four large doctrinal treatises, the first three dealing with Aristotelian (*masha'i*) philosophy with certain modifications and the last with *ishraqi* wisdom proper. These works, all in Arabic, include the *Talwihat*, *Muqawwamat*, *Mutarahat* and the *Hikmat al-Ishraq*.
2. Shorter doctrinal treatises like *Hayakil al-Nur*, *al-Alwah al-'Imadiyyah*, *Partau-Nameh*, *I'tiqad al-Hukama'*, *al-Lamahat*, *Yazdan Shinakht* and *Bustan al-Qulub* all of which explain further the subject-matter of the larger treatises. These works are partly in Arabic and partly in Persian. The treatise *Yazdan Shinakht* has often been attributed to Ain al-Qudat Hamadani and its authorship remains in any case doubtful. *Bustan al-Qulub* has also appeared under the name *Raudat al-Qulub* and has been occasionally attributed to Sayyid Sharif Jurjani.

Initiatory narratives written in symbolic language to depict the journey of the initiate towards gnosis (*ma'rifah*) and illumination (*ishraq*). These short treatises, all written in

Persian, include *'Aql-i Surkh*, *Awaz-i Par-i Jibra'il*, *al-Ghurbat al-Gharbiyyah* (also in Arabic), *Lughat-i Muran*, *Risalah fi Halat al-Tufuliyyah*, *Rizi ba Jama'at-i Sufiyan*, *Risalah fi al-Mi'raj* and *Safir-i Simurgh*.

Commentaries and transcriptions of earlier philosophic and initiatic texts and sacred Scripture like the translation into Persian of the *Risalat al-Ta'ir* of ibn Sina, the commentary in Persian upon ibn Sina's *Isharat wa Tanbihat* and the treatise *Risalah fi Haqiqat al-'Ishq* which last is based on ibn Sina's *Risalat al-'Ishq* and his commentary upon the verses of the *Qur'an* and on the *Hadith*. Prayers, litanies, invocations and what may be called books of the hour, all of which Shaharazuri calls *al-Waridat w-al-Taqdisat*.

These works and the large number of commentaries written upon them during the last seven centuries form the main corpus of the tradition of *ishraq* and are a treasure of traditional doctrines and symbols combining in them the wisdom of Sufism with Hermeticism and Pythagorean, Platonic, Aristotelian and Zoroastrian philosophies together with some other diverse elements. There is little doubt that Suhrawardi is greatly indebted to the Muslim philosophers, especially ibn Sina, for the formulation of many of his ideas. Moreover, inasmuch as he is a Sufi as well as a philosopher or, more properly speaking, a theosophist, he is in debt, both for spiritual inspiration and for his doctrines, to the great chain of Sufi masters before him. More specifically, he is indebted to Hallaj whom he quotes so often and to al-Ghazali whose *Mishkat al-Anwar* played so important a role in his doctrine of the relation of light to the Imam.

Suhrawardi came also under the influence of Zoroastrian teaching, particularly in

angelology and the symbolism of light and darkness. Suhrawardi is careful in distinguishing between exoteric Zoroastrians and the sages among Zoroastrians whom he follows. As he writes in *Kalimat al-Tasawwuf*:

"There were among the ancient Persians a community of men who were guides towards the Truth and were guided by Him in the Right Path, ancient sages unlike those who are called the Magi, It is their high and illuminated wisdom, to which the spiritual experiences of Plato and his predecessors are also witness and the wisdom of the ancient Zoroastrian sages with that of Hermes and, therefore, with the pre-Aristotelian philosophers, especially Pythagoras and Plato, whose doctrines he sought to revive".

Finally he was influenced directly by the vast tradition of Hermeticism which is itself the remains of ancient Egyptian, Chaldaean and Sabaeen doctrines metamorphosed within the matrix of Hellenism and is based on the primordial symbolism of alchemy. Suhrawardi considered himself to be the reviver of the perennial wisdom, *philosophia perennis*, or what he calls *Hikmat al-Ladunniyyah* or *Hikmat al-'Atiqah* which existed always among the Hindus, Persians, Babylonians, Egyptians and the ancient Greeks up to the time of Plato.

The concept of the history of philosophy for Suhrawardi and his school is itself of great interest. This school identifies philosophy with wisdom rather than with rational systematisation. Philosophy for it does not begin with Plato and Aristotle; rather, it ends with them. Aristotle, by putting wisdom in a rationalistic dress, limited its perspective and separated it from the inactive wisdom of the earlier sages. From the *Ishraqi* point of view. Hermes or the Prophet Idris is the father of philosophy having received it as revelation from

heaven. He was followed by a chain of sages in Greece and in ancient Persia and later in Islam which unified the wisdom of previous civilisations in its milieu. The chain of transmission of *ishraqi* doctrines, which must be understood symbolically rather than only historically, may be schematised as follows:

HERMES
AGATHODEMON (SETH)

Asclepius	Persian priest-kings:
Pythagoras	Kiumarth
Empedocles	Faridun
Plato	Kai Khusrau
Neo-Platonists	
Dhu al-Nun Misri	Abu Yazid Bistami
Abu Shah Tustari	Mansur Hallaj
	Abu al-Hasan
	Kharragani
	Suhrawardi

In the introduction to his *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, Suhrawardi states explicitly the nature of *ishraqi* wisdom and its relation to ancient doctrines. As he writes: "Although before the composition of this book I composed several summary treatises on Aristotelian philosophy, this book differs from them and has a method peculiar to itself. All of its material has not been assembled by thought and reasoning; rather, intellectual intuition, contemplation and ascetic practices have played an important role in it.

Since our sayings have not come by means of rational demonstration but by inner vision and contemplation, they cannot be destroyed by the doubts and temptations of the sceptics. Whoever is a traveller (*salik*) on the way to truth is my companion and a help on this Path. The procedure of the master of philosophy, the *divine* Plato, was the same and the sages who preceded Plato in time like Hermes, the father of philosophy, followed the same path.

Since sages of the past, because of the ignorance of the masses, expressed their sayings in secret symbols (*rumuz*), the refutations which have been made against them have concerned the exterior of these sayings and not their real intentions. And the *ishraqi* wisdom the foundation and basis of which are the two principles of light and darkness as established by the Persian sages like Jamasp, Farshadshur and Buzarjumihr is among these hidden, secret symbols. One must never think that the light and darkness which appear in our expressions are the same as those used by the infidel Magi or the heretical Manichaeans for they finally involve us in idolatry (*shirk*) and dualism. Suhrawardi *Opera*, Vol. II. pp.10–11. Some modern interpreters of Suhrawardi have considered him to be anti-Islamic and of Zoroastrian sympathy. A. von Kremer in his *Geschichte der Herrschenden Ideen des Islam*, writes that Suhrawardi was part of the current directed against Islam.

On the other hand, the scholarly and sympathetic interpreter of Suhrawardi, H. Corbin, insists on the roles of *Shaikh al-Ishraq* in reviving the philosophy of Zoroastrian Persia and on his sympathy for Zoroastrian and Manichaean ideas, although he does not consider this revival to be a movement against Islam but rather an integration of ancient Persian myths in "the prism of Islamic spirituality." In any case, all views which consider *ishraqi* wisdom to be simply a revival of Zoroastrianism or Manichaeism confuse the form with the spirit. There is no doubt that Suhrawardi makes use of Mazdaean symbols especially with regard to angelology, but that is no more reason for calling him Mazdaean than it is to call Jabir ibn Hayyan a follower of Egyptian religion, because he used Hermetic symbols.

The only criterion of orthodoxy in Islam is the first *shahadah* (*la ilaha ill-Allah*) and, according to it, Suhrawardi cannot be said to lie outside the pale of Islam, no matter how strange his formulations may be. Furthermore, the disciples of the Ishraqi school consider the Persian sages of whom Suhrawardi speaks to have lived before Plato and Pythagoras and not during the Sassanid period. The genius of Islam to integrate diverse elements into itself is evident here as elsewhere and should not be interpreted as a sign of departure from the straight path (*sirat al-mustaqim*) or the universal orthodoxy which embraces all the perspectives within the tradition, so that all the streams of the ancient religious and cultures have flowed into it without in any way destroying its purity.

His Mystical Ideas: Though referring to the doctrine of the 'pious fore fathers', al-Suhrawardi in his mystical ideas went far beyond this, up to the point of even accepting, be it in a limited way, the *'l-hakk* of al-Halladj. Yet the freedom which al-Suhrawardi permitted himself in his judgement of the executed mystic did not bring him into agreement with the doctrines of contemporary 'freethinkers'. In strong words, he turned against the pantheism of his contemporary Ibn al-'Arabi. According to al-Suhrawardi, the latter had started to establish a despicable connection between *tasawwuf* and elements of Greek philosophy. The often-quoted story of the meeting in Baghdad between the very famous and controversial Andalusian mystic and al-Suhrawardi, his elder by about twenty years, contains legendary elements. His contracts with Ruzbihan al-Bakli (see Djami, *Nafahat*, 418) also belong to the realm of legend. On the other hand, his meeting with Ibn al-Farid, perhaps the most important mystical poet in the Arabic

language, is historical. They met in the *haram* of Mecca in 628/1231 during al-Suhrawardi's last pilgrimage.

The interest shown by the 'Abbasid caliph al-Nasir in al-Suhrawardi's gatherings, and the ruler's first extraordinary marks of goodwill towards the *shaikh*, e.g., the foundation of the *ribat* al-Marzubaniyya in 599/1202-3 (also known as *ribat* al-Mustadjadd, situated on the shore of the Nahr 'Isa in West Baghdad) occurred in a period in which al-Nasir had intensively begun to promote the Sufi branch of the *futuwwa* and to put it at the service of the caliphate. The development of a new *futuwwa*, led by the caliph as a *Kitbla*, was no less important to al-Nasir than it was to al-Suhrawardi. The caliph thus obtained a unique political instrument, while the *shaikh* in his turn saw his personal prestige spread far and wide outside Baghdad, as well amongst the circle of students which was gradually taking shape and from which the *tarika al-Suhrawardiyya* later originated.

In his works, al-Suhrawardi supported the union of *futuwwa* and *tasawwuf*. Interpreting the *futuwwa* as a part of the *tasawwuf* (*Idalat*, fol. 89a-b), he created the conditions necessary for both supporting the caliphate through the *tasawwuf* and for sanctioning Islamic mystics by means of the highest Islamic institution, the caliphate. In his *Idalat al-'iyan 'ala 'l-burhan* (fol. 88a), al-Suhrawardi considers the relation of a Sufi teacher (*shaikh*) to his novice (*murid*) as being analogous to that of the caliph, who is the mediator (*wasita*) appointed by God between the absolute One (*Allāh*) and the people (*nas*). However, a reference to the idea of consensus (*idjma'*) is missing in this context. Al-Suhrawardi developed a theory which coordinates the concepts of *futuwwa*, *tasawwuf*

and *khilafa* in an upward relation: 'The supreme caliphate is a booklet (*daftar*) of which the *tasawwuf* is a part; *tasawwuf* in its turn is also a booklet of which the *futuwwa* is a part. The *futuwwa* also includes the pious actions and religious exercises (*awrad*); the supreme caliphate comprises the mystical states, the pious actions and the pure morals' (*Idala*, fol. 89a-b).

The comparison of the caliphate with a booklet, which contains *tasawwuf* and *futuwwa* in a subordinate way, is reminiscent of the hierarchy of the concepts of *shari'a*, *tarika* and *hakika*, found in al-Suhrawardi's *Risalat al-futuwwa* (Aya Sofya 3155, fol. 186b), which are also linked in gradations. Here the *Shari'a* is the higher concept, used on the same level as *khilafa*. In relation to one another both concepts represent a unity.

The bilateral relation which, according to al-Suhrawardi, existed between the caliphate and Sufism explains why the caliph sent the *shaikh* several times to the courts of rulers as his representative. To the best-known diplomatic mission belong al-Suhrawardi's visits to the Ayubids. In 604/1207-8, after al-Nasir had declared himself the mandatory *kibla* for all members (*fityan*) of the *futuwwa*, he sent al-Suhrawardi to the courts of al-Malik al-Zahir in Aleppo (cf. Ibn Wasil, *Mufarridj*, iii, 180), of al-Malik al-'Adil in Damascus (*op.cit.*, 181-2), and of al-Malik al-Kamil in Cairo (*op.cit.*, 182; Ibn al-Sa'i, *Djami'*, ix, 259).

The Meaning of Ishraq: The Arabic words *ishraq* meaning illumination and *mashriq* meaning the east are both derived etymologically from the root *sharq* meaning the rising of the sun. Moreover, the adjective illuminative, *mushriqiyyah* and Oriental, *mashriqiyyah*, are written in exactly the same

way in Arabic. This symbolic identification of the Orient with light which is inherent in the Arabic language and is employed often by the Ishraqi sages, has given rise to many difficulties in the interpretations of that wisdom which is both illuminative and Oriental. Already in his *Mantiq al-Mashriqiyyin* most of which is lost, ibn Sina refers to an Oriental wisdom which is superior to the commonly accepted Peripatetic (*masha'i*) philosophy. Due to the fact that the word *mashriqiyyun* could also be read as *mushriqiyyun* in Arabic, the latter meaning illuminative, one could interpret the esoteric teachings which ibn Sina proposes as being illuminative as well as Oriental.

Since the famous article of Nallino, it has become common opinion that the reading is Oriental and has nothing to do with illumination. Yet, this opinion, however correct it may be linguistically, is essentially limited in that it does not take into account the profound symbolism inherent in the language and does not consider the great debt which Suhrawardi and *ishraqi* wisdom owe to ibn Sina.

Suhrawardi writes that ibn Sina wanted to recapture Oriental philosophy but did not have access to the necessary sources. Yet, if we consider how the sacred geography of the Orient of light and the Accident of darkness in the initiatory trilogy of ibn Sina, *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*, *Risalat al-Ta'ir* and *Salaman wa Absal*, is followed by Suhrawardi, how the Shaikh al-Ishraq translated several of the treatises of ibn Sina into Persian and how parts of *Hikmat al-Ishraq* resemble closely the commentary of ibn Sina upon the *Theology of Aristotle*, it will become clear how profoundly the roots of Ishraqi philosophy lie in certain of the later non-Aristotelian works of ibn Sina and how

illumination and the orient are united in this form of wisdom.

The unification of the meaning of illumination and the Orient in the term *israq* is connected with the symbolism of the sun which rises in the Orient and which illuminates all things so that the land of light is identified with that of gnosis and illumination. Inasmuch as the accident is where the sun sets, where darkness reigns, it is the land of matter, ignorance, or discursive thought, entangled in the mesh of its own logical constructions. The Orient is, on the contrary, the world of light, of being, the land of knowledge and of illumination which transcends mere discursive thought and rationalism. It is the land of knowledge which liberates man from himself and from the world, knowledge which is combined with purification and sanctity. It is for this reason that Suhrawardi connects *ishraqi* wisdom with the ancient priest-kings of Persia like Kai Khusrau and with the Greek sages like Asclepius, Pythagoras and Plato whose wisdom was based on inner purification and intellectual intuition rather than on discursive logic.

In a historical sense, *ishraqi* wisdom is connected with pre-Aristotelian metaphysics. Jurjani in his *Ta'rifat* calls the Ishraqis "the philosophers whose master is Plato." 'Abd al-Razzaq Kashani, the celebrated Sufi, in his commentary upon the *Fusus al-Hikam* of Ibn 'Arabi writes that the Ishraqis derive their chain from Seth, often identified with Agathodemon, from whom craft initiations and Hermetic orders also derive their origin. Ibn Wahshiyyah in his *Nabataean Agriculture* mentions a class of Egyptian priests who were the children of the sister of Hermes and who were called *Ishraqiyyun*.

Suhrawardi himself writes in his *Mutarahat* that the wisdom of Ishraq was possessed by

the mythological priest-kings of ancient Persia, Kiumarsh, Faridun and Kai Khusrau and then passed on to Pythagoras and Plato, the latter being the last among the Greeks to possess it and was finally inherited by the Muslim Sufis like Dhu al-Nun Misri and Bayazid Bistami.

Both metaphysically and historically, *ishraqi* wisdom means the ancient pre-discursive mode of thought which is intuitive (*dhaufi*) rather than discursive. In the hands of Suhrawardi it becomes a new school of wisdom integration. In the hands of Suhrawardi it becomes a new school of wisdom integrating Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy with Zoroastrian angelology and Hermetic ideas and placing the whole structure within the context of Sufism.

In reading the texts of Suhrawardi one is particularly struck by the large number of quotations from the *Qur'an*, *Hikmat* and the sayings of earlier Sufis and by the profound transformation into the Islamic mould of all the diverse ideas which Suhrawardi employs. It is by virtue of such an integration and transformation that the *ishraqi* wisdom could come to play such a major role in Shi'ism.

In the introduction to *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, Suhrawardi outlines the hierarchy of those who know in a manner which demonstrates how he integrates ancient wisdom into the perspective of Islam. There are, according to this scheme, formulator types of 'knowers':

1. The *hakim ilahi*, or *theosophos*, who knows both discursive philosophy, i.e., Aristotelianism and gnosis (*ta'alluh*). Suhrawardi considers Pythagoras, Plato and himself among this group.
2. The sage who does not involve himself with discursive philosophy but remains

content with gnosis, like Hallaj, Bistami and Tustari.

3. The philosopher who is acquainted with discursive philosophy but is a stranger to gnosis like Farabi or ibn Sina.
4. He who still seeks knowledge (*talib*) but has not yet reached a station of knowledge.

Above all these degrees is that of the Pole (*Qutb*) or Leader (*Imam*) who is the head of the spiritual hierarchy and of his representatives (*khulafa'*).

The stations of wisdom are also described in a purely Sufi fashion as degrees of penetration into the divine unity expressed by the *shahadah*. In his initiatory treatise, *Safir-i Simurgh* (Song of the Griffin), Suhrawardi enumerates five degrees of unity: *la ilaha il-Allah*, none is worthy of worship but God, which but God, which is the common acceptance of the ones of God and rejection of any other divinity; *la hawa illa huwa*, there is no he but He, which is the negation of any otherness than God, i.e., only God can be called 'He'; *la anta illa anta*, there is no thou but Thou, which is the negation of all thouness outside of God; *la ana illa ana*, there is no 'I' but the divine 'I', which means that only God can say 'I'; finally, the highest station of unity which is that of those who say *wa kullu shai' in halikun illa wajhahu*, i.e., all things perish except His face (essence). The formulations of Sufism become, therefore, the frame-work of his classification of knowledge into which he tries to place the heritage of universal gnosis and philosophy inherited by Islam.

Origin of Sufism: According to him, the word *sufi* is etymologically derived from "*sufi*", the coarse woollen cloth which, as he says, was worn by the Holy Prophet. He enumerates

several other views: (i) The Sufis are those who stand in the first rank (*salf*) before God; (ii) the word was originally *safawi* and was later on changed into *sufi*; (iii) it was derived from *suffah*, the mound where a group of Muslims used to spend their time in religious learning and ascetic ways of life. According to Suhrawardi, these derivations are etymologically incorrent, though with regard to the third it may be said that the life led by the people of the *suffah* resembled the pattern of life adopted by the Sufis. He also refers to a particular group of the people of Khurasan who used to live in caves far off from inhabited places. They were called *Shagufiyyah* from *Shagufi*, the name of the cave. The people of Syria used to call them *Jau'yyah*.

Suhrawardi, however thinks that this word was not used in the time of the Holy Prophet. According to some people, it became current during the third generation after the Prophet (*Taba' Tabi'in*). According to others, it came into use in the third century of the Hijrah. The titles of *Sahabah* (companions of the Prophet) and *Tabi'in* (their Successor) were held in great esteem and, therefore, the word *Sufi* — a title of honour, of doubt—did not make its appearance during their times. But when these peaceful times disappeared and gave place to turbulent periods of unrest and and political intrigue, pious people found it convenient for their peace of mind to shun society and live in seclusion and pass their time in meditation and spiritual exercise.

What is Sufism?: Suhrawardi tries, to establish a very intimate relationship between Sufism and knowledge. According to him, knowledge that is followed by moral behaviour is the main characteristic of Sufi life. Such knowledge is called by him *Fiqh* which is not

used in the usual legal sense buy for spiritual insight as it is used in the *Qur'an*. He refers to several *Qur'anic* verses to prove this point. First, he quotes the verse; "He (God) taught man what he did not know" and concludes that the spiritual status of man is based solely on knowledge. Secondary, he holds that Sufis are the people who acquire spiritual insight into religion and this helps them lead people to the right path. This spiritual perception, according to him, pertains to the sphere of the heart and not to the sphere of the head. He argues that, according to the *Qur'an*, knowledge and moral uprightness are the characteristics of the truly learned persons. He holds that knowledge is the consequence of *taqwa*, i.e., piety and moral integrity. In a verse it is said that "those of His servants only who are possessed of knowledge have *taqwa*". This verse is very significant in establishing the relationship between knowledge and moral behaviour, for, as Suhrawardi puts, it, it excludes knowledge from those who are not characterised by moral intrigue (*taqwa*).

But to what kind of knowledge does Suhrawardi refer? In this connection he enumerates different views. According to some, it is the knowledge of the psychological states of an individual for, without this kind of knowledge, it is contended, it is not possible for a person to distinguish between different types of revelations and experiences. According to others, it is the knowledge concerning worldly matters, for without proper information in this respect, a person is liable to be misled in his religious pursuits. According to Abu Talib of Mecca, it is the knowledge of the five religious duties of a Muslim. But, according to Suhrawardi himself, the knowledge which is incumbent on all Muslims is the knowledge of religious commandments and prohibitions.

And yet true knowledge, which manifests itself in practice and moulds and informs the life of the individual possessing that knowledge, is not formal knowledge that is imparted in schools and colleges but a state of the heart that grasps the truth of things without thereby becoming the master of details. Such a person is called in the *Qur'an* the one firmly rooted in knowledge (*rasikh fi al-'ilm*). He calls it the knowledge which one receives as a legacy (*ilm al-wirathah*) from the prophets and saints. He distinguishes it from the knowledge gained through formal education (*ilm al-dirasah*). Their relation, according to him, is like the relation of butter and milk. It is not milk but butter that is the object of man. We take milk only because it yields butter and fat. This type of knowledge is usually divided into three stages: knowledge by inference, knowledge by perception (or observation) and knowledge by personal experience or intuition (*ilm al-yaqin*, *'ain al-yaqin* and *haqq al-yaqin*). A person who attains to the stage of intuition, though less careful in observing ritualistic formalities is far superior to a man who has many ritualistic practices to his credit but whose knowledge is not of the highest types.

Sufism, according to Suhrawardi, is characterised by two things. It consists in following the practice of the Holy Prophet (*Sunnah*) and in inoculating purity of motives and attaining the highest integrity of character. There are two different categories of Sufis. The first includes those persons in whom mystic illumination (*kashf*) is followed by exercise of personal effort (*ijtihad*). He quotes the example of Pharaoh's magicians. When they realized the spiritual stature of Moses in comparison with their petty tricks, they were overwhelmed by the effulgence of spiritual illumination as a

result of which they decided there and then to break with the Pharaoh in favour of Moses. This decision of theirs for which they willingly bore all the terrible consequences with which the Pharaoh threatened them came to them with an ease that follows spiritual illumination.

To the second category belong those people who lead a hard ascetic life spending their days in prayers and nights in meditation. It is only after a long struggle spread over days, months and years that they receive divine illumination. Here illumination is the fruit and crown of personal efforts and hard ascetic life. He quotes a saying of Junaid: "We did not gain access to the domain of Sufism through discursive reasoning or intellectual discussion but through hunger, abdication of worldly lust and prestige and discarding of even lawful things".

There are two other kinds of people usually called Sufis but according to Suhrawardi, they cannot be included among mystics at all. The first are the *majdhubs*, i.e., those who receive spiritual illumination through divine grace but cannot reap the full fruit of their illumination because they are not able to supplement it with their personal efforts. The others are the ascetics who spend their whole life in self-mortification and meditation but whose efforts are not crowned with illumination.

In another place, discussing the qualities of a spiritual guide, he divides persons into four categories: (1) Pure or absolute ascetic (*salik*). (2) Pure or absolute *majdhub*. People belonging to these two categories do not deserve to be adopted as spiritual guides. The absolute ascetic retains the consciousness of self to the last. He starts with ascetic practices but, unfortunately, he is not able to ascend to the stage of *kashf*. The absolute *majdhub*, on the

other hand, receives through divine grace a little illumination and some veils from the face of Reality (God) are removed for him, but he does not put in the requisite labour that forms an indispensable part of mystic discipline (3) First *salik* and afterwards *majdhub*. Such a person is fit for becoming a guide. He starts with ascetic practices and reaches the goal of his endeavour, viz., spiritual illumination, which relieves him of the severity of his earlier discipline. He becomes the repository of divine wisdom. (4) But the most perfect stage, according to him, is the fourth, viz., first *majdhub* and afterwards *salik*. Such a person receives divine illumination in the beginning and veils are removed from his heart. His interest in the material world vanishes and he looks towards the spiritual world with eagerness and joyful expectations. This inner transformation affects his outward life and the antagonism between love and Law ceases for him. His outward and inward life, this world and the other world, wisdom and power, all become one. His faith is so deep that even if all the veils that hide the face of the Real were removed, he will gain nothing thereby.

Suhrawardi makes a distinction between a person of the third rank and a person of the fourth rank. The former who follows the path of a lover (*muhibb*) is freed from the bonds of the lower self (*nafs*) but is tied down in the bondage of the heart. The latter who traverses the way of the Beloved (*Mahbub*) is freed both from the lower self and the heart. Again, the former follows the forms of action (*suwar al-a'mal*) and thinks that just as a man cannot do without a body so long as alive, so action of one sort or other is indispensable for him. But the man belonging to the fourth category passes beyond all these. He leaves behind everything—lower self (*nafs*), heart, states and actions—

and achieves complete unity with God to the extent that God becomes his ears and eyes so that he hears with God's ears and sees with God's eyes.

Sufism covers both poverty (*faqr*) and continence (*zuhd*), but is identical with neither. *Faqr* is a difficult term to translate. Usually it means poverty, but in mystic morality it signifies the positive attitude of total independence from worldly needs. Suhrawardi quotes different definitions and descriptions of *faqr* in Sufism given by several eminent mystics. Ruyam says that Sufism based on three principles, the first of which is attachment to poverty. Ma'ruf of Karkh says that he who does not possess *faqr* is not a Sufi. *Faqr*, according to Shibli, is indifference towards all except God. According to usage of the terms in Syria, there is no difference between Sufism and *faqr*. They argue on the basis of the *Qur'anic* verse that "(alms are for) the poor (*fuqara'*) who have devoted themselves to the way of God, which, according to them, is the description of the Sufis. But Shurawardi disagrees with this view. He thinks that a person's constant attachment to poverty and fear of riches is a sign of weakness; it amounts to reliance on external causes and conditions and dependence on expected reward. But a true Sufi is above all these things. He is motivated neither by fear nor by rewards; he is above all such limitations. Again, adoption of poverty and avoidance of riches imply exercise of personal will and freedom of choice which is contrary to the spirit of Sufism. A true Sufi has subjected his will to the will of God and, therefore, he sees no difference in poverty or riches.

Sufism is, thus, distinct from *faqr*, though the latter forms the basis of the former in the sense that the way to Sufism passes through

faqr, not in the sense that both are identical or indispensable to each other. The same is the case with asceticism (*zuhd*), which may be a preparatory stage for Sufism but cannot be identified with it at all. There is a *Qur'anic* verse which says to the believers to be "upright (*qawwamin*) for Allah and bearer of witness with justice. This uprightness (*qawwamiyyah*), according to Suhrawardi, is the essence of Sufism. There are three stages in the mystic process; first, faith (*iman*); secondly, knowledge (*'ilm*); and lastly, intuition (*dhaug*). When a person is at the first stage, he is called "one who is like a true Sufi in appearance and dress (*mutashabih*)." When he attains to the second stage, he is called "one who pretends to be a Sufi (*mutasawwif*)." Only he who reaches the last stage deserves to be called a true Sufi. Suhrawardi again refers to a *Qur'anic* verse where three different kinds of persons are mentioned who have been chosen by God as the repositories (*warith*) of the knowledge of the Book: "Of them is he who makes his soul suffer a loss, of them is he who takes a middle course and of them is he who is foremost in deeds of goodness." The *Qur'an* uses the word *zalim* for the first, *muqtasid* for the second, and *sabiq* for the third. According to some, *zalim* is the ascetic (*zahid*), *muqtasid* is a gnostic (*'arif*) and *sabiq* is the lover (*muhibb*). According to others, the first is one who cries when any calamity befalls him, the second is one who patiently bears it, while the third feels positive pleasure in it. According to another version, the first are those who worship God carelessly and as a master of routine, the second do it with hope and fear, while the third are those who do not forget God at any time. These three categories of people according to Suhrawardi are identical with the three types of mystics: Mutashabih, Mutasawwif and the Sufi, respectively.

He refers to two other groups. The first are Malamitiyyah who do not manifest good deeds and do not hide evil. But they are inferior to a true Sufi who is so engrossed in his experiences and illumination that he does not know what to hide and what to manifest. The second are Qalandariyyah who are people of integrity but who do not subject themselves to full ascetic discipline. They have no ambition for further spiritual progress and lead a life of happiness and contentment.

He mentions a group of people who claim that *Shariah* (the religious Law) is binding only up to a certain stage. When reality manifests itself to a gnostic, the bonds of the Law disappear. Suhrawardi holds that these are misguided people, for Law and reality (*Shari'ah* and *Haqiqah*) are not antagonistic but interdependent. He who enters the sphere of reality (*Haqiqah*) becomes bound to the rank of slavehood (*'ubudiyyah*). Those who subscribe to the doctrine of incarnation (*hulul*) and employ the Christian terms *lahut* and *nasut* without understanding their real significance are all misguided people. He holds that the saying attributed to Bayazid, viz., *subhani, ma a'zamu shani* (all praise to me, how exalted is my position!), if spoken by him at all must have been said about God and not about himself as is commonly held. The *ana l-Haq* (I am the Truth) of Hallaj must be similarly interpreted according to the true intention of the statement. Suhrawardi adds that if it were known that Hallaj by this statement implied incarnation (*hulul*), he would condemn him outright.

There are some people who think that they receive words from God and often converse with Him, and, as a result of this conversation, they claim to receive messages which they attribute to God. Such people, according to

Suhrawardi, are either ignorant of the true nature of their experience or are deceived by their intellectual conceit. The words they hear are mere words which appear in their mind and in no way can be attributed to God. Such things appear when a man due to excessive ascetic practices is morally uplifted. Their attribution to God should be like attribution of everything to the Creator and not as a result of any kind of conversation with Him. He mentions another group of people who claim to be submerged in the sea of Unity and deny man's free-will and look upon each human action as the direct consequence of God's will or act. It seems that the Sheikh is referring to those mystics who were later called pantheists, for they were the people who claimed to be the followers of the true doctrine of *tauhid*, interpreted by them as the denial not only of any gods besides God but the denial of any existence besides His.

Suhrawardi thinks that mystics must live in monasteries (*khanqahs*) quite unconcerned with the problem of earning their bread. Without complete break with the world, it is not possible for them to turn their attention to God and to the purification of their hearts. As this seems to be incompatible with the generally held view, he tries to justify his stand by reference to certain *Qur'anic* verses and the Prophet's traditions.

There is a verse which says: "Be patient and vie you in patience and be steadfast (*rabitu*). Suhrawardi interprets the word *rabitu* in his own way. He says that *ribat* was originally a place where horses were tied, then it came to be used for a fortress the residents of which gave protection to the people. Later on, it came to be employed for monasteries, for the people of monasteries by the godliness are able to protect people from the influence

of evil. So the word *rabit* in this verse stands, according to Suhrawardi, not for struggle against the enemies but for struggle against the self, not for smaller *jihad* but for greater *jihad*, as a tradition puts it. But the *Qur'anic* verse that he quotes in the beginning of the chapter conclusively disproves the whole tenor of his stand. It is clear that the *Qur'an* refers to the houses, the inmates of which have not turned their back upon the world but are engaged in full worldly pursuit and these pursuits never stand in the way of their remembrance of God.

If monastic life is accepted as an ideal for the mystic, as Shurawardi does, it follows naturally that begging and celibacy should be adopted as the basic principles governing the life of the mystics. Naturally, therefore, we find him defending both these principles in spite of his view that they are not in complete accord with the Islamic way of life, as enunciated by the and sanctioned by the Holy Prophet. While discussing begging, he refers to several traditions which prohibit a man from begging and yet, he insists that a Sufi who is engaged in a life of total dedication to *dhikr-Allah* (remembrance of God) is compelled to satisfy his minimum physical needs of hunger and thirst by resort to begging. For justifying his point of view he misinterprets the traditions. There is a saying of the Prophet that the most lawful of food for a Muslim is what he earns by his own hands. Many mystics tried to explain it away by holding that 'earning by hand' means stretching hand in prayers to God for sending them food through other persons. He refers to abu Talib of Mecca who rejected this and still clings to it. There is another tradition according to which the upper hand (of the giver) is better than the lower hand (of the beggar). But Suhrawardi following Hujwiri, interprets it again in his own way. According

to him, the upper hand is the hand of the beggar who by receiving alms gives blessing to the alms-giver.

Similarly, discussing the question of celibacy, he wavers between the two positions. On the one hand, he feels inclined towards celibacy as a logical consequence of the conception of mysticism that he holds. On the other hand, there are many traditions to the effect that he who does not marry does not belong to the Muslim community. Ultimately, he leaves the question to the discretion of the individual mystic or to the advice of the spiritual guide.

On the question of listening to music, again, his attitude is non-committal. On the one hand, he quotes several eminent Sufis who were fond of music and who referred to several traditions in their support. On the other, there were several eminent persons who did not like it because, according to them, there was no scriptural support for it. While discussing the question of musical assemblies, he points out that some people look upon these assemblies as innovations. But he adds that not all innovations are religiously blame-worthy and, therefore, the question under discussion cannot be decided on this ground. Again, he quotes a tradition in support of the mystic dance (*wajd*) and tearing of the mystic robe (*khirqah*) in these assemblies and yet, adds that traditions invariably reject them as unlawful and, therefore, the matter stands where it is. But on the whole he seems to be in favour of music.

With regard to travel, Suhrawardi thinks that a Sufi cannot be expected to conform to any particular pattern of life. He divides Sufis into four classes in this respect: First, those who start their mystic career as travellers but then change into stays-at-home. Their travelling

is for several purposes—for acquiring knowledge, which, as the Shaikh quotes different traditions, is incumbent on all Muslims; for visiting people versed in knowledge (*rasikhun fi al-'ilm*) and benefiting from their company; for observing the various forms of natural phenomena, for, according to the *Qur'an*, God shows "His signs in the objective world and in the subjective world of the self till the truth is clear to them"; for moral and spiritual discipline which will season them and train them to achieve self-control and other virtues. The second, are those who start their mystic life with a retreat to solitude and end up with travelling. Such persons happen to enjoy the company of a perfect saint and under his guidance cover several stages of the mystic discipline and then after maturity try to consolidate their position by travelling from place to place.

To the third category belong people who start their mystic life in solitude and retirement and end with it. "Such people keep their heads on the knees and find therein the Mount of Sinai." In other words, they enjoy the nearness and see the light of divine illumination. It is said that water if stationary begins to stink. To this, the mystics reply that one should become as vast as an ocean and thereby become protected from stagnation and nasty smell. To the fourth category belong people who are always on the move and with them travelling is the beginning and end of mystic discipline.

Psychology: Soul, Appetitive Self, Heart.—The Shaikh bases his account of the soul (*ruh*) on two verses of the *Qur'an*. In the first, it is held that man was created by God from fine clay, then it successively changed into a moist germ, a clot of blood and flesh, till all of a sudden this compound of apparently

chemical changes assumed a form beyond the material plane, acquired the new spiritual dimension and became a new creation (*khalqan akhar*). Beginning as a piece of matter, man acquires at a certain stage of development characteristics which as if push him out of this plane into the plane of life. This stage, according to Suhrawardi, was reached when soul was breathed into him. But what is this soul which changes a piece of clay and matter into a being of a different dimension? He refers to the second verse: "They ask you of the soul (*ruh*), Say, the soul is from the command (*amr*) of my Lord."

On the basis of this verse, some mystics regard the soul as eternal—as being an emanation of God's *amr*, which, an attribute of God, is eternal. Suhrawardi, however, thinks that the soul is not eternal but created (*hadith*), though it is the most subtle of all things and purer and lighter than all else.

The next question is to determine whether it is an attribute (*'ard*) or a substance (*jauhar*). In a tradition it is mentioned that the souls have the capacity to move here and there, fly to different places, etc. On this basis some mystics are inclined to the view that soul is a substance characterised by some definite attributes. But Suhrawardi does not accept this interpretation. He holds that the account of the soul in the traditions is only symbolical and, therefore, cannot be taken in a literal sense. Soul is neither eternal nor is it a substance but created (*hadith*) and is an attribute (*'ard*). It is a created thing which acts according to its nature; it keeps the body alive as long as it is associated with it; it is nobler than the body; it tastes death when it is separated from the body, just as the body meets death when it is separated from the soul.

There are, according to him, two stages of the soul. The first is that of the animal soul

(*ruh al-hayawani*) which is a subtle body. It is the source of movement in the human body and produces in it the capacity of receiving sensations from the outside world. This soul is common to all animals and is intimately connected with the digestive organism of the body. The other grade of the soul is what Suhrawardi calls the heavenly soul of man. It belongs to the world of command (*'alam al-amr*). When it descends upon the animal soul, the animal soul is totally transformed. Now it acquires the characteristic of rationality and becomes capable of receiving inspiration (*ilham*).

The appetitive self (*nafs*) is the source of all undesirable activities. It has two dominant impulses, rage and avarice. When in rage, it is like a circular substance which is by its nature always on the move. When avaricious, it is like the moth which, being not satisfied with a little light, throws itself head-long into the flame of the candle and burns itself to death. A man is able to attain true rank of manliness when he tries to purify his self (*nafs*) of these gross characteristics by bringing into play reason and patience.

The self passes through three different stages of development. The first stage of the Self is evil-prompting (*ammarah*), the second is repentant (*lawwamah*), while the third is satisfied (*mutma'innah*).

Heart (*qalb*) is a spiritual principle (*latifah*) and has its locus in the heart of flesh. It comes into being as a result of mutual attraction between the human soul and the appetitive self. According to a tradition of the Holy Prophet (narrated by Hudhaifah), there are four kinds of hearts. The first is like a pure soil free from all kinds of vegetation. It is illumined as if by a shining lamp. It is the heart of a true believer

(*mu'min*). The second is a dark, inverted heart which belongs to an unbeliever. The third belongs to a hypocrite and is enveloped in a veil. The last is a pure but many-faceted heart, with an inclination towards good as well as evil.

Mystery (Sirr)—There is difference of opinion among the mystics with regard to the exact place which the secret occupies in the psychological make-up of man. According to some, it is prior to the soul (*ruh*) and posterior to the heart (*qalb*) as a spiritual principle. To others it is posterior to the soul, though higher and subtler than it. According to these mystics, *sirr* is the locus of spiritual observation (*mushahahadah*), soul is the locus of love and heart is the locus of gnosis (*ma'rifah*). Suhrawardi, however, thinks that secret (*sirr*) has no independent being like the soul and heart. It refers to a particular stage in the spiritual development of man. When man is able to free himself from the dark prison of the appetitive self and looks towards the spiritual soul, his heart acquires a new characteristic which is called mystery (*sirr*). Similarly, at this stage his soul also attains a special position which again is called mystery. At this stage, man acquires the satisfied self and he acts and wills what God wishes him to do or will; he loses his individual power of action and freedom of choice and becomes a perfect servant (*'abd*).

Reason ('Aql).—It is the essence of the heavenly soul, its tongue and its guide. The Sheikh quotes the usual traditional account that reason was the first creation of God. God asked it to come forward, to turn back to sit, to speak, to become silent in turn and it obeyed God's orders to the very letter. At this, God said, "I swear by My majesty and power that I did not

and appropriates all the divine attributes. His position becomes what God says: "When I love a person I become eyes and ears, etc."

Nearness (Qurb)— This is not physical nearness but only a psychological state in which the mystic feels a profound consciousness of intimacy with the Ultimate Reality. The *Qur'an* says: "And prostrate and draw near (to Him)." On this basis Suhrawardi thinks that attainment of nearness depends upon concentration on God which enables the individual to surpass levels of normal consciousness. There are two stages in this process. In the first place, the mystic falls as if into a trance and is overcome by intoxication (*sukr*); his consciousness of self (*nafs*) and *ruh* regain their separate identities and the individual feels the consciousness of nearness intimately and yet, in spite of it, the consciousness of otherness, which is involved in his relation of slavehood (*'ubdiyyah*) to God, is also conspicuously present. He quotes a mystic as saying: "By following the Sunnah one attains gnosis (*ma'rifah*) by observing the obligatory duties (*fara'id*) one reaches nearness, while by practising daily 'extra' prayers (*nawafil*), one attains love."

Bashfulness (Haya')— There is a saying of the Holy Prophet: "Be modest with God as it is due to Him." Suhrawardi explained it as follows: "He alone can be called modest in relation to God who is careful of his daily behaviour towards Him and remembers his death and the hereafter, with the result that his heart cools off towards this world and its entanglements."

But this modesty or bashfulness, being acquired, is a station (*maqam*), while bashfulness of a special quality is a state. In order to define it, Suhrawardi quotes certain sayings of some mystics. One says:

"Bashfulness and attachment (*uns*) hover about the heart and when they find that it is possessed of continence (*zuhd*) and piety (*war'*), they descend into it, otherwise they move away." This bashfulness is the submission of one's soul to God for maintaining the grandeur of His majesty (*jalal*), while attachment is the soul's experience of pleasure in the perfection of His beauty (*jamal*). When both bashfulness and attachment combine, it is the end of a mystic's ambition. According to abu Sulaiman, there are four different motives of action fear, hope, awe and bashfulness and that action is the best which is motivated by the last.

Union (Ittisal)—As Nuri says, union is the revelation of the heart and the observation of secrets. There is a person who attains union through his personal efforts but loses this position as soon as there is slackness in his efforts. This is all but natural, for human efforts cannot be kept up at the same degree of intensity for a long time. Such a person is called *mufassal*. But the union that Suhrawardi commends is one which is the result not of personal effort but of divine grace. A person who receives it is called united (*wasil*). But there are several grades of this union.

There is a person who receives illumination from divine actions. To such a person, actions, his own as well as those of others, cannot be attributed, for his role is only passive. It is God who does all actions through him and he loses all freedom of choice or independence of action. Secondly, there is illumination from divine attributes. Here, the recipient through revelation of divine attributes of majesty and beauty stays at the stations of awe (*haibah*) and attachment (*uns*). Then, there is the illumination of divine essence (*dhat*) which is a stage towards annihilation (*fana'*). A person at this stage is

illuminate with the divine light of faith and in the observation of God's face loses his individuality. This is a further stage in union (*ittisal*). It is open only to a few, the *muqarrabin*, who enjoy nearness to God. Above it is the stage of spiritual perception (*haqq al-yaqin*) which is vouch-safed to very few persons and that only for the twinkling of an eye. It is the complete permeation of divine light in the recipient, so much so that his self (*nafs*) and heart both feel overpowered by it. And, in spite of its being a very rare experience attainable by a few select persons, the recipient feels that he is perhaps at some preliminary stage of his journey towards union. It is a long and toilsome journey for which perhaps a life of eternity may not suffice.

Contraction and Expansion (Qabd was Bast)—These two emotional states are dependent for their appearance on certain preliminary conditions. They are usually experienced by a mystic when he is traversing the early stages of what Suhrawardi calls the states of special love. They appear neither at the stage of general love, nor at the termination of the stage of special love. There are some emotional experiences in the state of general love which seem to correspond to contraction and expansion, but which in reality are nothing more than fear (*khauf*) and hope (*raja'*), while at other times they are what he calls grief (*hamm*) and pleasure (*nishat*) which the experient confuses with contraction and expansion. Grief and pleasure emanate from the self (*nafs*) which is yet, at the appetitive stage (*nafs-i ammah*), a stage susceptible to the promptings of evil. *Hamm* is the feeling of dissatisfaction experienced at the failure of attaining the object of self-love while *nishat* is the crest of the wave when the sea of self-indulgence is all astorm.

It is only when the mystic enters the next stage which is connected with the stage of special love and when his appetitive self becomes the repentant self (*nafs-i lawwamah*) that the true moods of contraction and expansion make their appearance. The mood of contraction is the result of a psychological state when the self (*nafs*) is in ascendance, while the mood of expansion follows when the heart (as an organ of spiritual perception) is in ascendance.

When the appetitive self becomes repentant (*lawwamah*), there is a constant up and down in the urge towards evil; sometimes the urge towards good has the upper hand, while at others there is a tendency towards the other pole. The appearance of contraction and expansion corresponds to these two poles of the life of the self. *Nafs* is the veil of darkness and heart is the veil of light and as long as an individual is in the sphere of these veils, he continues to experience these two moods of contraction and expansion. But as soon as he passes beyond these veils, these moods also disappear. In the experience of annihilation (*fans'*) and abiding (*baqa'*), there is neither contraction nor expansion; they are intimately connected with the consciousness of selfhood.

According to some Sufis, the mystic first experiences contraction in his spiritual development and then it is followed by expansion. Sugrawardi also holds the same opinion. But there are certain situations where this order is reversed. Under the mood of expansion, the experient feels overjoyed and happy. This happiness then filters down to the self (*nafs*) which is by nature inclined to interpret it appetitively so that this mood of expansion degenerates into an attitude of pleasure. At this stage the mood of contraction

of necessity makes its appearance to bring the self to the state of sanity and equilibrium. If the self were to be free from a tendency towards the extremes, the mystic would be in a perpetual state of expansion (*bast*) and blessedness.

When the self passes into the last stage and becomes the satisfied soul, it attains complete harmony and passes beyond the bipolar strife of good and evil. For such a person the moods of contraction and expansion are non-existent.

Annihilation and Abiding (*Fana'* was *Baqā'*). — According to Suhrawardi, what most mystics describe as the state of annihilation (*fana'*) is in reality not *fana'* but something else. According to some, *fana'* is the annihilation of all attachment, absence of all urges towards satisfaction of worldly desires, etc. This state, according to Suhrawardi, is what is implied in repentance of a true type (*taubat al-nasuh*). To some *fana'* is the annihilation of evil attributes and *baqa'*, the abiding of good attributes. This, again, according to Suhrawardi, is not true *fana'* and *baqa'* but the result of moral transformation and purification (*tazkiyah*). There are many phases of *fana'*, but the state of absolute *fana'* is one where the Being of God is so overpowering and overwhelming that the consciousness of the finite self is totally obliterated. He quotes with approval the following event as a true representation of the state of annihilation (*fana'*). A person greeted 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar while he was engaged in circumambulation (*tawaf*) of the Ka'bah to which he made no response. Later on, he heard that the man had complained to someone at the absence of his response. At this 'Abd Allah b. 'Umar replied that in that state he was in communion with God and, therefore, did not have any consciousness of himself, not to speak of others.

There are two kinds of *fana'*—The first is the apparent annihilation (*fana al-zahir*). Here, the mystic receives illumination through divine action with the result that freedom of action and choice disappears from him. He sees all action, his as well as those of others, emanating directly from God. At the stage of the real annihilation (*fana al-batin*), the mystic receives illumination from God's attributes and His essence (*dhat*) with the result that he is overwhelmed by the divine *amr* so much so that he becomes totally immune from evil promptings of all kinds.

Some people in the state of annihilation lose all consciousness but, according to Suhrawardi, it is not an essential phase of this state.

In the state of abiding (*baqa'*), the mystic is restored the power of action which had been annihilated previously. God allows him full freedom to act as he likes and as the situation demands. In this state he is conscious of the obligations both to the world and to God and none of these becomes a hindrance to the other. His duty to the world does not make him oblivious of his duty to God, nor does his communion with God debar him from turning his attention to the worldly matters.

The apparent annihilation (*fana al-zahir*) is for those who are at the station of heart and are busy with emotional states, while the real annihilation (*fana al-batin*) is for those who passed beyond that station and attained union with God and who are what he calls *bi-Allah* (with God).

Union and Separation (*Jam'* was *Tafriqah*)—According to Junaid, nearness to God in ecstasy (*wajd*) is union while the sense of selfhood (*bashriyyah*) and absence from God (*ghariba*) i.e., awareness of self, is separation

(*tafriqah*). Suhrawardi accepts this position and says that the state where the mystic feels himself united with God (*tauhid al-tajrid*) is denoted by union (*Jam'*), while ordinary and normal state of consciousness, where the mystic feels the separate individuality of his own self as well as of other things, is called separation (*tafriqah*). He adds that both these states are complementary; if we ignore union, we are landed in negation of the divine attributes (*ta'til*) and if we ignore separation, it leads to heresy (*ilhad*) and denial of God (*tafriqah*) is relationship of an obedient servant to God (*ududiyyah*). Union is the result of man's possession of a soul, while separation is due to his possession of a body and as long as the combination of the soul and the body persists, these two states must equally be emphasised in the life of the mystic.

There is another state which is called by mystics the union of the union (*jam' al-jam'*). When a mystic looks towards God's action, he is in the state of separation; when he looks towards God's attributes, he is in the state of union; and when he looks towards God's essence, he is in the state of union of the union.

Process of Self-Purification—The ideal life, according to Suhrawardi, is the life of a perfect man, who in spite of the highest spiritual attainments, is yet conscious of his subservience to the Law of *Shari'ah*. But this stage of purification cannot be attained without a long process of self-mortification which demands self-examination, introversion, contemplation, patience, submission to God's will and an attitude of complete detachment. The spark of life that is kindled within the heart of the mystic has a charm of its own, but it cannot be kept burning unless it is fed constantly on the oil that flows from continuous efforts towards

ascetism. He receives wayward glimpse of the Infinite Beauty and is charmed, but they prove fleeting; he wants this experience to be stabilised and enriched—hence the necessity of the whole process of self-purification. The result is second birth out of the womb of spirit into the kingdom of the re-awakened spirit.

Suhrawardi gives the details of this process of gradual enlightenment. There are four preliminary stages: Faith, repentance (*taubah*), continence constancy in unblemished virtuous actions. These four must be supplemented by four other things which are essentials of asceticism, viz., minimum conversion, minimum food, minimum stay-at-home, and minimum contact with people.

Repentance (*taubah*) over past shortcomings and determination to avoid them in future are effective only when a person keeps a constant check over his thoughts and actions and is fully awake to all situations. But to maintain this psychological state of repentance there are certain essential requirements. The first is self-examination (*muhasabah*) and the other is introversion or meditation (*muraqabah*). A person asked Wasti, 'which is the best virtuous action?' He said, 'Outwardly self-examination and inwardly meditation; both are perfected by each other and help to maintain the attitude of repentance in the mystic which leads to concentration on and communion with God (*inabah*).'

The other thing that is essential for a mystic is patience (*sabr*) without which it is not possible for him to continue his life. This moral quality enables him to endure the vicissitudes of life. It is far more easy for an individual to show his mettle in adversity than in prosperity and hence the mystics have emphasized the importance of patience in a state

of affluence which is regarded superior to patience shown in a state of want. The next state is that of *rida* which is in a way the fruit of conversion (*taubah*) where the mystic enters the sphere of fear and hope. He feels shocked at the tendency towards evil and being morally at a higher stage of development, he fears succumbing to these temptations. This feelings of fear therefore serves to keep him aware and make him watchful of any fall towards the satisfaction of his baser self. He is repentant and feels hopeful of ultimate victory over these evil forces. Thus, the life of the mystic moves between these two poles of fear and hope and gradually attains the stage of what Suhrawardi calls continence (*zuhd*), which in a way sums up all that he has achieved so far. The stage of continence, in other words, is the stage where the fruits of conversion (*taubah*) with its constituents of self-examination and meditation, patience and voluntary submission to God, piety, hope, and fear, all converge and make the mystic into a perfect ascetic who lives, moves, and has his being in complete communion with God and in total reliance (*tawakkul*) upon Him. This second stage of continence is distinct from poverty (*faqr*). A *faqir* is one who is forced by circumstances to lead a life of poverty, while the continent person (*zahid*), on the other hand, adopts this life of detachment of his own free-will even when the state of affluence is open to him.

The third stage is that of stability in morally virtuous actions. According to Suhrawardi, a *zahid* who does not follow the Law of the *Shari'ah* is liable to be led astray. It is only through constancy in action for God (*'aml li-Allah*) remembrance (*dhikr*), recitation from the Qur'an, prayers and meditation (*muraqabah*) that a mystic can hope to attain his objective which is *ubudiyyah*, perfect

obedience to God. Sahl b. 'Abd Allah Tustari said about this stage: "When a man after passing through repentance, continuance and constancy in virtuous deeds reaches the stage of slave hood, he becomes totally passive towards the divine will and of his own free-will decides no longer to exercise his freedom of choice and action. Then he is granted full power of activity and freedom of action because he has identified himself with the will of God. His self-determination is equivalent to God—determination; the liability of his falling a prey to evil temptations and ignorance are totally obliterated".

According to Suhrawardi, the stage of giving up freedom of choice and action is the stage of annihilation, while the second stage where the mystic freely acts because his will follows the will of God, is the state of abiding in God. It is the shedding of the mortal self for the eternal, material for the spiritual, human for the divine. The mystic at this stage is the perfect servant.

The Orient and Occident in Sacred Geography: The already mentioned, the term *ishraq* is closely connected with the symbolism of directions and sacred geography which are essential elements of the traditional sciences. In the trilogy of Ibn Sina to which we have already referred, the disciple passes from the Occident which is the world of matter, through intermediate Occidents and Orients which are the heavens and separate substances, to the Orient proper which symbolises the world of archangels.

A similar division of the cosmos occurs in the writings of Suhrawardi. The Occident is the world of matter, the prison into which man's soul has fallen and from which he must escape. The Orient of lights is the world of archangels

above the visible cosmos which is the origin of his soul (*ruh*). The middle Occident is the heavens which also correspond to the various inner faculties of man. It is important to note that, contrary to Peripatetic philosophy, the Ishraqis hold that the boundary between the Occident and the Orient is set at the *primum mobile*; all that is visible in the cosmos including the celestial spheres is a part of the Occident, because it is still connected with matter, however subtle it may be. The Orient, properly speaking, is above the visible cosmos; it is the world of informal manifestation with its boundary at the heaven of the fixed stars.

In his treatise *al-Qissat al-Ghurbat al-Gharbiyyah*, 'the Story of the Occidental Exile,' in which Suhrawardi seeks to reveal the secrets of the trilogy of ibn Sina the universe becomes a crypt through which the seeker after truth must journey, beginning with this world of matter and darkness into which he has fallen and ending in the Orient of lights, the original home of the soul, which symbolises illumination and spiritual realization. The journey begins at the city of Qairawan in present-day Tunis, located west of the main part of the Islamic world. The disciple and his brother are imprisoned in the city at the bottom of a well which means the depth of matter.

They are the sons of Shaikh Hadi ibn al-Khair al-Yamani, i.e., from the Yaman, which in Arabic means also the right hand and, therefore, symbolically the Orient and is connected traditionally with the wisdom of the Prophet Solomon and the ancient sages as the left is connected with matter and darkness. Above the well is a great castle with many towers, i.e., the world of the elements and the heavens or the faculties of the soul. They will be able to escape only at night and not during

the day which means that man reaches the intelligible or spiritual world only in death, whether this be natural or initiatory and in dream which is a second death. In the well there is such darkness that one cannot see even one's own hands, i.e., matter is so opaque that rarely does light shine through it. Occasionally they receive news from the Yaman which makes them home-sick, meaning that they see the intelligible world during contemplation or in dreams. And so, they set out for their original home.

One clear night an order is brought by the hope from the Governor of the Yaman telling them to begin their journey to their homeland, meaning the reception of a revelation from the intelligible world and the beginning of asceticism. The order also asks them to let go the hem of their dress, i.e., become free from attachment, when they reach the valley of ants, which is the passion of avidity. They are to kill their wives, i.e., passions and then sit in a ship and begin their journey in the *name* of God. Having made their preparation they set not for their pilgrimage to Mount Sinai.

A wave comes between the disciple and the son, meaning that the animal soul is sacrificed. Morning is near, that is, the union of the particular soul with the universal soul is approaching. The hero discovers that the world in which evil takes place, meaning this world, will be overturned and rain and stones, i.e., diseases and moral evils, will descend upon it. Upon reaching a stormy sea he throws in his foster-mother and drowns her, meaning that he even sacrifices his natural soul. As he travels on still in storm, i.e., in the body, he has to cast away his ship in fear of the king above him who collects taxes, meaning death which all mortals must taste. He reaches the Mount

of Gog and Magog, i.e., evil thoughts and love of this world enter his imagination.

The *jinn*, the powers of imagination and meditation, are also before him as well as a spring of running copper which symbolises wisdom. The hero asks the *jinn* to blow upon the copper which thus becomes fiery and from it he builds a dam before Gog and Magog. He takes the carnal soul (*nafs ammarach*) and place it in a cave, or the brain which is the source of this soul. He then cuts the "streams from the liver of the sky," i.e., he stops the power of motion from the brain which is located in the head, the sky of the body. He throws the empyrean heaven so that it covers all the stars, the sun and the moon, meaning all powers of the soul become of one colour and passes by fourteen coffins, the fourteen powers of *ishraqi* psychology and ten tombs, the five external and the five internal senses. Having passed through these stages he discovers the path of God and realizes that it is the right path.

The hero passes beyond the world of matter and reaches a light, the active intellect which is the governor of this world. He places the light in the mouth of a dragon, the world of the elements and passes by it to reach the heavens and beyond them to the signs of the Zodiac which mark the limit of the visible cosmos. But his journey is not yet at an end; he continues even beyond them to the upper heavens. Music is heard from far away and the initiate emerges from the cavern of limitation to the spring of life flowing from a great mountain which is Mount Sinai. In the spring he sees flash that are his brothers; they are those who have reached the end of the spiritual journey.

He begins to climb the mountain and eventually reaches his father, the archangel of

humanity, who shines with a blinding light which nearly burns him. The father congratulates him for having escaped from the prison of Qairawan, but tells him that he must return because he has not yet cast away all bonds. When he returns a second time, he will be able to stay. The father tells him that above them is his father, the universal intellect and beyond him their relatives going back to the Great Ancestor who is pure light. "All perishes except His essence."

From this brief summary we see how *ishraqi* wisdom implies essentially a spiritual realization above and beyond discursive thought. The cosmos becomes transparent before the traveller and interiorised within his being. The degrees of realization from the state of the soul of fallen man to the centre of the soul freed from all limitation corresponds 'horizontally' to the journey from the Occident of matter to the Orient of lights and 'vertically' to the ascent from the earth to the limits of the visible universe and from there, through the world of formless manifestation, to the divine essence.

Hikmat al-Ishraq: *Ishraqi* wisdom is not a systematic philosophy so that its exposition in a systematic fashion is hardly possible. What Suhrawardi says in one text seems at first sight to be contradicted in another work and one has to discover the point of view in each case in order to overcome the external contradictions. In expounding the major points of *ishraqi* wisdom we will, therefore, follow the outlines of *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, the most important text in which this wisdom is expounded, drawing also from the shorter treatises which Suhrawardi wrote as further explanations of his major work.

Hikmat al-Ishraq is the fourth of the great doctrinal works of Suhrawardi the first three

dealing with Aristotelian philosophy which is the necessary pre-requisite and foundation for illuminative wisdom. It deals with the philosophy of Ishraq itself which is written for those who are not satisfied with theoretical philosophy alone but search for the light of gnosis. The book which in the beauty of style is a masterpiece among Arabic philosophical texts was composed during a few months in 582/1186 and, as Suhrawardi himself writes at the end of the book, revealed to him suddenly by the Spirit; he adds that only a person illuminated by the Spirit can hope to understand it. The work consists of a prologue and two sections: the first concerning logic and the criticism of certain points of Peripatetic philosophy and the second composed of five chapters (*maqalat*), dealing with light, ontology, angelology, physics, psychology and, finally, eschatology and spiritual union.

In the section on logic he follows mostly the teaching of Aristotle but criticises the Aristotelian definition. According to the stagirite, a logical definition consists of genus plus differentia. Suhrawardi remarks that the distinctive attribute of the object which is defined will give us no knowledge of that thing if that attribute cannot be predicated of any other thing. A definition in *ishraqi* wisdom is the summation of the qualities in a particular thing which when added together exist only in that thing.

Suhrawardi criticises the ten categories of Aristotle as being limited and confined only to this universe. Beyond this world there is an indefinite number of other categories which the Aristotelian classification does not include. As for the nine categories of accidents, he reduces them to four by considering relation, time, posture, place, action and passivity as the one

single category of relation (*nisbah*) to which are added the three categories of quality, quantity and motion.

Suhrawardi alters several points of Aristotelian philosophy in order to make it a worthy basis for the doctrine of illumination. A major point of difference between the Ishraqis and the Muslim followers of Aristotle (*Mash'is*), also a central issue of Islamic philosophy, is that of the priority of Being or existence (*wujud*) to essence (*mahiyyah*). The term *mahiyyah* in Arabic is composed of *ma* meaning 'what' and *hiyyah* derived from the word *huwa* ('it'). It is the answer given to the question 'What is it?'. It is used to denote the essence of anything whether the existence of that thing is certain or doubtful, while the word *dhat* is used to denote the essence of something which possesses some degree of being.

The *Masha'is* like the Sufis consider Being to be principal and *mahiyyah* or essence to be accidental with respect to it. Suhrawardi objects to this view and writes that existence does not have any external reality outside the intellect which abstracts it from objects. For example, the existence of iron is precisely its essence and not a separate reality. The *Mash'is* consider existence to have an external reality and believe that the intellect abstracts the limitation of a being which then becomes its essence.

The argument of Suhrawardi against this view is that existence can be neither substance nor accident and, therefore, has no external reality. For if it is an accident, it needs something to which it is an accident. If this something is other than existence, it proves what we sought, i.e.,; this something is without existence. If existence is a substance, then it cannot be accident, although we say accidents 'are'. Therefore, existence is neither substance

nor accident and consequently can exist only in the intellect.

The issue involved, which is essential to the understanding of all medieval and ancient philosophy, is the relation between Being and existence, on the one hand and the archetypes and limitations on the other. The Masha'is and Sufis consider the universe to consist of degrees of Being and limitations which distinguish various beings from one another. The Sufis, particularly those of the school of ibn 'Arabi who are concerned essentially with metaphysical doctrines, transpose these limitations into the principal domain and consider them the same as the archetypes or the Platonic ideas.

The traditional interpreters of Shaikh al-Ishraq interpret his doctrine in a way which does not destroy the principality of Being, but rather subordinates the existence of a thing which is temporary and 'accidental' to its archetype which with respect to the terrestrial existence of the thing is principal. In other words, essence (*mahiyyah*) is subordinated to Being (*wujud*), if we understand by this term Being *qua* Being; but as archetype, it is superior to particular existence which is an 'exteriorisation' of Being.

The Ishraqis believe in fact that it is useless to discuss about the principality of *wujud* and *mahiyyah*, of Being and essence, because the essence or *mahiyyah* is itself a degree of Being. The Ishraqis differ from the Masha'is in that the former considers the world to be actual in its being and potential in its qualities and attributes and the latter believes, on the contrary, that the world is potential in its being and actual in its qualities and perfections. Although in his *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, Suhrawardi does not speak of the necessary and possible

beings, in many of his other treatises like the *Partau-Nameh*, *I'tiqad al-Hukama'* and *Yazdan Shinakht*, he speaks of the *masha'i* categories of Necessary Being (*wajib al-wujud*), possible being (*mumkin al-wujud*), and impossible being.

Another important criticism of the Aristotelians by Suhrawardi is that of the doctrine of hylomorphism, of form and matter, which is the foundation of Aristotle's philosophy. As we shall see later, Suhrawardi considers bodies to be darkness and transforms the Aristotelian forms into the guardian lights or angels which govern each being. He defines a body as an external, simple substance (*jauhar basit*) which is capable of accepting conjunction and separation.

This substance in itself, in its own essence, is called body (*jism*), but from the aspect of accepting the form of species (*surah nau'iyah*) it is called the *materia prima* or *hyle* (*hayula*). He also differs from the Aristotelians in defining the place (*makan*) of the body not as the internal surface of the body which contains it but as the abstract dimension (*bu'd majarrad*) in which the body is placed. Suhrawardi follows ibn Sina and other Masha'is in rejecting the possibility of a void and an indivisible particle or atom and in considering the body to be indefinitely divisible even if this division cannot be carried out physically.

Other elements of Peripatetic philosophy which Suhrawardi condemns include its doctrine of the soul and arguments for its subsistence which he believes to be weak and insufficient; its rejection of the Platonic ideas which are the corner-stone of *ishraqi* wisdom and upon the reality of which Suhrawardi insists in nearly every doctrinal work; and its theory of vision. In his works Suhrawardi insists on the perishable nature of the body and its being

a prison into which the soul has fallen. In the *Bustan al-Qulub*, MS., Teheran Sipahsalar Library, 2911, he gives as argument for the permanence of the soul and its spiritual nature, the fact that the body of man changes its material every few years while man's identity remains unchanged. The *masha'i* doctrine of the soul is essentially one of defining its faculties; the *ishraqi* view is to find the way by which the soul can escape its bodily prison.

This last criticism is of interest in that Suhrawardi rejects both of the theories of vision commonly held during the Middle Ages. Regarding the Aristotelian theory that forms of objects are imprinted upon the pupil of the eye and then reach the *sensus communis* and finally the soul, Suhrawardi asks how the imprinting of large objects like the sky upon this small pupil in the eye is possible. Since man does not reason at the time of vision which is an immediate act, even of large objects like the sky upon this small pupil in the eye is possible. Since man does not reason at the time of vision which is an immediate act. Even if large objects were imprinted in smaller proportions, one could not know of the size of the object from its image.

The mathematicians and students of optics usually accepted another theory according to which a conic ray of light leaves the eye with the head of the cone in the eye and the base at the object to be seen. Suhrawardi attacks this view also by saying that this light is either an accident or a substance. If it is an accident it cannot be transmitted; therefore, it must be a substance. As a substance. Its motion is dependent either on our will or it is natural. If dependent on our will, we should be able to gaze at an object and not see it, which is contrary to experience; or if it has natural

motion, it should move only in one direction like vapour which moves upward, ore stone which moves downward and we should be able to see only in one direction which is also contrary to experience. Therefore, he rejects both views.

According to Suhrawardi, vision can occur only of a lighted object. When man sees this object, his soul surrounds it and is illuminated by its light This illumination (*ishraq*) of the soul (*nafs*) in presence of the object is vision. Therefore, even sensible vision partakes of the illuminative character of all knowledge.

With this criticism of the Aristotelian (*masha'i*) philosophy, Suhrawardi turns to the exposition of the essential elements of *ishraqi* wisdom itself beginning with a chapter on light, or one might say the theophany of light, which is the most characteristic and essential element of the teachings of this school. Light (*nur*), the essence of which lies above comprehension, needs no definition because it is the most oblivious of all things. Its nature is to manifest itself; it is being, as its absence darkness (*zulmah*), is nothingness. All reality consists of degrees of light and darkness As the quotations we have already cited demonstrate, Suhrawardi insists that he is not dealing with the dualism of the Zorastrians. Rather, he is explaining the mysterious polarisation of reality in this symbolism,. Rather, he is explaining the mysterious polarisation of reality in this symbolism. The *Ishraqis* usually interpret light as Being and darkness as determination by ideas (*mahiyyah*). They say that all ancient sages taught this same truth but in different languages. Hermes spoke of Osiris and Isis; Osiris or the sun symbolises Being and Isis or the moon, *mahiyyah*. They interpret the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers in the same fashion.

Suhrawardi calls the Absolute Reality the infinite and limitless divine essence, the Light of lights (*Nur al-anwar*). The whole universe, the 18,000 worlds of light and darkness which Suhrawardi mentions in his *Bustan al-Qulub*, are degrees of irradiation and effusion of this Primordial Light which shines everywhere while remaining immutable and for ever the same.

Suhrawardi 'divides' reality according to the types of light and darkness. If light is subsistent by itself, it is called substantial light (*nur jauhari*) or incorporeal light (*nur mujarrad*); if it depends for its subsistence on other than itself, it is called accidental light (*nur 'ardi*). Likewise, if darkness is subsistent by itself it is called obscurity (*ghasaq*) and if it depends on other than itself for its subsistence it is called form (*hai'ah*). This division is also based on the degrees of comprehension. A being is either aware of itself or ignorant of it. If it is aware of itself and subsists by itself, it is incorporeal light, God, the angels, archetypes and the human soul. If a thing has need of a being other than itself to become aware of itself, it is accidental light like the stars and fire. If it is ignorant of itself but subsists by itself, it is obscurity like all natural bodies and if it is ignorant by itself and subsists by other than itself, it is form like colours and smells.

All beings are the illumination (*ishraq*) of the Supreme Light which leaves its vicegerent in each domain, the sun in the heavens, fire among the elements and the lordly light (*nur ispahbad*) in the human soul. The soul of man is essentially composed of light; that is why man becomes joyous at the sight of the light of the sun or fire and fears darkness. All the causes of the universe return ultimately to light; all motion in the world, whether it be of the heavens or of the elements, is caused by various

regent lights (*nur mudabbir*) which are ultimately nothing but illuminations of the Light of lights.

Between the Supreme Light and the obscurity of bodies there must be various stages in which the Supreme Light weakens gradually to reach the darkness of this world. These stages are the orders of angels, personal and universal at the same time, who govern all things. In enumerating these angelic orders Suhrawardi relies largely upon Zoroastrian angelology and departs completely from The Aristotelian and Avicennian schemes which limit the intelligences or angels to ten to correspond to the celestial spheres of Ptolemaic astronomy. Moreover, in the Avicennian scheme, the angels or intellects are limited to three intelligible 'dimensions' which constitute their being, namely, the intellection of their principle, of the necessity of their existence and of the constingence of their essence (*mahiyyah*). Suhrawardi begins with this scheme as a point of departure but adds many other 'dimensions' such as domination (*qahr*) and love (*mahabbah*), independence and dependence, illumination (*ishraq*) and contemplation (*shuhud*) which open a new horizon beyond the Aristotelian universe of the medieval philosophers.

Suhrawardi calls the first effusion of the Light of lights (*nur al-anwar* or *nur al-'zam*) the archangel *Bahman* or the nearest light (*nur al-aqrab*). This light contemplates the Light of lights and, since no veil exists in between, receives direct illumination from it. Through this illumination, a new triumphal light (*nur al-qahir*) comes into being which receives two illuminations, one directly from the Supreme Light and the other from the first light. The process of effusion continues in the same

manner with the third light receiving illumination four times, twice from the light preceding it, once from the first light and once from the Supreme Light; and the fourth light eight times, four times from the light preceding it, twice from the second light, once from the first light and once from the Light of lights or Supreme Light. In this manner the order of archangels, which Suhrawardi calls the longitudinal order (*tabaqat al-tul*) or 'world of mothers' (*al-ummahat*) and in which the number of archangels far exceeds the number of intelligences in Aristotelian cosmology, comes into being.

Usually in medieval cosmology the elements, the acceptors of form, are called the 'mothers' and the celestial orbits, the givers of form, the 'fathers.' The term 'mothers' used by Suhrawardi to designate the archangel world should not, therefore, be confused with the elements.

Each higher light has domination (*qahr*) over the lower and each lower light, love (*mahabbah*) for the higher. Moreover, each light is a purgatory or veil (*barzakh*) between the light above and the light below. In this manner the supreme order of angels is illuminated from the Light of lights which has love only for Itself because the beauty and perfection of Its essence are evident to Itself.

The supreme hierarchy of being or the 'longitudinal' order gives rise to a new polarisation of Being. Its positive or masculine aspect such as dominance, contemplation and independence gives rise to a new order of angels called the latitudinal order (*tabaqat al-'ard*) the members of which are no longer generators of one another; rather, each is integral in itself and is, therefore, called *mutakafiyah*. Suhrawardi identifies these angels with the

Platonic ideas and refers to them as the lords of the species (*arbab al-anwa'*) or the species of light (*anwa' nuriyyah*). Each species in the world has as its archetype one of these angels, or to express it in another manner, each being in this world is the theurgy (*tilism*) of one of these angels which are, therefore, called the lords of theurgy (*arbab al-tilism*).

Water is the theurgy of its angel *khurdad*, minerals of *shahrwar*, vegetables of *murdad*, fire of *urdibihisht*, etc. Suhrawardi uses the names of the *Amshaspands* (*Amesha Spentas*), the separate powers of Ahura Mazda in Zoroastrianism, to designate these archetypes and in this way unites Zoroastrian angelology with the Platonic ideas. These longitudinal angels are not however, in any way abstract or mental objects, as sometimes the Platonic ideas are interpreted to be. They are, on the contrary, concrete as angelic hypostases and appear abstract only from man's point of view who, because of his imprisonment in the cage of his senses, considers only the object of the senses to be concrete. These angels are the real governors of this world who guide all of its movements and direct all of its changes. They are at once the intelligence and principles of the being of things.

From the negative and feminine aspect of the longitudinal order of arch-angels, that is, love, dependence and reception of illumination, there comes into being the heaven of fixed stars which these angels share in common. The stars are the crystallisation into subtle matter of that aspect of the archangels which is 'Non-Being' or removal from the Light of lights. This 'materialisation' marks the boundary between the Orient of pure lights or the archangelic world which lies beyond the visible heavens and the Occident which is comprised of

increasing condensations of matter from the luminous heavens to the dense earthly bodies.

The latitudinal order of angels or the archetypes gives rise to another order of angels through which they govern the species. Suhrawardi calls this intermediary order the regent lights (*anwar al-mudabirah*) or sometimes *anwar isphabad* using a term from ancient Persian chivalry. It is this intermediary order which moves the heavenly spheres the motion of which is by love rather than by nature and which governs the species as the agent of the archetypes for which the species are theurgies (*tilismat*) or 'icorns' (*asnam*).

The *isphavad* lights are also the centres of men's souls, each light being the angel of some individual person. The governing light of the heavens moves each heaven by means of the planet attached to it, which is like the organ of the light, Suhrawardi calls this mover *hurakhsh* which is the Pahlawi name for the sun, the greatest of the heavenly lights. Suhrawardi, *Opera* Vol. II, p. 149.

Regarding the motion of each heaven, Suhrawardi writes, "Its illumination is the cause of its motion and its motion is the cause of another illumination; the persistence of the illuminations is the cause of the persistence of motion and the persistence of both the cause of the persistence of the events in this world," Each being in this world, including man, is connected to the Supreme Light not only through the intermediary angels but also directly. This light which connects each being directly to the Divine Light and places that being in the hierarchy of beings at a place proper to it is called *khurrah*. In ancient Persia it was believed that when a new king was to be chosen, the royal *kurrah* would descend upon him and distinguish him from the other

pretenders to the throne. As for mankind itself, its angel is Gabriel. Humanity is an image of this archangel who is the mediator between man and the angelic world and the focus in which the lights of the Orient are concentrated. It is also the instrument of all knowledge inasmuch as it is the means by which man's soul is illuminated.

This archangel as the Holy Spirit is also the first and supreme intelligence and the first as well as the last prophet, Muhammad (upon whom be peace), the archetype of man (*rubb al-nau' al-insan*) and the supreme revealed of divine knowledge.

The physics and psychology of *Hikmat al-Ishraq* treat of the world of bodies and the world of souls, along with the world of the intelligences or angels, comprise the totality of this universe. As already mentioned, Suhrawardi does not divide bodies into form and matter. Rather, his division of bodies is based on the degree in which they accept light. All physical bodies are either simple or compound; the simple bodies are divided into three classes: those that prevent light from entering (*hajiz*), those which permit the entrance of light (*latif*) and those which permit light to enter in various degrees (*muqtasid*) and which are themselves divided into several stages. The heavens are made of the first category in the luminous state.

As for the elements below the heavens, they consist of earth belonging to the first category, water to the second and air to the third. Compound bodies belong likewise to one of the above categories, depending on which element predominates in them. All bodies are essentially purgatories or isthmus (*barzakh*) between various degrees of light by which they are illuminated and which they in turn reflect. Suhrawardi rejects the view that the change of

bodies is due to particles of one element entering into those of another. As a reason against this view he cites the example of a jug full of water that has been heated, i.e., according to this view particles of fire have entered into it. The volume of the water, however, does not change since it does not spill over; therefore, particles of fire cannot have entered into it. Qualitative change is due rather to the coming into being of a quality which is intermediate between the qualities of the original bodies and which is shared by all the particles of the new compound. For example, when water is heated a new quality between the cold of the water and the heat of the fire is brought into being by the light governing the change.

In the explanation of meteorological phenomena, Suhrawardi follows closely the teachings of Ibn Sina and Aristotle in accepting the exhalation and vapour theory. He differs, however, from them in the importance he attaches to light as the cause of all these changes. For example, that heat which is responsible for evaporation is nothing but one of the effects of reflected light. All changes in fact which one observes in the world are caused by various hierarchies of light.

Suhrawardi gives a different meaning to causality than the Aristotelians' whose four causes which he does not accept. For Suhrawardi all these causes are really nothing but light, i.e., everything is made of light and by light and is given a form by the archangelic light whom he calls the 'giver of forms' (*wahib al-suwar*) and seeks the Light of lights as its goal and end.

The elements are powerless before the heavens, the heavens are dominated by the souls, the souls by the intelligences, the intelligences by the universal intellect and the

universal intellect by the Light of lights. The elements or simple bodies combine to form compounds which comprise the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms, each of which is dominated by a particular light or angel. All that exists in the mineral kingdom is 'lighted body' (*barzakh nuriyyah*) the permanence of which is like that of the heavens. Gold and various jewels like rubies make man happy because of the light within them which is akin to the soul of man. This light within the minerals is governed by *isfandarmudh* which is the master of theurgy for earthy substances.

With greater refinement of the mixture of the elements, plants and animals come into being having their own faculties and powers which are so many 'organs' of the light governing them. In higher animals and in man who is the most complete terrestrial being these faculties appear in their perfection. Man as the microcosm contains in himself the complete image of the universe and his body is the gate of life of all elemental bodies. This body in turn is the theurgy for the *ispahbad* light which governs each man.

All the faculties of the soul are aspects of the light which shines upon all elements of the body and illuminates the powers of imagination and memory for which it is the source. This light is connected with the body by means of the animal soul (*ruh hayawaniyyah*) the seat of which is in the liver and leaves the body for its original home in the angelic world as soon as death destroys the equilibrium of the bodily elements. It is the love (*mahabbah*) of the light which creates the power of desire as it is its domination (*qahr*) which brings about anger.

Suhrawardi draws heavily upon the psychology of Ibn Sina for the enumeration of the faculties of the various souls. It may be

said in fact that with a few changes his classification is the same as that of his famous predecessor, despite the different role which the intellect or light plays in governing and illuminating the various faculties in each case.

Man, besides the above faculties and the five external senses, possesses five internal sense which serve as a bridge between the physical and the intelligible worlds and have their counterpart in the marocismic order. These senses consist of:

Sensus communis (hiss mushtarik)—The centre in which all the data of the external sense are collected. It is located in the front of the frontal cavity of the brain.

Fantasy (*khayal*) — The place of storage for the *sensus communis*. It is located in the back of the frontal cavity.

Apprehension (*wahm*) — Governs sensible things by what does not belong to the senses. It is located in the middle cavity.

Imagination (*mutakhayyilah*)—Analyses, synthesises and governs forms and is sometimes identified with apprehension. It is located in the middle cavity.

Memory (*hafizah*)—The place of storage for apprehension. It is located in the back of the middle cavity.

These faculties are crowned by the intellectual soul (*nafs natiqah*) which belongs to the spiritual world and which through the network of these faculties, becomes for a period attached to the body and imprisoned in the fortress of nature. Often it is so lost in this new and temporary habitat that it forgets its original home and can be re-awakened only by death or ascetic practices. Suhrawardi, *Hayakil al-Nur*, Sections 6 and 7. In certain other writings Suhrawardi avers the intelligences

the intelligences the intelligences that the light of each man is created with his body but survives after it. By creation, however, Suhrawardi means essentially 'individualisation' and 'actualisation' rather than creation in the ordinary sense. There is no doubt that his basic teaching is that the spirit or soul comes from the world of light and ultimately returns to it.

The last section of the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* concerning eschatology and spiritual union outlines precisely the way by which the spirit returns to its original abode, the ways by which the *catharsis* of the intellect is achieved. Every soul, in whatever degree of perfection it might, seeks the Light of lights and its joy is in being illuminated by it. Suhrawardi goes so far as to say that he who has not tasted the joy of the illumination of the victoria lights has tasted no joy at all. Every joy in the world is a reflection of the joy of gnosis and the ultimately felicity of the soul is to reach toward the angelic lights by purification and ascetic practices. After death the soul of those who have reached some measure of purity departs to the world of archetypes above the visible heavens and participates in the sounds, sights and tastes of that world which are the principles of terrestrial forms.

On the contrary those soul has been tarnished by the darkness of evil and ignorance (*ashab al-shaqawah*) depart for the world of inverted forms (*suwar mu'allaqah*) which lies in the labyrinth of fantasy, the dark world of the devils and the *jinn*. This is properly speaking the world of the unconscious which has become the subject of study for modern psychologists. It should be clearly distinguished from the world of archeypes which, rather than the 'collective unconscious', is the source of symbols. As for the gnostics or the *theosophos*

(*muta'allihin*) who have already reached the degree of sanctity in this life, their soul departs to a world above the angels.

After leaving the body, the soul may be in several states which Suhrawardi outlines as follows. Either the soul is simple and pure like that of children and fools who are attracted neither to this world nor to the next. Or it is simple but impure and as such is attracted more to this worlds, so that upon death it suffers greatly by being separated from the object of its desire; gradually, however, it forgets its worldly love and becomes simple as in the first case, Or, it is not simple but perfect and pure and upon death joins the intelligible world to which it is similar and as an undescribable joy in the contemplation of God. Or, it is complete but impure, so that upon death it suffers greatly both for separation from the body and from the First Source; gradually, however, the pains caused by alienation from this world cease and the soul enjoys spiritual delights.

Or the soul is incomplete but pure, i.e., it has a love for perfection but has not yet realized it; upon death therefore, it suffers ceaselessly although the love of this world gradually dies away. Finally, the soul is incomplete and impure, so that it suffer the greatest pain. Man should, therefore, spend the few days he has here on earth to transform the precious jewel of his soul into he image of an angel and not into that of an animal. The highest station to be reached by the souls is that of the prophets (*nafs qudsiyyah*) who perceive the forms of the universal or archetypes naturally. They know all things without the assistance of teachers or books. They hear the sounds of the heavens, i.e., the archetypes of earthly sounds and not just vibrations of the air and see the intelligible forms. Their souls and those of great saints

also reach such degree of putty that they can influence the world of the elements as the ordinary soul influences the body. Since human soul are brought into being by the celestial souls they are able to acquire the knowledge which these heavenly souls posses when they are put before them as a mirror. In the dreams of ordinary men this effect occurs occasionally since the external and internal senses which are the veils of the soul are partially lifted. In the case of prophets and saints such effects occur in awakening, i.e., they always reflect the intelligible world in the mirror of their souls so that they have knowledge of the unmanifested world even when awake. They can even make the archetypes substst. By will, that is, give them existence.

The knowledge of the prophets is the archetype of all knowledge, In his nocturnal Ascension (*mi'raj*) the prophet Muhammad — upon whom be peace—journeyed through all the states of being beyond the universe to the Divine Presence or microcosmically through his soul and intellect to the Divine Self. The journey to the spring of life which lies at the boundary of the visible heavens symbolises the journey through the soul (*nafs*), while the journey to the cosmic mountain *Qaf* from which the spring flows and the ascent of this mountain which lies above the visible heavens symbolise the inner journey to the centre of one's being. In his *Mi'raj-Nameh*, Suhrawardi describes the symbolic meaning of the nocturnal Ascension of the Prophet which is the model that all Sufis seem to imitate.

This journey through the hierarchy of Being symbolises the degrees of knowledge which the initiate gains as he travels on the Path in imitation of the bringer of revelation who has opened the way for him. A prophet is

absolutely necessary as a guide for the gnostic and as a bringer of Law for society. Man needs a society in order to survive and society needs law and order and, therefore, prophets to bring news of the other world and to establish harmony among men. The best man is he who knows and the best of those who know are the prophets and the best prophets are those who have brought a revelation (*mursilin*) and the best of them are the prophets whose revelation has spread over the face of the earth, and the completion and perfection of the prophetic cycle is the Prophet Muhammad—upon whom be peace—who is the seal of prophethood.

The Initiatory Narratives: In a series of treatises written in beautiful Persian prose, Suhrawardi expounds another aspect of *ishraqi* wisdom which is the complement of the metaphysical doctrine. These works which we have called initiatory narratives are symbolic stories depicting the journey of the soul to God much like certain medieval European romances and poems such as *Parsifal* and the *Divine Comedy* although of shorter length. Unfortunately, in this limited space we cannot deal with all of these narratives each of which treats of a different aspect of the spiritual journey using various traditional symbols such as the cosmic mountain, the griffin, the fountain of life and the lover and the beloved. Some of the more important of these narratives are the *Risalah fi al-Mi'raj* (The Treatise on the Nocturnal Journey), *Risalah fi Halat al-Tufuliyyah* (Treatise on the Nocturnal Journey), *Risalah fi Halat al-Tufuliyyah* (Treatise on the State of Childhood), *Ruzi ba Jama'at-i Sufiyan* (A Day with the Community of Sufis), *Awaz-i Par-i Jibra'il* (The Chant of the Wing of Gabriel), *'Aql-i Surkh* (The Red Intellect), *Safir-i Simurgh* (The Song of the Griffin), *Lughat-i Muran* (The Language of Termites), *Risalat al-*

Tair (The Treatise on the Birds) and *Risalah fi Haqiqat al-'Ishq* (Treatise on the Reality of Love). The titles alone indicate some of the rich symbolism which Suhrawardi uses to describe the spiritual journey.

Each narrative depicts a certain aspect of the spiritual life as lived and practised by sages and saints. Sometimes theory and spiritual experience are combined as in the *Awaz-i Par-i Jibra'il* where in the first part of the vision the disciple meets the active intellect, the sage who symbolizes the 'prophet' within himself who comes from the 'land of nowhere' (*na-kuja-abad*) and asks certain questions about various aspects of the doctrine. In the second part, however, the tomb changes; the hero asks to be taught the Word of God and after being instructed in the esoteric meaning of letters and words, i.e., *jafr*, he learns that God has certain major words like the angels, as well as the supreme Word which is to other words as the sun is to the stars.

He learns furthermore that man is himself a Word of God and it is through His Word that man returns to the Creator. He, like other creatures of this world, is a chant of the wing of Gabriel which spreads from the world of light to that of darkness. This world is a shadow of his left wing as the world of light is a reflection of his right wing. It is by the Word, by the sound of the wing of Gabriel, that man has come into existence and it is by the Word that he can return to the principal state, the divine origin, from which he issued forth.

The Ishraqi Tradition: The influence of Suhrawardi has been as great in the Islamic world, particularly in Shi'ism, as it has been small in the West. His works were not translated into Latin so that his name hardly ever appears along with those of ibn Sina and ibn Rushd as

masters of philosophy. But in the East from the moment of his death, his genius in establishing a new school of traditional wisdom was recognised and he was to exercise the greatest influence in Shi'ism. With the weakening of Aristotelianism in the sixth/twelfth century the element that came to replace it and to dominate Islamic intellectual life was a combination of the intellectual Sufism of Ibn 'Arabi and the *ishraqi* wisdom of Suhrawardi.

On his return to Baghdad, the *shaikh* was greeted by immense expressions of sympathy and processions in his honour, just as he had experience during his journey. But al-Suhrawardi's new ostentatious pomp and his breach of the rules of a Sufi way of life was not agreeable to the caliph, who withdrew from him the direction of the *ribats* and banned him from preaching (cf. Sibṭ Ibn al-Djawzi, *Mir'at*, fol. 306b, which is lacking in the Haydarabad edition; Ibn Kathir, *Bidaya*, xiii, 51–2). The event caused quite a public stir in Baghdad. Only the *shaikh's* inner repentance, his renouncing property and money, and his complete return to the ideal of a Sufi way of life brought about the lifting of the measures taken against him and reconciliation with the caliph. Never again was a cloud cast upon their friendship.

Ten years later, when the 'Abbasid caliphate, through the politics of the Khwarazm Shah, found itself in a difficult position both militarily and constitutionally, al-Suhrawardi was entrusted with a second important diplomatic mission. In order to defend the caliphate, al-Nasir sent him in 614/1217–8 to Hamadan, where the Khwarazm Shah 'Ala al-Din Muhammad II, who was already marching against Baghdad, gave him a chilly reception in his state tent. The Khwarazm Shah was not prepared to accept al-Nasir as Caliph.

On the decisive question, whether it was permitted to the caliph, by reason of the public interest, to keep members of the 'Abbasid dynasty, namely his own son and the latter's family, in prison, or whether the *hadith* should be applied according to which no harm could be caused to descendants of al-'Abbas b. 'Abd al-Muttalib, al-Suhrawardi did not reach agreement (cf. Sibṭ Ibn al-Djawzi, *Mir'at*, viii, 582–3; Nasawi, *Sira* 51–2; Ibn Kathir, *Bidaya*, xiii, 76); the mission failed.

On the other hand, al-Suhrawardi's mission in 618/1221 to the new Saldjuk sultan of Rum, 'Ala' al-Din Kaykubad, was successful. In the caliph's name the *shaikh* brought the sultan the tokens of rulership: the diploma with the titles and insignia of a sultan and of the delegated state power over the Islamic regions of Asia Minor, the ruler's robe of honour, the sword and the signet ring. Al-Suhrawardi was also successful in recruiting members for the caliph's *futuwwa*, which was joined in Konya by Kaykubad and many officials and scholars. Al-Suhrawardi led the initiation ceremonies. The extraordinary friendly atmosphere is described by Ibn Bibi in his chronicle of the Saldjuks. According to Franz Taeschner, al-Suhrawardi's political and Sufi activities in Asia Minor could be interpreted as a secession from the caliph's *futuwwa*.

On the basis of linguistic peculiarities in one of al-Suhrawardi's Persian epistles, e.g., because he uses *akhi* instead of *futuwwatdar*, and because the usual classification into *sayfi* and *kawli*, common in the organisation of the *akhis* as well as the term *tarbiya* are used, Taeschner surmised that the *futuwwa* represented by al-Suhrawardi was not identical with that of the caliph, but that there had been close relations between the *akhis* of Anatolia and Persia and even a *futuwwa* of al-

Suhrawardi's own and Breebaart (*Turkish futuwah guilds*, 109–39), on the other hand, have shown that a consistent terminology was not yet common in Anatolia in the 7th/13th century. It can be assumed that there were strong rivalries within Sufism, the *futuwwa* and the *akhis* in Anatolia.

Besides, the Anatolian *akhis* did not form a definitely constituted professional organisation, as has been thought in the past; on the basis of their ethical principles they can rather be considered as a widely-spread *tarika* (cf. Koprulu, *Ilk mutasavviflar*, 212–13). A comparative study of al-Suhrawardi's terminology and that of other writers, including of anonymous contemporary authors, is still lacking.

Just as al-Suhrawardi spread the caliph's 'purified *futuwwa*', he enjoyed support during his journeys by followers or his own Sufi doctrine and his theological view of the world. He himself considered the latter as wisdom within the Prophet's inheritance, as a complete representation of all branches of religious knowledge and standards of behaviour. Yet there is also, especially in al-Suhrawardi's works of his last years, a mixture of traditionalist Sufi concepts with heterogeneous thoughts which can be traced back to gnostic and Neo-Platonic elements. A conclusive investigation is still lacking. Al-Suhrawardi's numerous disciples and friends spread his doctrine mainly in Syria, Asia Minor, Persia and North India. His pupils—and not he himself as has been thought for a long time—founded the Suhrawardiyya, the famous order named after him. Next to the Cishtiyya, the Kalandariyya and the Nakshbandiyya, the Suhrawardiyya became one of the leading Islamic orders in India, where it still exists.

Among the most successful propagators of al-Suhrawardi's doctrine were his disciples 'Ali b. Buzghush (d. 678/1279–80 in Shiraz).

These two masters who lived within a generation of each other came from the two ends of the Islamic world to Syria, one to die in Damascus and the other in Aleppo and it was from this central province of Islam that their doctrines were to spread throughout the Muslim East, particularly in Persia. The main link between these two great masters of gnosis was Qutb al-Din Shirazi who was, on the one hand, the disciple of Sadr al-Din Qunawi, himself a disciple and the main expositor of the teachings of ibn 'Arabi in the East and, on the other, the commentator of *hikmat al-Ishraq*. This commentary, finished in 694/1295, appears on the margin of the standard edition of *hikmat al-Ishraq* which is studied in all the theological schools in present-day Persia. It has been the means by which the doctrines of Suhrawardi have been interpreted through the centuries.

Throughout the last seven centuries the tradition of *Ishraq* has continued especially in Persia where it played a major role in the survival of Shi'ism during the Safawid period. Among the most important commentaries written on Suhrawardi's works are those of Shams al-Din Shahrazuri and Qutb al-Din Shirazi in the seventh/thirteenth century, Wudud Tabrizi in the tenth/sixteenth century and Mulla Sadra in the eleventh/seventeenth century on the *Hikmat al-Ishraq*, the commentaries of Shahazuri, ibn Kammunah and 'Allamah Hilli in the seventh and eighth/thirteenth and fourteenth centuries on the *Talwihat* and the commentaries of Jalal al-Din Dawwani in the ninth/fifteenth century and Maula 'Abd al-Razzaq Lahiji in the eleventh/seventeenth century on the *Hayakil al-Nur*. These

commentaries and many others which we have not been able to mention here present a veritable treasure of *ishraqi* wisdom which has influenced so many philosophers, theologians and gnostics from Khwajah Naswir al-Din Tusi and Dawwani to Mir Damad, Mulla Sadra, Shaikh Ahmad Ahsa'i and Haji Mulla Hadi Sabziwari.

Works: Al-Suhrawardi left behind a sizeable number of writings, in which all traditions of classical Islamic mysticism and religious sciences represented.

1. *'Awarif al-ma'arif* is the title of his main work. It is a famous and comprehensive handbook (*vade-mecum*) for Sufis, which has influenced permanently the thoughts of millions of believers and which is still used today. In this work were incorporated the older Sufi literature, the *tafsir* of Sahl al-Tustari, the *Haka'ik al-tafsir* of Abu 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, and the handbooks of Abu Nasr al-Sarradj of Abu Talib al-Makki, of Abu Bakr al-Kalabadhi and other Sufi *tabakat* literature and commentaries on the Kur'ân. The themes treated comprise in 63 chapters the whole of Sufi way of life, the relation of the novice to the *shaikh*, the latter's tasks, a human being's self-knowledge, the revelations of the Sufis on this point and the explanation of what happens when one is in the mystical 'state' (*hal*) and when in the 'station' (*makam*).

It is not known when the *'Awarif* was composed, but the *terminus ad quem* is 612/1215–16 (cf. Hartmann, *Bemerkungen*, 124–5), and thus it is certain that al-Suhrawardi wrote his work at a period in which his theoretical epistles on *futuwwa* also came into being. Persian translation and commentaries of the *'Awarif* were already made during the author's lifetime. The most important basis for the

continuation of al-Suhrawardi's thoughts in the Persian-speaking world was the *Misbah al-hidaya wa-miftah al-kifaya* by 'Izz al-Din Mahmud b. 'Ali-i Kashani (d. 735/1334–5). This work contains most of the doctrines of the *'Awarif*, but adds personal ideas (Eng. tr. by H. Will before Clarke, printed as a supplement to his translation of the *Diwan* of Hafiz, Calcutta 1891). There still is no critical edition of the *'Awarif*. The best-known editions are those of Cairo 1358/1939 (printed in the margin of al-Ghazali's *Ihya' 'ulum al-din*) and of Beirut 1966, but both are defective. The partial edition of Cairo 1971 contains only chs. 1–21 and is based on later manuscripts. In his German translation (*Die Gaben der Erkenntnisse*, Wiesbaden 1978), Richard Gramlich has corrected the mistakes of the existing editions by adducing better variants, thus providing for the first time a reliable basis for the text. There are several Turkish translations, the last one being Istanbul 1990.

2 *Rashf al-nasa'ih al-imaniyya wa-kashf al-fada'ih al-yunaniyya* (Reisulkuttab 465, Koprulu 728) is a polemic against the arguments of the apologetic-dialectical theology (*kalam*), against Islamic philosophy and its ancient origins. In this work, composed in 621/1224, the author, already aged and almost blind, reveals to what extent his theological-mystical thinking had developed. The *'Awarif al-ma'arif* was still completely grounded in the Shafi'i-Ash'ari orthodoxy, but the works of his old age, especially the *Rashf al-masa'ih*, show concepts and borrowings from the tradition of his intellectual adversaries, e.g., from the *fulasifa* on one hand, and from the refutation of the latter derived from the (crypto) Isma'ili viewpoint of the heresiographer Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Karim al-Shahrastani on the other. In the *Rashf*, al-Shahrastani's theology has become

the basis of a peculiar concept of creation and of anthropology.

This doctrine can be followed far back in Islamic gnosis, e.g., the myth of the cosmic marriage between spirit and soul as the starting-point of the origin of the universe, the participation of earthly man in the universal spirit and the universal soul, the world as macranthropos, man as a microcosmos, the classification of the strata of the earth in *djism* and *djirm*.

Al-Suhrawardi adopts other ideas which he believed he was refuting: he draws up a hierarchical series of creatures which emanate from the primordial creatures with the help of God's command (*amr*). This creature he calls 'the mighty spirit' (*al-ruh al-a'zam*). It is identical with the *prima causa* of the philosophers, and it is 'One' (*wahid*), just like God. While God is above existence (*mudjid*), His first and most beloved creature has the tasks of a necessitator (*mudjib*). The first to originate from it is 'the intellect of the primordial quality' of the human being ('*akl fitri*, i.e., the intellect of the prophets), the second is the soul, while "the intellect of the creational quality" (*akl khalki*, i.e. the intellect of the philosophers) comes only in the third place. Then follow the spheres down to the sphere of the moon. Al-Suhrawardi unites these concepts with the Ash'ari doctrine of *sabb* and with popular mythologumena into an innovative conception of theological thinking.

The work is dedicated to the Caliph al-Nasir, whom al-Suhrawardi quotes as an authority on *hadith*. The political and religious aim of this work consists in the fact that the author Unites contradictory dogmatic trends into an—in his eyes—purified traditionalism, in order to strengthen the 'Abbasid caliphate by

using *hadith* as a tool and by involving *tasawwuf* to reform the intellectual education. The work offers a politico-religious middle course (*wasat*, *lawassut*), from which were only excluded those who challenge the unicity of God (*wahdaniyya*). These are, in al-Suhrawardi's opinion, the philosophers with their doctrine of the *prima causa* and their analogies, by which they have committed polytheism (*shirk*). That is why he calls them the enemies of the *umma*, while the Shi'is, including the Isma'ilis, are not attacked.

There exist recensions of the *Rashf* with and without its Neo-Platonic adoptions. The work was translated into Persian by Mu'in al-Din al-Yazdi (d. 789/1387), the historian of the Muzaffarids and provided with borrowings from Ibn al-'Arabi's theosophy (ed. Tehran 1365/1986). The Persian historiographer Muhammad al-Idji, who wrote ca. 781/1380, based the methodological part of his history of religions and cultures *Tuhfat al-fakir-ila sahib al-sarir* (Turhan Valide Sultan 231), partly word-for-word on al-Suhrawardi's argumentation. In the 7th/13th century, a refutation of the *Rashf* was composed under the title *Kashf al-asrar al-imaniyya wa-haik al-astar al-hutamiyya*. The author, Diya' al-Din Mas'ud b. Mahmud (d. 655/1257–8), was a scholar from Shiraz and a disciple and friend of Fakhr al-Di al-Razi.

3. *Idalat al-'iyan 'ala 'l-burhan* (Bursa, Ulu Cami, Tas. 1597), also a refutation of philosophy. This work was finished after the *Rashf*, between 622/1226 and 632/1234, and contains the same underlying ideas, but the linguistic style is more precise. Quotations from authorities and mythological themes are less frequently brought up. Instead, al-Suhrawardi develops an independent theory of the state in which caliphate, *futuwwa* and Sufism, as described above, are linked together. In the third

section, al-Nasir's grandson, al-Mustansir is mentioned as patron of the *futuwwa*.

4. *I'lam al-huda wa-'akidat arbab al-tuka* (Asir Ef. 416/10), composed in 632/1234, is a treatise on religion, in which the author tries to explain to the conservative Hanbalis in Baghdad the theological arguments of the Ash'aris concerning God and the theodicy. The author's aim is to promote the unity of the Muslim community in the face of the Mongol danger.

5. *Nughbat al-bayan fi tafsir al-Kur'an* (Haci Besir Aga/Eyup 24, dated 610/1214) is a commentary on the Kur'an, which should be situated in the tradition of Kur'an exegesis as practised by the Sufis al-Tustari and al-Sulami.

6. Al-Suhrawardi carried on an extensive correspondance, from which have survived, among others, letters to the theologian Fakhr al-Din al-Razi.

7. For his disciples, al-Suhrawardi wrote spiritual testaments (*wasfiyya*, pl. *wasaya*), in which the admonishes them to observe the duties of a Sufi on the basis of the sciences approved by Kur'an and *sunna*. Also in the *wasaya*, Al-Suhrawardi speaks of the close connection between *futuwwa* and *tasawwuf*. Further writings and collection of sayings are mentioned in the publications of H. Ritter, A. Hartmann and R. Gramlich.

Some of the works of Suhrawardi were also to influence the sages and philosophers in the Mughul Court in India where parts of his writings were even translated into Sanskrit, as they were translated into Hebrew some time earlier. *Ishaqi* wisdom has, therefore, been one of the universal elements of Eastern intellectuality during the past centuries and, as it is a version of the perennial philosophy, it is touched by the breath of eternity which, as in

the case of all expressions of truth, gives it a freshness and actuality that make this wisdom as essential today as it has been through the ages.

Al-Suhrawardi died in Baghdad at the age of 90 in Muharram 632/November-December 1234 and was buried in a *turba* in the *makbarat al-wardiya*, the cemetery of the Sufis (cf. Ibn al-Fuwati, *Hawadith*, 74; Sibti Ibn al-Djawzi, *Mir'at*, fol. 359b). His tomb has been venerated as a sanctuary since the 8th/14th century. After Baghdad had been conquered by the Ottoman sultan Murad IV, the tomb, which had become dilapidated, was in 1638 restored, together with the tombs of Abu Hanifa and 'Abd al-Kadir al-Jilani.

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ANGELIKA HARTMANN

Al-Sulami, Abu 'Abd Rahman Muhammad al-Naysaburi (942–1021)

Abu 'Abd Rahman Muhammad b. al-Husayn al-Azdi al-Sulami al-Naysaburi al-Sulami was an important Sufi hagiographer and Kur'ân commentator. He was born at Nishapur (Naysabur) in 325/937 or 330/942 and died in the same city in 412/1021. He belonged to the tribe of the Azd on his father's side and to that

of the Sulaym on his mother's. When al-Sulami's father left Nishapur to settle at Mecca, al-Sulami's education was entrusted to his maternal grandfather, Abu 'Amr Isma'il b. Nudjayd (d. 366/976–7), who was a disciple of Abu Uthman al-Hiri (d. 298/910), a Shafi'i scholar of *hadith* and an adherent of the ascetic tradition of Nishapur. Al-Sulami received a teaching certificate (*idjaza*) from the Hanafi Abu Sahl al-Su'luki (296–369/909–80) and, some time after 340/951, the Sufi cloak (*khirka*) from the Shafi'i Abu'l-Kasim al-Nasrabadhi (d. 367/977–8) who, some ten years before in 330/942, had become a Sufi at the hands of Abu Bakr al-Shibli at Baghdad.

An avid student of *hadith*, al-Sulami travelled widely throughout Khurasan and 'Irak in search of knowledge, visiting Marw and Baghdad for extended periods of time. He travelled as far as the Hijaz, but apparently visited neither Syria nor Egypt. His travels climaxed in a pilgrimage to Mecca, performed in 366/976 in the company of al-Nkasrabadhi, who died shortly after the Pilgrimage. When al-Sulami returned to Nishapur about 368/977–8, his teacher Isma'il b. Nudjayd had passed away, leaving his extensive library.

This library became the centre of the small Sufi lodge (*dwwayra*) which al-Sulami established in his quarter of the town, the *sikka al-Nawand*. There he spent the remaining forty years of his life as a resident scholar, probably visiting Baghdad on a number of occasions. By his later years, he had become highly respected throughout Khurasan as a Shafi'i man of learning and an author of Sufi manuals.

Al-Sulami was a prolific author who eventually employed his future biographer, Abu Sa'id Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Khashshab (381–456/991–1064), as his attendant and scribe. He

composed the long list of his works, amounting to more than a hundred titles, over a period of some fifty years from about 360/970 onwards. Some thirty of his works are known to be extant in manuscript: many have appeared in print. These writings may be divided into three main categories: Sufi hagiographies, Sufi commentaries on the Kur'an, and treatises on Sufi traditions and customs. Each of these categories appears to be represented by a major work.

The substantial *Tarikh al-Sufiyya*, listing the biographies of a thousand Sufis, is known only through extracts incorporated in later sources. It was probably an amplified version of the *Ta'rikh* of Abu Bakr Muhammad b. 'Abd Allāh al-Badjali, known as Ibn Shadhan al-Razi, who died in 376/986 at Nishapur. The *Tabakat al-sufiyya* (ed. J. Pedersen, Leiden 1960, and N. Shariba, Cairo 1969) is a shorter version, listing summary biographies of 105 Sufis with selections of their sayings.

The writings of al-Sulami on Sufi traditions and customs, often referred to as *Sunan al-sufiyya*, are lost today. Extracts of its contents were integrated into the major works of Abu Bakr Ahmad b. al-Husayn al-Bayhaki (d. 458/1066). Judging by these extracts, al-Sulami's *Sunan* probably resembled a variety of minor treatises on Sufi practices.

His principal commentary on the Kur'an, *Haka'ik al-tafsir*, is a voluminous work which still awaits publication as a whole, although extracts of it have been published by Massignon and Nwyia. Some time after the completion of the *haka'ik al-tafsir*, al-Sulami wrote a separate Kur'an commentary entitled *Ziyadat haka'ik al-tafsir* (ed. G. Bowering, Beirut 1995), an appendix to the former extant in a unique manuscript.

This work was compiled some time after 370/980, the date by which, in all probability, the *Haka'ik al-tafsir* had been completed. Significant portions of both Kur'an commentaries were integrated into the 'Ara'is al-bayan fi haka'ik al-Kur'an (2 vols., Cawnpore 1301/1884) of Abu Muhammad Ruzbihan al-Bakli (d. 606/1209).

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