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From The School of Isfahan to School of Tehran

S. H. Nasr, The George Washington University, USA

Abstract

With the establishment of Tehran as the capital of Persia, the intellectual centre of the country also shifted gradually to that city. Fatḥ 'Alī Shāh invited the great master of ḥadrian philosophy, Mullā 'Alī Nūrī, who lived in Isfahan to migrate to Tehran, but because of old age the latter refused the invitation, sending instead one of his foremost students, Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī. Thus began the last major school of Islamic philosophy, the School of Tehran, which during the nineteenth century was the locus of activity of such great masters as Mullā 'Alī Mudarris, the son of Mullā 'Abd Allāh, Āqā Muḥammad Riḡā Qumshā'ī and Mīrzā Abu'l-ḡasan Jilwah. Different strands of Islamic thought including the ḥadrian al-ḡikmat al muta'āliyah, the ishrāqī School, the peripatetic philosophy of the School of Ibn Sīnā and 'īrfan were taught and pursued in teaching circles and many new books were written some of which also contain new philosophical teachings based on the principles of the earlier schools. Most of the later masters of Islamic philosophy in the contemporary period in Persia were students of the School of Tehran, which in a sense survived until a few decades ago. It was also in the Scholl of Tehran that the main Islamic philosophical tradition first encountered modern European philosophy. The study of this School is therefore important not only for a better understanding of the total tradition of Islamic philosophy, but also very significant for a grasp of the development of philosophy in Persia during this century (of the Persian hijrī calender).

The School of Isfahan in its Later Phase

The remarkable revival of Islamic philosophy which took place in the early Safavid period under the aegis of Mīr Dāmād and its aftermath has now come to be widely known as the School of Isfahan. 1 This School produced a galaxy of important philosophers, chief among them Mullā ḥadrā, 2 but also including his teacher Mīr Dāmād, as well as Mīr Findiriskī, Mullā ḥadrā 's students such as Mullā Muḥsin Fayḡ Kāshānī and a number of other important figures such as Mullā Rajab 'Alī Tabrīzī, Mullā Shamsā Gīlānī, Āqā ḡusayn Khunsārī, Sayyid Aḡmad 'Alawī and Qāḡī Sa'īd Qummī. 3 Towards the end of the Safavid period the religious atmosphere in Persia turned against philosophy and especially the School of Mullā ḥadrā. Still the teaching of philosophy continued in Isfahan under the direction of such masters as 'Ināyat Allāh Gīlānī, Mīr Sayyid ḡasan Tāliqānī and Mawlā Muḥammad Sādiq Ardistānī.

The tragic life of this last figure exemplifies the plight of philosophy in Isfahan during the reign of Shāh Sulḡān ḡusayn at the end of the Safavid period. This outstanding ḡakīm and saintly man was a follower of the teachings of Mullā ḥadrā as one can see in the former's short Persian treatise entitled Ja'l ("Instauration"). He is also known for a treatise entitled ḡikmat-i ḡādiqiyah ("ḥadiqiyān Wisdom") which

deals with the powers of the soul and is of a mystical character. Despite his great piety and saintly demeanor, however, he was driven away from Isfahan in the winter and lost one of his children to the bitter winter cold. Ardīstānī, who is the last ṭadrīan philosopher of the Safavid period, died in 1113/1701.

Meanwhile, in the latter part of the Safavid period the influence of the School of Isfahan spread to other cities. Mullā ṭadrā himself spent the last decades of his life back in Shiraz. Mullā Muḥsin Fayḡ retired to his hometown of Kashan where he continued to teach and where an entourage grew around him. Later in the Qajar period philosophical activity was to continue in Kashan with the appearance of the major intellectual figure, Mullā Muḥammad Maḥdī Narāqī. Lāhījī settled in Qom where he and his son ḡusayn Lāhījī as well as the major expositor of gnosis, Qāḡī Saḡīd, taught. Yet, despite all the opposition to ḡikmat in Isfahan during the latter part of Safavid rule and despite the devastation brought about by the Afghan invasion, ḡikmat continued to survive in Isfahan and once the political situation settled down, it was in this city that philosophical activity and especially the teachings of Mullā ṭadrā's al-ḡikmat al muta'āliyah were revived.

A number of philosophers were witness to the storm at the end of the Safavid period, chief among them Mullā Ismā'īl Khājū'ī (d.1173/1760). In one of his works he describes the devastation caused by the conquest of Isfahan and the suffering he underwent. His own life was endangered and many of his works were lost but he survived to continue to teach ḡikmat and trained as important a student as Narāqī. 4 The major reviver of ṭadrīan philosophy in Isfahan was, however, Mullā 'Alī Nūrī who lived about a century and taught ḡikmat in Isfahan for some seventy years until his death in 1246/1830-31. No one after Mullā ṭadrā has done so much to propagate the teachings of al-ḡikmat al muta'āliyah, through the teaching of numerous important students and writing glosses, commentaries and annotations upon the works of Mullā ṭadrā including the *Asfār*. 5 Nūrī's most important students include his own son Mīrzā ḡasan Nūrī as well as Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī, Mullā Muḥammad Ismā'īl Darbkūshkī Iḡfahānī, Sayyid Raḡī Lārījānī, Āqā Muḥammad Riḡā Qumsha'ī, Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Langarūdī, Mullā Āqā-i Qazwīnī and many other well known figures. The origin of the School of Tehran is to be sought in the Isfahan of the early 13th/19th centuries and the circle of Mullā 'Alī Nūrī. Even after the centre of philosophical activity shifted to Tehran, Isfahan remained a vibrant philosophical centre producing such famous philosophers as Jahāngīr Khān Qashqā'ī and in more recent times Āqā Mīrzā Raḡīm Arbāb. Whether one can call the long period of philosophical activity stretching from Mīr Dāmād to someone like Arbāb or Jalāl Humā'ī, who died just two decades ago, "The School of Isfahan" is open to debate, 6 but certainly something of the earlier School of Isfahan survived after the Safavid period into the Qajar period and even into the contemporary era and served as the source for the School of Tehran which became central in Persia from the 13th/19th century onward. The School of Tehran represents both a continuity with the School of Isfahan as far as major philosophical issues and position are concerned, and discontinuity created by the fact that it was in Tehran where the Islamic philosophical tradition in Persia encountered Western thought for the first time and developed in certain directions that make it distinct from the School of Isfahan from which it originated.

The Beginning of the School of Tehran

Soon after the establishment of the Qajar dynasty in 1210/1796, Tehran which was then a small town was chosen as capital of Persia and grew rapidly into an important city that became not only the political and economic heart of Persia, but also its intellectual centre. Mosques and madrasahs began to be built and they attracted religious scholars to the city. In 1237/1821-22 Muḥammad Khān Marwī built a major madrasah in the heart of what is now the old city and the king Fatḡ 'Alī Shāh invited Mullā 'Alī Nūrī to

migrate from Isfahan to Tehran to become the central mudarris or teacher of the newly built school. Nūrī was then at an advanced age and had numerous students in Isfahan whom he could not abandon. He therefore declined the king's offer but instead sent one of his foremost students, Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī to Tehran. Mullā 'Abd Allāh established himself in the Marwī School during that very year and taught Islamic philosophy there for the next two decades until his death in 1257/1841. 7 He marks the first step in the transfer of philosophical activity from the School of Isfahan to what was soon to become the School of Tehran.

Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī was a follower of the school of Mullā ṭadrā and of his own teacher Mullā 'Alī Nūrī and by training belonged to the School of Isfahan and more particularly to the circle of Nūrī. Like his teacher, he wrote a number of glosses on the works of Mullā ṭadrā including the *Asfār*, *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah*, *al-Mabda' wa'l-ma'ād* and *Asrār al-āyāt* as well as Ibn Sīnā's *Shifā'* and Lāhijī's *Shawāriq*. He also wrote a number of independent works which are perhaps his most significant writings. These treatise which are in Persian include: *Anwār-i jaliyyah* ("Manifest Light") which is a comprehensive commentary upon the tradition transmitted from 'Alī ibn Abī ṭalīb concerning the truth (*al-ḥaqīqah*), 8 *Lama'āt-i ilāhiyyah* ("Divine Splendors") on *tawḥīd* and *ilāhiyyāt bi ma'na'l-khāṣṣ* or philosophical theology in the tradition of Mullā ṭadrā; 9 and *Muntakhab al-khāqānī fī kashf ḥaqā'iq 'irfani* ("Royal Selections Concerning the Unveiling of Gnostic Trusts") on the proof of the Necessary Being and God's Unity and Attributes. 10 What is of great interest in these treaties is not only their philosophical content, but also the fact that they were written in lucid Persian and mark the beginning of a movement during the Qajar period to turn once again to fairly extensive use of Persian for the expression of philosophical ideas in addition to Arabic. 11 This moment is clearly evident in the School of Tehran but is also to be seen elsewhere such as in Sabziwar, Qom, Kashan and Shiraz. It is, however, especially significant for the School of Tehran for it was in the capital that contemporary philosophical Persian began to develop in the later Qajar period, a development in which traditional philosophical texts written in Persian played an important role.

Before turning to the major figures of the School of Tehran a few words must be said about two outstanding figures who exercised influence upon the School of Tehran but who did not belong to it. The first is ḥājji Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī (1212/1797-98- 1289/1872), the most famous philosopher of the Qajar period, who was also teacher of many of the main early figures of the School of Tehran. 12 Some of Sabziwārī's students came to Tehran and a number of students from Tehran who were to gain a name for themselves in the field of philosophy journeyed to Sabziwar in Khurasan to study with the venerable philosopher/saint. For several decades the circle of Sabziwar vied with the School of Tehran in importance in the field of philosophy and Sabziwārī was himself in contact with many figures from Tehran. His *Asrār al-ḥikam* ("Secret of Wisdom") was written in Persian at the request of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and was well known in Tehran while his *Sharḥ al-manṣūmah* ("Commentary upon the *Manṣūmah* [a philosophical poem]") became very popular as a texts in the School of Tehran and continues to be so in all centres in Persia where traditional philosophy is being taught. Altogether the figure of Sabziwārī and his works cannot be disassociated from the development of the School of Tehran.

The second seminal figure that must be mentioned is Āqā Sayyid Raḥī Lārījānī, an enigmatic figure about whose life little is known. 13 Apparently after his early life in Larijan near the Caspian Sea, he journeyed to Isfahan where he soon became one of the foremost students of Mullā 'Alī Nūrī and Mullā Ismā'īl Iṣfahānī and a recognized master in the school of Mullā ṭadrā. But it is essentially for his and knowledge of gnosis, esoterism and even the occult sciences that he was known to the extent that he was given the title *mālik-i-bāṣhin*, that is "Master of the Esoteric Realm" or *ḥājib-i ḥāl-i mālik-i-bāṣhin*, that is, "Possessor of the Spiritual State of the Esoteric Realm". 14 Those who knew him believed that the truths of gnosis

had become fully realized in him. The great master of gnosis of the School of Tehran, Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā Qumsha'ī, to whom we shall turn shortly writes that when he was in Isfahan he had begun to study the Fuṣūḥ al-ḥikam of Ibn 'Arabī with Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Langarūdī, a major ṭadrian philosopher of Isfahan, but he was not fully satisfied and so went to study the text with Lārījānī who became worried that Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā had changed teachers but added, "The teaching of the Fuṣūḥ is the work of qalandarī [that is an unruly and ecstatic Sufi state] while mājjī Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far is a ḥakīm and not a qalandar".15

In any case while a formidable authority in ḥikmat, Lārījānī was above all a gnostic, an esoterist and a realized sage. It was these qualities that caused him some problems with anti-Sufi and anti-philosophical religious authorities of Isfahan and had it not been for one his physician disciples who bore witness that Larijan was "mad", he might have met the same fate as Suhrawardī and 'Ayn al-Qurāt Hamadānī. In any case at the end of his life at the invitation of a Qajar notable, Mīrzā Ismā'īl Gurgānī, Lārījānī came to Tehran where he settled at the home of his host. He died in 1270/1853-54 in Tehran after only a few years of stay in the capital. A student of the well-known gnostic, Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Ābāda'i, Lārījānī became the most important master of the school of Ibn 'Arabī in the early phase of the School of Tehran, his greatest contribution to this school being his training of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā Qumsha'ī and though him numerous later masters of gnosis such as Āqā Mīrzā Hāshim Rashtī and Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī Shāhābādī.16

The Four °akīms and the full Establishment of the School of Tehran

Later Persian scholars have spoken of the four ḥakīms (ḥukamā-yi arba'ah) who were foundational to the School of Tehran, these four being Āqā 'Alī °akīm Mudarris ±ihrānī, also known as Zunūzī, Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā Qumsha'ī, Mīrzā Abu'l-ḡasan Jilwah and Mīrzā ḡusayn Sabziwārī. It is these four masters who established the School of Tehran firmly upon the earlier efforts of Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī and Lārījānī and who in a sense completed the transfer of the teachings of the School of Isfahan to Tehran.

Āqā 'Alī °akīm Mudarris - Given the title °akīm-i mu'assis (The Founding °akīm), Āqā 'Alī is the central founding figure of the School of Tehran. The son of Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī, he was born in 1234/1818 in Isfahan and accompanied his father to Tehran when he was only three years old. 17 He received his early education in literature, logic and fiqh in Tehran and then studied such philosophical and theological texts as the Shawāriq al-ilhām ("The Orient of Inspiration") of Lāhījī, Sharḥ al-ishārāt ("Commentary upon the Directives and Remarks [of Ibn Sīnā]") by ±ūsī and al-Mabda' wa'l-ma'ād ("The Origin and the Return") by Mullā ṭadrā with his own father. Upon his father's death, he set out for Iraq to study the transmitted sciences in Najaf and then went to Isfahan to complete his studies in philosophy. In this still vibrant centre of Islamic philosophy he studied the Shifa' ("The Healing") of Ibn Sīnā and the Asfār ("The Four Journeys) and Mafātīḥ al-ghayb ("Keys to the Invisible World") of Mullā ṭadrā with the son of Mullā 'Alī Nūrī, Mīrzā ḡasan Nūrī. He also studied with other major figures of the city such as Sayyid Raḫī and Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Langarūdī. Then he spent some time in Qazwin to study Mullā ṭadrā with Mullā Āqā-yi Qazwīnī whom he considered to be the best teacher of the principles of ṭadrian philosophy. After that short period he returned in Isfahan and about 1270/1853-54 he finished his formal studies in the intellectual sciences.

Finally Āqā 'Alī settled in Tehran where he continued to study the transmitted sciences with Mīrzā ḡusayn Āshtiyānī while beginning to teach philosophy. His career in teaching in Tehran was to last forty years first in Qāsim Khān madrasah, then for a few years in his own home and then for more than

twenty years as official madarris in Sipahsālār madrasah. The main texts that he taught were the following: The *Asfār*, *al-Mabda' wa'l-ma'ad*, *Sharḥ al-hidāyah* ('Commentary upon the Book of Guidance [of Athīr al-Dīn Abharī]) and *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah* of Mullā ṭadrā, the *Shifā'* of Ibn Sīnā and *Sharḥ ḥikmat al-ishrāq* ("Commentary upon the Theosophy of the Orient of Light [of Suhrawardī and Quṣb al-Dīn Shīrāzī]). His lessons were attended by numerous students and were famous throughout Persia and even in certain other Islamic countries and he trained a large number of important students belonging to the next generation of philosophers of the School of Tehran. After a long and fruitful life, he died in Tehran in 1307/1889 and was buried in *maḥrat-i 'Abd al-'Aḥim* in Rayy.

Some twenty-seven works of Āqā 'Alī Mudarris are known to have survived. 18 His works include: a number of major annotations (*ta'līqāt*) upon several works of Mullā ṭadrā, especially his *Asfār* and *Sharḥ ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, glosses upon *Sharḥ al-ishārāt* by Lāhījī as well as Lāhījī's *Shawāriq*, and his own father's *Lama'āt-i-ilāhiyyah*; independent or semi-independent treats on resurrection, 19 attribution (*ḥakm*), the soul, relational existence (*al-wujūd al-rābiṣī*), unity, the transcendent unity of being (*wahdat al-wujūd*) of the Sufis, a short history of Islamic philosophy and a short autobiography. In addition to these works and a number of poems Āqā 'Alī wrote *Badāyī'al-ḥikam* ("Marvels of Wisdom") which is perhaps his most important text and considered by some as being the most significant work in the school of al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah after the *Asfār*. 20 Written in Persian, it compares with the works of Afṣal al-Dīn Kāshānī and Suhrawardī in its significance for philosophical prose in that language. It also deals with ṭadrāian metaphysics in a remarkably creative manner. Furthermore, this work may be considered to be the first in which traditional Islamic philosophy and Western philosophy, mostly Kantian, meet for Āqā 'Alī sets out to respond to certain philosophical questions brought to him from Europe by the Qajar prince *Badī'al-mulk*. For this reason some have considered the *Badāyī'al-ḥikam* as being not only the most important text of ṭadrāian philosophy in Persian, but also the first text of comparative philosophy within the Islamic philosophical tradition, 21 the beginning of a path that was to be followed later by 'Allāmah ṭabāṣṣabā'ī, Mīrzā Mahdī Hā'irī Yazdī and by several younger philosopher of this generation.

As for Āqā 'Alī's annotations upon the *Asfār*, they cover nearly the whole text and constitute in themselves a cycle of ṭadrāian philosophy. The glosses of *Sabziwārī* upon the *Asfār* are among the most detailed and clarifying of the many commentaries written on the text and these glosses have been published in the lithographed edition of the text of Mullā ṭadrā. The only commentary upon the *Asfār* to compare in significance with that of *Sabziwārī* is that of Āqā 'Alī which, however, departs more from the text than does *Sabziwārī*'s. S. J. Āshtiyānī goes as far to say, "I believe that in philosophical discussions Āqā 'Alī was more meticulous and more confirmed in the truth than *Sabziwārī*." 22 Many in fact consider Āqā 'Alī Mudarris to be the greatest figure of school of al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah after Mullā ṭadrā himself. 23 Although it is true that Āqā 'Alī must be considered along with Mullā ṭadrā himself, Mullā 'Alī Nūrī, *muḥjī* Mullā Hādī *Sabziwārī*, Āqā Muḥammad Riḥā Qumsha'ī and one or two others as the greatest master of the school of al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah, he was not simply an imitator and commentator of Mullā ṭadrā. Rather, he expressed certain views not found in ṭadrā al-Dīn's works and may be said to have begun a new chapter in the history of the ṭadrāian School rather than being simply a continuator of the same chapter. Not only did he criticize certain ṭadrāian tenets, but he also formulated several new theses of his own concerning such questions as corporeal resurrection, attribution, knowledge, second philosophical intelligibles, trans-substantial motion, the principiality of being, gradation, the unity of the arc of descent and the arc of ascent and many other major issues. A thorough study of Āqā 'Alī will reveal him to be not only a major commentator of Mullā ṭadrā, but also the founder of a new phase in the development of the school founded by the great ḥakīm of Shiraz.

Āqā 'Alī had extensive contact with the notable figure of his day both among the class of religious scholars and those at court such as I'timād al-Salṣanah who was one of Nāẓir al-Din Shāh's closest confidants and at the same time very respectful of Āqā 'Alī. He was in fact Āqā 'Alī's disciple. I'timād al-Salṣanah was one of channels whereby Āqā 'Alī gained some knowledge of what was transpiring philosophically in Europe. I'timād al-Salṣanah, was also instrumental in spreading the fame of Āqā 'Alī in courtly circles and also among these also were becoming interested in Western education and thought.

As far as the contact of Āqā 'Alī with the West is concerned, it is especially important to mention Comte de Gobineau, the French philosopher who came to Tehran for two years as a minister in the French embassy. In his well known work *Les Religions etales philosophies dans l'Asie central*, 24 he mentions Āqā 'Alī and the information that Gobineau transmits concerning later Persian philosophers is from Āqā 'Alī whom he had met in Tehran. Some traditional Persian religious scholars have transmitted the account of an invitation given by Gobineau to Āqā 'Alī to go the France and teach Islamic philosophy at the Sorbonne. The account also mentions that at first he accepted the invitation but that he was later dissuaded from going by his many students. 25 One wonders what would have happened in the West as far as Islamic philosophy was concerned and in the Islamic world itself especially Persia, if a colossal figure of Islamic metaphysics and philosophy and a figure of great spiritual stature such as Āqā 'Alī Mudarris has gone to France in the 19th century. In any case even though the journey did not materialize, Āqā 'Alī established the School of Tehran on a firm ṭadrian foundation but at the same time ready to encounter the challenges of Western philosophies and schools of thought which were soon to inundate the capital of Qajar Persia.

Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā Qumshā'ī

Although a definite master of the School of Mullā ṭadrā, Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā was above all a master of gnosis of the School of Ibn 'Arabī and in fact the greatest representative of this School in Persia during the past few centuries. This remarkable figure, who was called " the second Ibn 'Arabī" and who used the pen name ṭahbā, was born in Qumshah in 1241/ 1825 and carried out his early studies in that city before coming to Isfahan to study ḥikmat with Mullā Muḥammad Ja'far Lāhījī and Mīrzā ḡasan Nūrī, the son of Mullā 'Alī Nūrī. His most important teacher was, however, Sayyid Raḥī Lārījānī and it was in his hands that Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā reached the station of realization in gnostic knowledge. It is important to note in this context that Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā had a spiritual teacher and confirmed the necessity of having a spiritual master in order to realize the truths of gnosis. 26 In this context he is said to have cited the verse,

Do not traverse this stage without the companionship of Khiṣr. 27

For there is darkness, have fear of being lost.

In any case what is known of the life of Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā reveals that he taught both 'irfān and ḥikmat in Isfahan and then, after giving all his worldly possession to the poor set out to settle in Tehran some time around 1294/1877. The cause for his migration from Isfahan to Tehran is not certain but later scholars have mentioned his dissatisfaction with some of the authorities in Isfahan and also the migration of a number of major scholars such as Mullā 'Abd Allāh Zunūzī and Mīrzā Abu'l-ḡasan Jilwah to Tehran. 28 Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā was to teach hundreds of students in Tehran until he died in that city in 1306/1888 and was buried, according to most authorities, in Ibn Bābūyah near Rayy. In describing the breath of his knowledge Āshtiyānī writes, "Āqā Muḥammad Riṣā was one of those people who could teach the *Shifā'*, and other *mashshā'ī* texts with perfect ease and domination and was a sagacious

master in the teaching of the books of Shaykh al- ishrāq and ʿadr al-mutaʿallihīn. As for gnosis and the teaching of the Fuṣūṣ, Tamhīd al-qawāʿid , Misbāʿ al-uns and Futūʿāt-i makkīyyah he was peerless". 29 One cannot describe more clearly and justly the intellectual activities of this supreme master of gnosis of his day.

Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā lived simply as a darvish and often met his students in the ruins outside of Tehran. There is an account by the great Isfahani ḥakīm Jahāngīr Khān Qashqāʿi, who had come to Tehran to meet Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā, which casts much light on the master's countenance and presence. Jahāngīr Khān has said:

I had the impulsion to study with Haḫrat-i Qumshaʿī in Tehran and therefore in the very night of my arrival I went to his presence. He did not have any characteristics of a religious scholar and was like muslin sellers of Sidah [a town near Isfahan]. I was in a state of spiritual attraction (jadhbah). When I made the request [to see him] he said that, I should come the next day to the ruins (kharābāt). The ruin was a place outside the ditch [surrounding Tehran] and a darvish had a coffeehouse there where people of spiritual taste would meet. The next day I went to that place and found him sitting in a place of spiritual solitude (khalwatgāh) on a mat. I opened the Asfār and he read it from memory and made such a verification of it that I almost fell into a state of madness. He discovered my spiritual state and said, 'Power does break the jar'. 30

It is perhaps this manner of living that caused many of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā's works to be lost including most of his poems. The few poems that have survived being in ghazal form in the ʿIrāqī style, reveal his great poetic power and the immensity of loss of the majority of his poems for Persian Sufi poetry of the Qajar period. The prose works of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā which are known include: a treatise on walāyat/wilāyat, Risālah fī waḥdat al-wujūd bal al-mawjūd ("Treatise on the Unity of Being or Rather the Existent") al- Khilāfat al-kubrā ("The Greatest Vicegerency"), treatise on the difference between the Essence and the Qualities of God, treatise on ʿilm or knowledge, a treatise about the Asfār, and a number of glosses and annotations upon the Asfār and the Shawāhid as well as major gnostic texts such as the Fuṣūṣ, Miftāḥ al-ghayb ("Key to the Invisible World") of Qunyawī and Tamhīd al-qawāʿid ("Arrangement of Principles") of Ibn Turkah Iṣfahānī.31

One can hardly overestimate the significance of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā in both ḥikmat and ʿirfān for the School of Tehran and his influence over succeeding generations to our own day. A sage and saint who lived simply and always in humility, he left a profound spiritual expression upon those who met him while imparting the profoundest teachings of ʿirfān and ḥikmat to those capable and worthy of receiving the pearls of wisdom which he disseminated. He established the school of ʿirfān in Tehran on a solid foundation and it was from there that his students were to spread his teachings in many other cities such as Qom itself. If one only goes over the long list of his students, 32 which include such names as Āqā Mīrzā Hāshim Ashkiwarī, Mīrzā Shihāb al-Dīn Nayrīzī, Mīrzā ḥasan Kirmānshāhī as well as Mīrzā Mahdī Āshdiyānī, one will realize the remarkably extensive influence of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā over the later intellectual life of Persia. In any case he is the second major figure of the School of Tehran after Āqā ʿAlī Mudarris and the two complement each other in many ways.

Mīrzā Abu'l-ḥasan Jilwah

The third of the four major founders of the School of Tehran, Mīrzā Abu'l-ḥasan Jilwah, was born in 1238/1822 in Ahmadabad in Gujarat. His father had migrated to India from Persia to Hyderabad in Sindh and had married to daughter of the prime minister and was even chosen as ambassador. But he fell out

with those at court and went to Ahmadabad and then Bombay returning finally to Isfahan when Jilwah was seven years old. 33 It was in this city that after the death of his father and a period of youth spent under financial duress, Jilwah turned to the field of religious studies and especially philosophy. He studied both ṭadrīan and Avicennan philosophy as well as some medicine with famous masters such as Mīrzā ṣasan Nūrī, Mullā Abd al -Jawād Tūnī, who was known especially as a master of traditional medicine, Mīrzā ṣasan Chīnī and Mullā Mu ḥammad Jaʿfar Langarūdī and soon became himself a well known philosopher. In 1273/1856, dissatisfied with his situation in Isfahan, he set out for Tehran and settled there to teach philosophy and write until the end of his life in 1314/1896. He was buried in Ibn Bābūyah near Rayy. Jilwah taught mostly in the Dar al-shifāʾ madrasah and became so famous and respected that Nāẓir al- Din Shāh would visit him from time to time at his school. Like Āqā ʿAlī and Āqā Mu ḥammad Riḫā, Jilwah taught the works of Mullā ṭadrā but his main interest was Ibn Sīnā and the mashshāʾī school. It is known that in the School of Isfahan one can detect two main philosophical trends: The ḥikmat al-mutaʿāliyah associated with Mullā ṭadrā and the continuation of Avicennan philosophy in its later interpretations as one sees in Mullā Rajab ʿAlī Tabrīzī and Mullā Shamsā Gīlānī. Jilwah represents more this second trends than the first and he was essentially a mashshāʾī ḥakīm even if he also taught Mullā ṭadrā and commented upon his works. Jilwah was even critical of Mullā ṭadrā accusing him of having taken various ideas from earlier philosopher without acknowledging his sources. Although he was a gifted poet whose dīwān has in fact been published, Jilwah was more of a rationalist than illuminationist or intuitive thinker and possessed a very rigorous and rational mind. One of his main contributions was in fact in correcting with great exactitude all the texts that he taught, paying attention to every word and phrase.

The works of Jilwah include his glosses upon the Mashāʾir ("The Book of Metaphysical Penetrations"), Shar ḥ al-hidāyah, al-Mabdaʾ wa-l-maʿād and Asfār of Mullā ṭadrā, annotations upon the introduction of Qayẓarī to his commentary upon the Fuḥūḥ and independent treaties on the relation between the created and the eternal, trans-substantial motion and composition and its rules. He also wrote a series of glosses upon the Shifāʾ along with the correction of the text which was one of the main works that he taught. Jilwah was also so much interested in Sufi poetry that he corrected the text of the Mathnawī of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī. Unfortunately most of his works, like those of Āqā Mu ḥammad Riḫā, remain unedited. Also like his illustrious contemporaries, Jilwah trained numerous students among whom one can mention especially Sayyid ṣasan ʾakīm Badkūbaʾī who established a circle for the study of Islamic philosophy in Najaf in Iraq, Mīr Sayyid Shihab al-Dīn Nayrīzī, the well known authority on ʾirfān and philosophy, Mīrzā ṣāhir Tunikābunī, one of the foremost later masters of philosophy in the School of Tehran, and Ākhūnd Mullā Mu ḥammad Hīdājī Zanjānī known for his famous commentary upon the Shar ḥ al-manḥūmah of Sabziwārī.

We know much less about the fourth of the four founding of the School of Tehran, Mīrzā ṣasan Sabziwārī except that he was a student of ṣajjī Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī and migrated later to Tehran where he used to teach in the ʿAbd Allāh Khān madrasah in the bazaar. Although he taught philosophy, his main concern was with mathematics for which he became justly famous. He also had a number of famous students including Hīdājī and Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Riyāḫī Zanjānī. What is significant about him is not only his fame among his contemporaries but that in the 13th/19th century in the School of Tehran the study of mathematics had not become as yet completely separated from that of philosophy and that the traditional link between philosophy and mathematics that one observes in ṣūsī, Quṣb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, the Dashtakīs, Shams al -Dīn Khafrī and Fat ḥ Allāh Shīrāzī was still alive but soon to become greatly weakened. The presence of Mīrzā ṣasan assured that something of this important link would survive into the later period. Our own teachers, Sayyid Mu ḥammad Kāʾim ʿAẓẓār and Sayyid Abu-l- ṣasan Rafīʾī Qazwīnī as well as a major later representative of the School of Tehran, Abu-l-ṣasan Shaʾrānī, had

extensive knowledge of the traditional Islamic mathematical sciences in addition to their great mastery of philosophy.

After the Four Founding °akīms

Among the most important students of those four masters besides those already mentioned were Mīrzā μasan Kirmānshāhī who was a specialist in the teachings of mashshā'ī philosophy, mathematics and medicine and Mīrzā Hāshim Rashtī who was a notable exponent of 'īrfān and ishrāqī doctrines. Their students and the generation that followed are too numerous to name here. 34 We have to confine ourselves to only a few of the most famous who later became masters of the School of Tehran during the late Qajar and the Pahlavi periods. One can mention in addition to those already cited Mīrzā Ma' mūd and Mīrzā A' mad Āshtiyānī who resided in Tehran and who were known as great authorities in the teaching of spiritual ethics and 'īrfān, Mīrzā Mu' ammad 'Alī Shāhābādī who moved to Qom where in addition to philosophy he taught the main texts of 'īrfān, Mu' ammad Taqī Āmulī, one of the leading philosophers of the School of Tehran during Pahlavi period, and three figures about whom we need to say a few more words: Mīrzā Mahdī Āshtiyānī, Sayyid Abu'l-μasan Rafī'ī Qazwīnī and Sayyid Mu' ammad Kā'im 'Aẓẓār all of whom died in the Pahlavi era but were trained in the late Qajar period in the School of Tehran.

Mīrzā Mahdī Āshtiyānī, at once an outstanding philosopher and faqīh, was born in 1306/1888 in Tehran. His first teacher was his father with whom he studied fiqh and uẓūl. He also studied these subjects with Shaykh Masī'ī ±āliqānī and Shaykh Faḫl Allāh Nūrī and philosophy with Āqā Mīr Shīrāzī and Mīrzā μasan Kirmānshāhī. Āshtiyānī was also very knowledgeable in traditional mathematics and medicine. He even studied Western medicine, which was then spreading in Persia, with such famous Qajar physicians as Nā'im al -aṣṣibbā' and Ra'īs al- aṣṣibbā'. He then set out for Iraq where he studied rational fiqh and uẓūl with such famous faqīhs as Sayyid Mu' ammad Kā'im Yazdī. After becoming established as an authority in fiqh as well as ḥikmat and 'īrfān, he returned to Persia, teaching for a while in Qom, Isfahan and Mashhad and finally settled in Tehran. He spent the rest of his life in the capital teaching and writing a number of important works, becoming recognized as the leading ḥakīm of his day in Tehran. During this period he also travelled to India, Central Asia, Europe and Egypt where he explained Islamic philosophy to many audiences. He died in Tehran in 1372/1952. 35

The philosophical works of Āshtiyānī include his commentary in Arabic and Persian paraphrase of the *Asfār* of Mullā ṭadrā and an 'īrfānī commentary on his *Mafātī' al-ghayb* as well as commentaries upon various parts of Sabziwārī's *Sharḥ al -man'ūmah*. 36 Āshtiyānī was also the author of an independent work on ḥikmat, *Asās al-tawḥīd* (" Foundations of Unity ") which reveals his remarkable philosophical profundity. 37 Furthermore, he also authored a number of shorter treaties on various philosophical subjects.

One should not think for one moment that Āshtiyānī was simply a commentator who only clarified the meaning of earlier texts. Like many members of the School of Tehran and those before them, his commentaries are original philosophical treatises written in commentary form much like the commentaries of Mullā ṭadrā upon *ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and the *Shifā'*. For example, his commentary upon Sabziwārī is much more 'īrfānī in character than Sabziwārī's own commentary and reveals the text as almost an 'īrfānī work rather than a systematic and rational presentation of Mullā ṭadrā's ideas. As T. Izustu writes:

Sabziwārī, despite the fact that his entire philosophising is at bottom based on a personal mystical existence does not disclose this concept of philosophy on the surface. Āshtiyānī on the contrary is openly 'irfānī throughout the whole commentary. This fact comes out more clearly in the introductory part of the work. But in the main part of the book, too, he never fails to seize the opportunity of leaving Sabziwārī behind at any moment and going into long fully developed 'irfānī discussions of the philosophical concept in question.....the same feature of Āshtiyānī's general attitude in writing his commentary is remarkable in that it turns the book into an original work of his own. 38

In any case Mīrzā Mahdī Āshtiyānī was a towering intellectual figure of his day who wielded much influence in traditional circles of learning. He was also the teacher of a number of well known philosophers of our own day such as Abu'l-ḡasan Sha'rānī, Muḡammad Taqī Ja'farī, Murtaḡā Muḡahharī, Mahdī ḡā'irī, Jawād Falāḡūrī and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī all of whom are well-known Islamic thinkers of the 14th /20th century.39

Sayyid Abu'l-ḡasan Qazwīnī, with whom we had the honour of studying the *Asfār* for some five years, was born in Qazwin in 1315/1897, where he carried out his early studies. Then he came to Tehran and Qom studying in both cities with such masters as Mīrzā ḡasan Kirmānshāhī, Mīrzā Hāshim Ashkiwarī, Sayyid Muḡammad Tunakābunī, Shaykh 'Alī Rashtī, Shaykh 'Abd al-Karīm ḡā'irī and others. He soon became famous as an authority in both philosophy and fiqh, becoming in fact one of the Persia's leading ayatollahs and after the death Ayatollah Burujirdi a source of emulation (*marja'-i taqlīd*) for many Shi'ites. He taught in Qom, Qazwin and Tehran where he died in 1396/1975, his body being buried in Qom.40

Qazwīnī was a masterful teacher especially of the work of Mullā 'adrā and in the explanation (*taqrīr*) of the *Asfār* which was unequalled among his contemporaries. He had a majestic countenance and exuded great authority. Although he taught mostly 'adrian philosophy, he did not agree on every point with Mullā 'adrā and Sabziwārī such as the exact meaning of the unity of the knower and the known (*al-'āqil wa'l-ma'qūl*). He also would often say that he was not totally satisfied with the explanation of the earlier Islamic philosophers of the relation between the created order and eternity (*'ādīth and qadīm*). He loved Sufi poetry but never spoke about it in public but this intimacy with the greatest works of Persian literature enabled him to possess a very lucid and flowing Persian prose. But he hated to write and the few philosophical treatise that have survived from his pen and now edited and published by the outstanding contemporary 'akīm from Qom, ḡasanzadah Āmulī, were produced as the result of our insistence. 41 These treatises are masterpieces in both their success in of clarifying in readily understandable terms some of most difficult issues of Islamic philosophy and also in their literary quality. They are among the best examples of philosophical Persian written in recent decades. Qazwīnī was also the author of a commentary upon the *Sharḡ al-manzumah*.

The influence of Ayatollah Qazwīnī in the domain philosophy was primarily through the training of students in Qazwin, Qom and Tehran such as Mīrzā Abu'l-Qāsim Kirmānshāhī and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī who told us often over the years that Qazwīnī was the most acute commentator and lucid expositor of 'adrian philosophy whom he had known among the all the teachers of his day.

As for Sayyid Muḡammad Kā'im 'Aḡḡār, he has been considered by some as the last outstanding representative of School of Tehran.42 He was born in a family of religious scholars in Tehran in 1302/1884, where he carried out his early studies in fiqh, uḡūl, kalām and logic with his father who was a well-known teacher at that time. 43 In order to learn the modern science he went to Dār al-fanūn which he completed. He was then asked to teach the modern sciences, especially mathematics, along with French

in Tabriz. It was there that he developed a close friendship with the famous religious scholar, Thaḡat al-Islām Tabrīzī who apparently benefited from ‘Aḡḡār’s knowledge of the Asfār. After the violent death of Thaḡat al-Islām, ‘Aḡḡār left Tabriz for Europe through Caucasia and spent some time studying in the West. He was in fact the first member of traditional class of ‘ulamā’ in Persia to have done so. He then returned to the East studying for some fourteen years in Najaf to complete his mastery of the transmitted sciences before coming to Tehran where he settled and devoted himself completely to teaching both fiqh and philosophy. He taught at the Sipahsālār School, where he gave a course on fiqh followed by one in philosophy in which usually the Sharḡ al-manḡūmah of Sabziwārī was used. He was also professor of Islamic philosophy in both the Faculty of Divinity and the Faculty of Letters of Tehran University. The latter position was particularly important because the philosophy department of the Faculty of Letters was then the most important philosophy department in Persia in which Western philosophy was taught. The doctoral students of the department, who became teachers in philosophy throughout the country, were therefore instructed in Islamic philosophy by ‘Aḡḡār. 44 This great master died in Tehran in 1396/1975.

Sayyid Muḡammad Kāḡim ‘Aḡḡār was a recognized authority in both the religious and philosophical sciences. He was at once a great mujtahid, ḡakīm and ‘ārif who had an incredible intelligence and a sense of humour which caused him to laugh at the follies of the world. He refused to receive religious tax or to enter into the political and economic aspects of the life of many mujtahids. He devoted his life entirely to teaching and writing and gave of his time freely to those who sought his advice or yearned to learn from him. Although he had spent some time in Europe, he avoided all modernistic mannerisms and even in his teaching rarely referred to Western thought. He had penetrated through the mask of the modern world and knew fully well what stood behind it and was therefore not fooled by modernist tenets. Often he would make fun of not only modernized Persians, but also those among the ‘ulamā’ who would make reference to some modern idea in a shallow way in order to appear up to date.

As a philosopher he was both a master of traditional texts and a creative interpreter of them. He had studied ḡikmat and ‘irfān with such luminaries as Āqā Mīrzā ḡasan Rashtī, who was himself a student of Āqā ‘Alī Mudarris and Āqā Muḡammad Riḡā Qumshaḡī, Āqā Mīrzā ḡasan Kirmānshāhī, that celebrated philosopher and physician of the Qajar period, and Āqā Mīrzā Shihab al-Dīn Nayrīzī who was also a foremost disciple of Āqā Muḡammad Riḡā and Āqā ‘Alī Mudarris. Having studied with such masters was fully reflected in ‘Aḡḡār’s approach to texts of ḡikmat and ‘irfān. He knew every nuance of the texts and ideas involved. While in the Sipahsālār School and Tehran University he would follow the assigned text carefully, in private classes the text would serve as the point of flight into the vast empyrean of sacred knowledge within which ‘Aḡḡār could fly with remarkable ease.45

Beside his commentaries and annotations to works concerning fiqh and uḡūl, ‘Aḡḡār has left behind a small but very significant number of writings devoted to some of the most different questions of ḡikmat and ‘irfān. These include the treatises on waḡdat al-wujūd and bada’ (meaning apparent change in the Divine Will) and two works which appear to deal with the religious sciences but which like the naqli works of Mullā ḡadrā are also treatises of ḡikmat and ‘irfān, the these being ‘Ilm al-ḡādith ("Science of ḡādith") and commentary upon the opening chapter of the Quran, al-Fātiḡah. 46 The study of these treatises reveal ‘Aḡḡār to be a major philosopher casting the light of his own God given intelligence upon the works of the earlier masters and displaying much intellectual creativity. His works are far from being simply an elucidation of what had gone before. Although primarily a ḡadriān philosopher, ‘Aḡḡār was also ishrāqī in a sense independent of Mullā ḡadrā. He was also given the exceptional gift of bringing out both the intellectual and spiritual dimension of terms, ideas and formulations associated with the

religious sciences and in creating a synthesis between the transmitted (naqlī) and intellectual ('aqlī) sciences crowned and also held together by the purest doctrines of 'irfān.⁴⁷

The Significant of the School of Tehran

The School of Tehran is important not only in being able to continue the tradition of Islamic philosophy from the Qajar to the Pahlavi period. It is also very significant because more than any other philosophical centre in Persia, Tehran became the locus where Western ideas began to penetrate into Persia and the main battleground for the struggle between tradition and modernism in later years. It was in Tehran that the Discourse on Method of Descartes was first translated into Persian and where Western philosophical ideas began to hold sway over the modernized classes. Because of the political weakness of Qajar Persia and dominance of colonial powers, many Persians like other Asian and Africans of that time, Muslims and non Muslims alike, developed a cultural inferiority complex vis-a-vis the West which still continues with many non-Western circles. This attitude caused most of the modern educated classes to turn away from traditional philosophy and to become infatuated with modern Western philosophers especially French ones and so, while the School of Tehran continued from the later Qajar period onward, modern Western philosophy came to be also studied often totally separated from the existing philosophical tradition which was then belittled and ignored. ⁴⁸

The current of Western philosophy cultivated in Tehran is not of course a part of the School of Tehran as we define this School. Often the two existed in parallel fashion to each other but sooner or later there was bound to be interaction and this occurred in the second half of the 14th/20th century. ⁴⁹ The two most important figures of this encounter were not trained in the School of Tehran but became nevertheless associated with it. The first was the remarkable master of Islamic thought, 'Allāmah Sayyid Muḥammad ḡusayn ḡabāḡabā'ī who hailed from Tabriz, studied also in Najaf and revived Islamic philosophy in Qom where he resided until his death in 1404/1983. ⁵⁰ This monumental figure of Islamic thought during the past century belonged to and in fact founded the new School of Qom in Islamic philosophy but his meetings with Marxist thinkers which led to his ground breaking work *Uḡūl-i falsafai ri'ālism* ("Principles of the Philosophy of Realism") took place in Tehran. This work which marks the first serious encounter between traditional Islamic philosophy and a Western philosophical school, in this case Marxism, is therefore related to the School of Tehran although 'Allāmah ḡabāḡabā'ī did not belong to that School strictly speaking. The same can be said of the discourses between him and Corbin which were carried out almost completely in Tehran and not in Qom.

The second major figure who confronted Western thought from the background of Islamic philosophy was Mīrzā Mahdī ḡā'irī Yazdī who was trained in Qom but spent much of his life in Tehran where he died in 1419/1999. ḡā'irī was the first 'ālim in Persia who went to Europe and America and spent years in studying Western philosophy, primarily the analytical school, until he attained his doctorate in Western philosophy and even taught for some time in Britain, Canada and the United States. He authored a number of important works such as *Hiram-i hastī* ("The Pyramid of Being") and *'Ilm-i ḡuḡūrī* ("Knowledge by Presence") in which philosophising is carried out in dialogue between Islamic philosophy and more specifically Angle-Saxon analytical philosophy. His *Knowledge by Presence* which is now available in English ⁵¹ reveals his philosophical acumen and is the first work of its kind in English by a traditional Islamic philosopher. Again technically speaking ḡā'irī belonged to the School of Qom rather than Tehran but like ḡabāḡabā'ī was related to the School of Tehran.⁵²

When one meditates upon the works of ḡabāḡabā'ī and ḡā'irī, one wonders why a member of the School of Tehran did not write a response based on the principles of Islamic philosophy to Descartes'

Discourse on Method when this work first appeared in Tehran in the Qajar period. Had such a criticism come forth, it would have been more like the response of a Hamann or a von Baadar to Descartes rather than the simply emulation of Cartesianism that we see among the modernized classes in Tehran. In any case the response did not come and one had to wait a century before Islamic philosophical responses began to appear to various currents of Western thought. As a result, the School of Tehran became ever more separated from the concern of modernized circles who turned to Western thought wholeheartedly becoming Cartesian, Kantian, Hegelian, Comptian, Marxist and in more recent decades, Heideggerian, Popperian and the like. Even after the Revolution of 1979 intense interest in the Islamic response to Western thought has not succeeded in weaning all the Persians given to philosophical discourse away from blind emulation of various currents of Western philosophy although interest in Islamic philosophy has certainly grown even among many followers of Western thought.

Despite this parting of ways in Tehran between traditional and modern philosophy, the School of Tehran exercised a definite influence upon Persian philosophical prose in general. Muḥammad 'Alī Furūghī, who translated works of European philosophy into Persian and whose *Sayr-i ḥikmat dar Urūpā* was the single most influential text in introducing European philosophy to Persians, was in touch with living numbers of the School of Tehran such as Fāḥil-i Tūni, Mīrzā ḥāhir Tunikābunī, Mīrzā Mahdī Āshtiyānī and Sayyid Muḥammad Kā'im 'Aẓẓār and developed his philosophical style and vocabulary with their help. Others, who wrote Persian philosophical prose well, such as Yaḥyā Mahdawī, were also very well acquainted with the Persian philosophical texts of the Qajar period as well as those of earlier ages. Although of course there was much development of new vocabulary for the expression of new Western ideas during the Pahlavi period, there is no doubt that there is a great deal of continuity in the style and vocabulary of Persian philosophical prose between the School of Tehran, and through it with earlier school of Islamic philosophy, and the modern currents of philosophy in the Pahlavi and even post-Pahlavi period. The revival of Persian prose, philosophical pose included, during the Pahlavi period is in many ways the continuation of what began in the Qajar period even if, as far as philosophy is concerned, the content of many philosophical works changed drastically from the Islamic to the Western.

Another feature of the School of Tehran, resulting from the centrality of the capital and modern means of transportation and communication, is that it was much more in contact with other centres of learning than were the Schools of Isfahan and Shiraz. Many of the philosophers of the School of Tehran journeyed to other Persian and Iraqi cities to become well-known scholars. Conversely many figures from other centres would travel to Tehran and spend some time there. During the last few decades some of the most famous Persian philosophers can be said to belong to this category. As examples one can site 'Allāmah ḥabāṣabā'ī, trained in Tabriz and resident in Qom who journeyed to Tehran every other week for some thirty years, Murtaḥā Muṣahharī, trained in Qom but who resided in Tehran, ḡā'irī Yazdī likewise trained in Qom but like Muṣahharī resident in Tehran and professor of Tehran University, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī, trained in Qom and professor of Mashhad University, who travelled and stayed in Tehran often and even studied there for while, and Jawād Muḥli, trained in Shiraz, but resident in Tehran for the second part of his life where he taught at Tehran University. From the later Qajar period until the weakening of the School of Tehran, member of this School were therefore in constant contact with other centres where Islamic philosophy was taught such as Shiraz, Isfahan, Qom and Mashhad and the reverse was also true.

After the Iranian revolution, Qom soon become the most important centre for the teaching of Islamic philosophy thanks to the foundation laid by 'Allāmah ḥabāṣabā'ī and his training of such illustrious students as ḡasanzādah Āmulī, Jawād Āmulī, and Miḥbā' Yazdī, all of whom teach ḥikmat to a large number of students in Qom today. Perhaps at no time in Islamic history have as large a percentage of

religious students turned to al-'ulūm al-'aqliyyah and particularly philosophy as today in Qom. However this remarkable growth did not rise from a vacuum. Rather, it is based on the revival of interest in Islamic philosophy in the 1950's, 60's and 70's resulting from the activities of 'Allāmah ṭabāṣabā'ī in Qom and Corbin and myself in university circles in Tehran along with the important activity of a number of prominent figures such as Muṣahharī and Āshtiyānī. One of the living symbols and results of this growth of interest was the establishment of the Iranian Academy of Philosophy which we founded in 1973 and in which mā'irī, Muṣahharī and Āshtiyānī not to speak of Corbin and Izutsu were active. All of those activities may be said to have been based on the heritage of the School of Tehran while in the field of traditional Islamic philosophy in the madrasah style, the centre of activity was shifting to Qom. Even after this shift, however, Tehran remained important and although there is no longer a figure of the stature of Sayyid Muḥammad Kā'im 'Aẓẓār to represent the School of Tehran, something of the School of Tehran survives even now while Tehran remains still the most important locus for the encounter between Islamic and Western philosophy and along with Qom the main arena for an intense philosophical activity not to be found to the same extent in other Islamic countries.

While the School of Tehran was flourishing in the 13th/19th century, other Islamic countries were also facing the onslaught of Western thought. In Egypt and North Africa the Islamic response came primarily from the fuqahā' and Sufis as it did in the Ottoman Empire. In India from Shāh Waliullāh of Dehli to Mawlānā 'Alī Thanwī there was also a strong response that contained philosophical as well as fiqhī and ḥikmatī elements. In fact in comparison with other Islamic lands, the situation in India most resembles that of Persia. Nevertheless, it was primarily in the School of Tehran and to some extent its extension in Najaf, 53 that the integral Islamic intellectual tradition had been preserved and where the first philosophical contact was made with Western philosophy. The historical significance of the School of Tehran lies in both preserving the Islamic philosophical tradition into modern times and in producing the first Islamic philosophical responses to the challenges of Western thought. The process of providing Islamic answers to questions and to problems posed by Western thought and in opening a new chapter in the history of Islamic philosophy that is both authentically Islamic and responsive to problems presented by various currents of modern thought is still going on and this chapter in the history of Islamic thought has not as yet been fully written. But there is no doubt that the School of Tehran is of great importance in this process and knowledge of it necessary not only for a better understanding of the later history of Islamic philosophy or the intellectual history of Persia during the past two centuries, but also in order to be able to continue the process of writing this latest chapter of Islamic philosophy with greater firmness and surer footing. The heritage of the School of Tehran is of much importance not only for Persians but also for all Islamic thinkers and philosophers concerned with the task of preserving of authentic and traditional Islamic thought and of providing responses based on Islamic philosophy to the many challenges of the modern world which are primarily intellectual and philosophical and which even on the level of popular culture so appealing to the young present a particular philosophy of life and of existence which pose the greatest challenges to the Islamic understanding of the nature of God, of man and of the rest of His creation.

Notes:

1-The terms "L' Ecole d' Ispahan" and "School of Isfahan" were first used by H. Corbin and ourselves in the 50's and have since become widely accepted in scholarly circles. See H. Corbin, "L'Ecole d' Ispahan", in his *En Islam iranien*, vol IV, Paris, Gullimard, 1972, pp. 9-201; and S. H. Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Traditional in Persia*, ed. M. Aminrazavi, London, Curzon, 1996; chapter 21, pp.239-270.

2-The last few years have been witness to a great deal of activity in the study of Mullā ʿadrā and there is even now a journal entitled *Khīrad-nāma-yi ʿadrā* published in Persian in Tehran and devoted primarily to his thought as well as one in English published in London under the title *Transcendent Philosophy*. See S. H. Nasr, *The Transcendent Theosophy of ʿadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, second edition, Tehran, Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 1997. For the bibliography of Mullā ʿadrā and ʿadrian studies see Bāqirī Khurramdashtī, N., *Bibliography of Mullā ʿadrā*, Tehran, Kitābkhāna-yi Millī, 1378 (A. H. Solar).

3- On these figures see the introduction of S. J. Āshtiyānī to his edition of *Sadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah* with the commentary of Sabziwārī, Mashhad, Mashhad Universe Press, 1967, pp. eighty five on; also M. Sadughi Soha, *A Bio-Bibliography of Post Sadr-ul-Mutaʿallihīn Mystics and Philosophers*, Tehran, Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1980, pp.19 ff. See also H. Corbin, *La Philosophie iranien islamique aux xviiie et xviiiie siecles*, Paris, Buchet-Chastel, 1981.

4- See, ʿA.A Halabī, *Tārīkh-i-falsafa-yi Īrān*, Tehran, Zawwār Press, 1361 (A. H. Solar), pp. 558-559. See also S. H. Nasr with M. Aminrazavi, *Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, vol. III, New York, Oxford University Press, (in press).

5- See Āshtiyānī's introduction to *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah*, pp. one hundred and six ff.; and Āshtiyānī (ed.), *Muntakhabātī az āthār-i ḥukamā-yi ilāhi-yi Īrān*, vol. IV, Mashhad, Mashhad University Press, 1357 (A. H. Solar), pp. 537 ff. See also M. Sadughi Soha, op. cit. pp.33 ff.

6- The history of the development of ḥikmat in Isfahan after Mullā ʿAlī has not been well studied although Jalāl Humāʿī has provided much useful information on this subject in his general study of the history of Isfahan (*Tārīkh-i Isfahān*) which, as far as we are able to tell, has never been published in full.

7- There is a short biography of Mullā ʿAbd Allāh by his son, the celebrated philosopher, Mullā ʿAlī Mudarris, to whom we shall turn shortly. This biography was discovered by Āshtiyānī and has been translated in our English introduction to Āshtiyānī's edition of *Zunūzī, Lamaʿat-i ilāhiyyah-Divine Splendor*, Tehran, Cultural Studied and Research Institute, 1982, pp.6-8.

8- Edited by S. J. Āshtiyānī, op. cit.

9- Edited by S. J. Āshtiyānī, Tehran, Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1976, with English and Persian introductions by S. H. Nasr.

10- Edited by Mayel Herawi, *Montaxab-Al-Xāqāni...*, Tehran, Mawlā Press, 1361 (A. H. Solar).

11- We have said "once again" because from the time of Nāẓirī-i Khusraw until Afḡal al-Dīn Kāshānī, Nāẓir al-Dīn ḥūsī and Quṣb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, the use of philosophical Persian was on the rise and this tendency continued to a large extent in the School of Shiraz as we see in the writing of Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī and Maḥmūd Dihdād. With the coming of the Safavid period Persian became to some extent eclipsed and Arabic became more dominant in the field of philosophy. It is enough to compare the ratio between Persian and Arabic writings of a Mullā ʿadrā with those of a Suhrawardī or a ḥūsī to realize the truth of this assertion. With the Qajar period the tendency to use Persian to a greater extent and of course not exclusively became strengthened in comparison to the Safavid period.

12- On Sabziwārī see S. H. Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persian*, chapter 23, pp. 304-319; and Nasr, "Sabziwārī" in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (forthcoming). See also M. Mohaghegh and T. Izutsu, *The Metaphysics of Sabzavārī*, Delmar (N. Y.) Caravan Books, 1977.

13- See Sadughi Soha, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-47, and Āshtiyānī, introduction to *Shawāhid...*, p.p. one hundred eight and nine and one hundred twenty two.

14- Sadughi Soha, *op. cit.* p., 46.

15- *Ibid.*, p. 47.

16- There is an initiatic line of transmission of esoteric teachings, not to be confused with the theoretical understanding of gnosis and Sufi metaphysics, that existed among Shi'ite scholars stretching from Mullā ṭadrā, and even before him, to 'Allāmah ṭabāṣṭabā'ī and before him certain other 14th/20th century figures including such famous Shi'ite scholars as Ba'īr al-'ulūm. Both Lārijānī and Qumsha'ī as well as a number of his students in the School of Tehran belonged to this initiatic line about which little has been written until now although some points of intersection between the chain of Shi'ite 'urafā' and the Sufi orders in Persia, especially the Dhahabī and the Ni'matullāhī is known.

17- Fortunately we now have the monumental study of Mullā 'Alī and the critical edition of his writings by Mu'ṣin Kadīwar (ed.), *Majmū'a-yi muṣannāfat-i 'akīm-i Mu'assis Āqā 'Alī Mudarris ṭhrānī*, 3 vols., Tehran, *Intishārāt-i iṣṣilā'āt*, 1378 (A. H. Solar). A fourth volume containing the text of the *Badāyi' al-ḥikam* is planned to complete the project. This work contains all the available and authenticated texts of Āqā 'Alī in addition to an extensive introduction by Kadīwar on his life and thought. These volumes are unique in their thoroughness and scholarly quality as far as a figure of the School of Tehran in concerned.

18- For a complete list see Kadīwar, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-64.

19- His treatise on resurrection known as *Sabil al-rishad* ("Path of Guidance") was among his most popular works.

20- *Ibid.* pp. 59.

21- See K. Mujtahidī, "Dhikr-i falāsafa-yi gharb dar *Badāyi' al-ḥikam*," *Rāhnamā-yi kitāb*, vol, 18, no. 10-12, 1354 (A. H. Solar); and Mujtahidī, "Mīrzā 'Imād al-Dawlah wa Evellene faylsūf-i Farānsawī." *Rāhnamā-yi kitāb*, vol. 19, no.11-12, 1355.

22- The introduction of Āshtiyānī to his edition of the *Rasā'il* of Sabziwārī, Mashhad, Mashhad University Press, 1970, p. 52.

23- "In his comprehension of the words of Mullā ṭadrā and understanding of the mysteries and difficulties of his philosophy, Āqā 'Alī was more perfect than all those who have written either glosses or independent works cornering the foundation of Mullā ṭadrā's [thought]" S. J. Āshtiyānī, his introduction to *Sharḥ risālat al-Mashā'ir* of Mullā ṭadrā by Mullā Mu'ammad Ja'far Lāhījānī, Mashhad, Mashhad University Press, 1964, p. 48.

24- Published in Paris, Dedier et cie, 1865.

25- Kadīwar, op. cit. p. 49.

26- Sadughi Soha, op. cit., p. 51-52. Sadughi Soha also writes that the teacher of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā's teacher Āqā Sayyid Raḫī Lārījānī, whose name was Ākhūnd Mullā Ismā'īl Wā'id al-'Ayn, was one of the spiritual masters of the Dhahabī Order. Ibid. p. 52.

27- Khīr or al-Khaḫīr refers of course to the mysterious prophet mentioned in the Noble Quran who symbolizes the guide upon the spiritual path in Islamic esoterism.

28- Sadughi Soha, op. cit., p. 49.

29- Āshtiyānī's, introduction to the Shawāhid, p. one hundred and twenty four.

30- Sadughi Soha, op. cit., p. 58.

31- Unfortunately most of those works have yet to be critically edited and published. One hopes that someone will do for the works of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā what Muḥsin Kadīwar has done for the writings of Āqā 'Alī Musarris.

32- For a long list of Āqā Muḥammad Riḫā 's students see Sadughi Soha, op. cit., pp. 59-105.

33- Like Āqā 'Alī Mudarris, Jilwah has written a short account of his own life, which has been published in Sadughi Soha, op. cit. pp.159-161.

34- Sadughi Soha has given the name of dozens upon dozen of the students of the founders of the School of Tehran and their immediate successors to the present day. See his op. cit., pp. 59 ff. There are many figures mentioned briefly by Sadughi Soha and Āshtiyānī who deserve to be more fully studied. We do not wish to give simply a catalogue of their names here but must emphasize that many of them are worthy of separate monographic study.

35- For an account of his life see the Persian introduction of M. Mohaghegh to A. Falaturi and M. Mohaghegh (eds.), Āshtiyānī, Commentary on Sabziwārī's Sharḥ-i manẓumah, Tehran, Mc Mill University, Institute of Islamic Studies, Tehran Branch, 1973. See also the English introduction written by T. Izutsu to this volume.

36- See ibid. where the complete Arabic commentary has been printed in a critical edition.

37- Published in Tehran by the Tehran University Press, 1330 (A. H. Solar).

38- Āshtiyānī, Commentary ..., English introduction, pp. 5-6. This description also holds true for a member of other commentaries written by members of School of Tehran on the earlier texts of Islamic philosophy not to speak of 'irfān.

39- All of these figures either belong to or have been closely associate with the School of Tehran and one day when the full history of this School and Islamic philosophy in general during the 14th/20th century is written, their ideas must be analysed and discussed fully. We have had the honour and pleasure of knowing all of them intimately and having collaborated for years with some of them

especially Muṣahharī and Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī or various projects dealing with Islamic philosophy and Islamic thought in general.

40- See the brief introduction of Sayyid ṣasan ṣasanzādah Āmulī to Qazwīnī, Itti'ād-i 'āqil wa ma'qel, Tehran, Markaz-i intishārātī-'ilmī wa farhangī, 1401 (A. H.).

41- When we planned to publish a commemoration volume on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of the birth of Mullā 'adrā, which came out as S. H. Nasr (ed.), Mullā 'adrā Commemoration Volume, Tehran, Tehran University Press, 1961, we asked him to contribute an article. He kindly accepted and wrote a masterly article in Persian on trans- substantial motion which was translated also in English by us for that volume (pp. 7-21). This is the only work of his available in English until now. Then in the late 60's and early 70's when we would visit Qazwin regularly often with Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī and Badī 'al-Zamān Furẓzānfar to benefit from Qazwīnī's presence, we would give him a note book in which he would write a short treatise each time to answer questions that we would pose to him. These questions included such thorny issues as Itti'ād al-'āqil wa'l-ma'qel, 'udḥth-i dahrī, 'ālam al-mithāl and eschatology, etc. In the mid 70's after his death M. T. Danehpazhuh asked us if he could make a copy of this note-book for the Central Library of Tehran University which we fortunately accepted because, with the plunder of our library in 1979, the original note-book was lost to us. Later ṣasanzādah Āmulī published these treatises together but we do not know whether they were from the Tehran University Library microfilms or from the original which had fallen into his hand. In any case fortunately these masterly treatises are now available in published form.

42- We have had an intense personal relationship with this master since our childhood days. He was an intimate friend of our father and like a second father to us. Upon returning to Persia in 1958, we studied both 'ikmat and 'irfān with him regularly until shortly before his death.

43- On the life of Sayyid Mu'ammad Kā'im 'Aẓẓār see the introduction of S. J. Āshtiyānī to his edition of Majm'ā-yi āthār-i 'Aẓẓār, Tehran, Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1376,(A. H. Solar), pp. one ff. See also the moving poetic account of this master by his daughter Shusha Guppy in her autobiography, The Blind Horse-Memories of a Persian Childhood, London, Heinemann, 1988. Written in elegant English, this work reveals much about the personal traits of this remarkable sage.

44- Upon his retirement he was succeeded by Abu'l-ṣasan Sha'rānī. When we became professor in this same department in 1958, the only course on Islamic philosophy was taught by 'Aẓẓār but we were able to expand the curriculum to some extent. For some years Corbin and I taught a graduate seminar on the subject and I also devised and taught a new course which was an introduction to Islamic philosophy and a requirement for all philosophy majors and many other students.

45- For over a dozen years we studied various traditional texts with the master at the house of Dhu'l-Majd ṣabāṣabā'ī, a lawyer dedicated to the study of 'ikmat and 'irfān. We met with 'Aẓẓār three afternoons a week for study. About five years of this period was spent in studying the Ashī'at al-lama'āt of Jāmī which is a gnostic text of great literacy beauty, 'Aẓẓār having been very well versed in classical Sufi literature and especially poetry which he quoted often in his classes. He would read one or two lines of Jāmī and then would carry out a discourse of his own for an hour or two. After five years when we had finished the introduction, the master said, " We do not need to continue. You should be able to read the rest of the text on your own. " It was also at the house of Dhu'l-Majd that the weekend sessions with 'Allāmah ṣabāṣabā'ī were held, session which were joined by Corbin during the fall season which he would spend in Tehran.

46- All of those works have been edited with commentary by Āshtiyānī in Majmū'a-yi āthār-i 'Aḡẏār.

47- It is an enigma that 'Aḡẏār did not write a work confronting Western thought as did 'Allāmah ḡabā'ī and Mīrzā Mahdī ḡā'irī Yazdī. We asked him several times about this question, but he always shrugged off the suggestion of writing such a work with laughter or a gesture that suggested that such an enterprise was not worthwhile because of the lack of depth of modern philosophical ideas.

48- Once Muḡsin Furūghī, the oldest son of Muḡammad 'Alī Furūghī who wrote the major text on Western philosophy in modern Persia, Sayr-i ḡikmat dar Urūpā, told us that when he was a child, in their house, there was keen interest in European philosophy which was highly revered, while when one spoke of Mullā ḡadrā it was considered as something very ordinary and uninteresting like meat bought at a butcher's shop. If this was the case of a household whose master was interested in Islamic philosophy and who translated a part of the Shifā' of Ibn Sīnā into Persian, one can imagine what it must have been like in other modernized households.

49- See our analysis especially in reference to Islamic thought of the philosophical scene in Persia at that time in our Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia, chapter 24, "Islamic Philosophy in Modern Persia", pp.323-340.

50- On his life and works see our introduction to his Shi'ite Islam, ed. by S. H. Nasr, Albany (N.Y.) The State University of New York Press, 1975; and 'Allāmah Sayyid Muḡammad ḡusayn ḡusayni ḡihrānī, Mīhr-i tābān, Mashhad, Mashhad University Press, 1417 (A. H.). ḡihrānī himself was a major scholar and philosopher and the author of over a hundred works many dealing with ḡikmat, but although named ḡihrānī, he studied in Qom and belongs properly speaking to the School of Qom rather than to the School of Tehran.

51- See his Principles of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophic-Knowledge by Presence, Albany (N. Y.), The State University on New York Press, 1992, and our forward to the work about the author.

52- There were of course other traditional philosophers such as ḡusayn 'Alī Rāshid and Muḡammad Taqī Ja'farī who also dealt with Western thought, but we consider ḡabā'ī and ḡā'irī to be the most important in this group and therefore have not dealt the others here.

53- In this context it is important especially to refer to the works of Muḡammad Bāqir al-ḡadr who was a prominent member of the School of Najaf in philosophy.

Divine Attributes According to Suhrawardī and Mullī ḡadrī

M. Damad, Academy of Science, Iran

Abstract

An accurate understanding of Divine Attributes can only be realized after a proper comprehension of the principality and simplicity of existence. The reason for the diversity of the views of theologians and philosophers concerning this vital issue stems from their difference of these very fundamental

assertions. Whereas the Ash'arites believe that the Divine Attributes are additional and separate from the Divine Essence, majorities of the Mu'tazilites negate every kind of Attribute for the Divine Essence. The theosophists (Ishraqiyyun), on the other hand, have taken the course of moderation, after firmly establishing the theories of the principality and simplicity of the Divine Essence. They believe that the Divine Essence despite having attributes is not separate from them, but rather one with them. Among these theosophers to whom the Islamic philosophy is highly indebted is Shaykh al-Ishraq. It is believed that due to an ambiguity or contradiction in his expressions, giants like Mullī Ṭadrī and the faithful commentators of his works, have attributed the theory of the 'principality of quiddity' to him. However, upon having an impartial look at his works, this attribution would not sound substantial, the reason being that many of his views entirely depend on and concur with the theory of the principality of existence. It would therefore be fundamentally wrong to judge the views of this sage of illumination through only parts of his statements.

In classical Islamic theology the discussion on proving the existence of God precedes the discussion about Divine Attributes. Neo-theologians, however, believe that the question 'what do the Divine attributes resemble?' must be discussed before proving Divine existence, for 'so long as we have no idea of what God is, it is meaningless to ask whether God exists or not. Louis Carl has written a beautiful poem by the title 'Stark'.¹ But it is meaningless to ask whether Starks really exist or not, for Carl never tells us clearly what kind of a creature a Stark is. If we likewise stay in the dark with regard to the reality of God, how can we question about His existence or nonexistence?'²

This contention is absolutely correct if the question 'What is God?' seeks a general idea of God and His Attributes. In other words, whosoever would like to speak about proving God's existence must have a general concept of God in his mind. However, the discussion on the reality of the Divine Essence and His Perfect Attributes comes after proving the existence of His Essence and not before that.

Classical Islamic Theology abides by the Aristotelian method, which says that inquiring about the reality of an entity comes after an inquiry about the existence of the same, although the inquiry of the details of the entity precedes the latter. Hence when we speak about the existence of God we have no ambiguity about the general meaning of God, although we have no complete knowledge of His reality and Essence. And research on the reality of the Divine Essence prior to establishing His Existence is meaningless.

Ṭadrī Muta'allihī in his exposition to the wise dictum of Imām 'Alī ('a) that says 'The basis of religion is knowing Him', remarks:

This indicates that knowing the Almighty God, even in general, is the beginning of belief and certainty, for so long as something is not yet conceived, it is impossible for one to accept its existence. That is why it is said: inquiring about the details of an entity precedes inquiring about the existence of the same.³

This means that religion begins with a formal comprehension of God, however general and concise that may be, for belief in God and faith and conviction in him without conceiving Him is impossible. This is because the knowledge of every entity is in stages of conception (taḥawwūr) and assertion (taḥdīq), the latter following the former. Thus in the discipline of logic it is said that ma' al-shjri'a (inquiry about the details of an entity) which is responsible for defining the concept of an entity precedes hal al-basṣa (inquiry about the very existence of the entity) which informs about the existence of the entity; and

knowledge about God is not an exception to this universal law. Therefore, before believing and acknowledgement God must be known in general.

In the epistemological system of Islamic Theology, coherence is a characteristic entirely apparent and tangible. For example, the knowledge of Divine Attributes is closely related to the method of the principle of proving His existence. And the response to the query that what Attributes does God possess and what sort of link does His Essence have with His Attributes, is entirely derived from the method of proving God's existence.

Because the Ash'arites believed that the existence of the Necessary Essence is additional to quiddity (mihhiyya) and speculated the Necessary Being to be composite like contingent existence, in their discussion concerning His Attributes too they held that the Divine Attributes are additional to His Essence.

It is also interesting to note that their proofs on this issue accurately resemble the same proofs that try to establish that existence itself is additional to [and other than] the Divine Essence. 4

Theosophists (ʾukami) who believe the Divine Essence to be Sheer Existence and Simple Reality comprehend His Perfect Attributes to be the same as His very Simple Essence. In this connection, the Mu'tazilites have no unanimous view. Contradictory views, however, are attributed to them:

'Alljma millç in his Shar' -e Yiqæt of Nawbakhtç says:

And that which our scholars as well as most of the Mu'tazilites believe is that Almighty Allah is Powerful, Knowledgeable, All-Living in His Essence (lidhjtih)....And He is needless of other than Himself when ascribed to the said attributes; rather if there was nothing in the realm of Existence save Almighty Allah, He would indeed have still been Powerful, Knowledgeable, and All-living. 5

However in his commentary on al-Tajrd he says:

And a group among the Mu'tazilites held that Almighty Allah possesses Attributes in addition to His Essence. 6

And finally, their famous view on this issue is the theory of representation (niyjba). Sabzawjrç says:

Ash'arites believe that Divine Attributes are additional to the Essence

And the Mu'tazilites believe in representation (niyjba). 7

The theory of niyjba is to reject every kind of Attribute for Almighty God, be it in concrete form or in the form of being additional; and in reality this view is one of the extensions of the theory of suspension (ta'şçl).8

And it should not be conjectured that the Mu'tazilites' rejection of 'The Divine Attributes being additional [to the Essence]' is the same theory of the theosophists based on the unity ('ayniyya) of the Divine Attributes and the Divine Essence in one concrete reality. The reason behind this supposition is that the proofs employed by the Mu'tazilites for the negation of the Divine Attributes being additional

resemble the proofs presented by the theosophists. However, according to the Mu'tazilites, negating attributes additional to the Essence is other than the 'oneness' ('ayniyya) believed by the theosophists.

In reality, the solution behind the problem of Divine Attributes lies in the knowledge of the reality of existence, which is [also] a means of correct knowledge of other divine teachings; and so long as existence is not perfectly known, existential entities cannot be accurately differentiated from derivative (mijhuwç) and conceptual (mafhemç) entities, and [therefore] would [also] not possess its specific law. Isn't it that [at the onset] motion (!araka) was known to be a derivative (mijhuwç) entity and a form of accident ('araç), and philosophers were in search of its subject (mawæf'), and on the basis of this very thinking did not believe substance to have motion? However, after expounding the reality of existence and its classification into individual (nafsç) and relational (rjbişç) existence in the Transcendent Theosophy, specific concrete existence was introduced as the subject of flux and change without any need of any kind of subject.

And wasn't knowledge conjectured to be a derivative entity (mijhiyya), and hence some considered it to be a relational category and others as a psychic quality (kayfe nafsijnç), whereas in the Transcendent Theosophy it was established to be an existential entity and known to possess degrees and grades? 9

Likewise is the case with the attributes. If we consider the attributes to exist by other than themselves and depend on the 'Attributed' we can never reckon God whose Essence is Independent and does not rest on any other thing to be His very Attributes; and we would also be left with no option save either to believe like the Ash'arites, that the Attributes are additional to the Essence or like the Mu'tazilites that the Essence represent the Attributes (the theory of niyiba) which in reality is the negation of any attribute for God, and hence consider him to be free from any kind of perfect attribute.

However, in the Transcendent Theosophy where the derivative attributes are distinguished from the perfect existential attributes, and the first category is known to follow existence whereas the second is the same as existence, the problem is completely solved, for if the existential attributes are known to be the same as existence, they would follow the laws of existence; and gradation (tashkçk) being one of its laws, would also include the attributes of existence to be so. That is, in the same way as existents are in grades, some being affluent (ghanç), while others indigent (faqçr), existential attributes of perfection likewise are the same. As does Almighty God Subsist by His Essence and is Infinite in Nature, so are all of His Perfect Attributes, which are the same as His Sacred Essence. 10 Transcendent Theosophy does not involve the conceptual difference of the Attributes in their existential extension and perceives Simple Existence which is Self-subsistent to be one with its Perfect Attributes and observes no kind of real priority (taqaddum) or posteriority (ta'akhhur) between existence and its perfect attribute such as life, knowledge, and power.

All of these results in the Transcendent Theosophy are based on the knowledge of the reality of existence and its principality, for were we to consider existence to be mentally posited and derivative and believe that it does not have an identity in the world of reality, it would according to its concepts and quiddities undoubtedly diversify.

It is their understanding of the reality of existence that made the Ash'arites reckon the extension (miçdiq) [of the Attribute] to be additional and separate like its concept (mafhem) and apply the law of the concept on the extension, and consequently fall in the trap of believing that the Attributes are additional to the Essence. Likewise is the case with another group who believed that concepts are united [in one simple reality] like their extension, and thus applied 11 the law of the extension on the concepts.

In the Transcendent Theosophy, given the idea of the principality of existence, despite the numerousness of the attributes and the multiplicity of their concepts, they are:

Firstly, united with the Essence in one concrete reality, and the orbit of their unity as well as their oneness ('ayniyya) is external existence;

Secondly, all of the attributes are conceptually different. Further, they are also different from the concept of Necessary Existence, and there is no kind of conceptual unity between them;

Thirdly, having proved the unity of the Essential Attributes of the Necessary Being one can prove the principality of existence and the derivative nature of quiddity, for if existence was mentally posited, that which would exist in the external world would be a concept and quiddity. And because concepts and quiddities are the pivot of multiplicity and separation, the Essential Attributes of the Necessary Being must inevitably be diverse and separate from the Necessary Being. On the contrary however, both the intellectual proof on the unity and oneness of all the Essential Attributes and the Essence, as well as the invalidity of the multiplicity of the Divine Attributes, have been established. In the words of Sabzawjī:

The Truth and His words would not be unified

Except by that with which unity always goes hand in hand. 12

ʿadrij says:

Because the proof of the unity and oneness of the Essence and Attributes has been established and there is no option but to accept the same, and since the proponents of the principality of quiddity and the derivativeness of existence were not able to position existence as the pivot of unity, they were bound to reckon 'the concept' to be the pivot of unity and conjecture that conceptions of those perfect Attributes return to one concept; and more worse than this was that they were about to say that the lexis of these meanings are synonymous with one another, whereas the falsity of this conjecture is clear to you. 13

Shaykh al- Ishrīq's Stance on the Issue of Divine Attributes

We would now like to observe the stance adopted by Shaykh Shahjibuddin Suhrawardī with specific regard to the issue of the Attributes of the Almighty Creator and the manner in which He is qualified by them and whether that can be in harmony with his opinions.

Certainly Shaykh al-Ishrīq does not believe that the Attributes are additional to the Essence, and has presented several proofs to establish the same; it also seems that the proofs mentioned by ʿadruʿī Mutaʿallihīn in his Asfīr 14 are the same as those that have come in μikmat al-Ishrīq.15

Now the question that arises is that whether by denying the theory that says that the Divine Attributes are additional to the Divine Essence, has he adopted the path of the Muʿtazilites, and thus negated any kind of Attribute for the Sacred Essence, or does he believe in the unity of the Essence and the Attributes and their oneness- a stance taken by the divine theosophers? Here below we present Shaykh's statement verbatim:

No kind of state is added to the light of lights, whether it be radiant or dark; and no attribute whatsoever is possible for Him. 16

It is likely to suppose that Shaykh believes that the Divine Essence possesses no Attribute. And as it was mentioned a few lines above, due to the common proofs of the theosophers and the Mu'tazilites regarding the impossibility of the additional nature of the attributes of the Sacred Essence, as well as their common belief in the rejection of Divine Attributes being additional to the Essence, it has been observed several times in theological literature that authorities from both parties due to their personal inclination interpret religious texts or the statement of the ancient scholars according to their own viewpoint. For example, Ibn Abi al-ʿadā, the Mu'tazilite when interpreting the dictum of Imam 'Alī ('a) 'And the perfection of sincerity to Him is in negating attributes from Him' considers it to be in harmony with the view of the Mu'tazilites, 17 and criticizes 18 Quṣb Rīwandī. However, ʿadru'l Muta'allihīn by his wise analysis has clarified and expounded it to be in harmony with the theory of the Islamic theosophists.19

Apparently, due to the infiltration of the thoughts of the Mu'tazilites, the same question was asked from the holy progeny of the Prophet (s) by the Shi'ite elders. As an example, look at the following tradition:

A group from the inhabitants of 'Iraq conjecture that He (Allīh) Hears by means of other than what He Sees and Sees by means of other than what He Hears. He ('a) said: They lied, disbelieved and likened Him, Exalted is He from that. Indeed He is All-hearing and All-seeing; He Hears by means of what He Sees, and Sees by means of what He Hears. 20

From the above tradition it can be well-understood that the origin of the unity and oneness of the Attributes of the Essence is 'the sheer simplicity of the Necessary Being'; and were the Essential Attributes, apart from being the very Necessary Essence, distinct from one another, they would result in the inner multiplicity of the Essence, whereas the Sacred Essence is secure from the taints of multiplicity.

Anyways, can we contend that Shaykh Ishrīq, like the Mu'tazilites, believed that the Divine Essence has no Attribute?

ʿadru'l Muta'allihīn highly cautions us 21 against thinking in such a way about Shaykh. The words of Shaykh in the latter part of his discussion is a witness to the ʿadraean understanding, for after establishing a proof of the necessity of multiplicity in sheer simplicity in terms of action and acceptance and the impossibility of their unity in a purely simple entity, he says:

Thus it has been established that the light of the lights is free from other than itself, and nothing is added to it... Thus the life and knowledge of the light of lights about itself is not additional to its Essence. 22

The last statement clearly shows that Shaykh does not negate Divine Attributes, and informs us that he believes that God has [the attributes of] life and power, without considering them to be additional to the Essence.

Clearer than this is the statement that ʿadri quotes from Shaykh in his book *Asfīr* in the discussion on the kinds of Divine Attributes, as follows:

The Shaykh Shahjib al-Dġn, the martyr and theosopher, says in one of his books:

And that which is incumbent for us to know and research about is that it is forbidden to attribute various additions to the Necessary Existent which would necessitate different states in it. He rather has only one state which is 'origination' (mabda'iyya) that facilitates all others attributions (lġjfi) such as 'the attribute of providing sustenance' (riziqiyya), 'the attribute of designing' (muġawwiriyya) and their like; nor does he have any negation save for one which follows all others, and that is 'the negation of contingency (imkin). 23

However, we all know that ġadri has introduced Shaykh al-Ishriġ to be among the forerunners of negating the principality of existence and the proponents of the principality of quiddity and derivativeness (i'tibariyyat) of existence. And this matter seems to be clear in the statements of ġadri and the commentators of his works. The following statement of Sabzawġrġ in the beginning of Sharġ al-Manġma is tapped in the ears of all the seekers of philosophy:

Indeed, existence according to us is principal

The proof of our opponents is defective.

He introduces Shaykh al-Ishriġ here as the opponent, who believes in the derivativeness of existence and principality of quiddity.²⁴

Now the question that arises is that if the above is correct, how can Shaykh in his idea about the derivativeness of existence, rationalize his belief in the oneness of the Divine Attributes and the Divine Essence? Isn't it true that quiddities are requisite of diversity and multiplicity? How then can all the attributes unite with one another [in one simple reality] and at the same time also be one with the Divine Essence?

It seems that the answer to this query is hidden in the kind of Shaykh's vision about the reality of the external world and his worldview. Can it be possible for us to believe that whereas Shaykh, akin to Mulli ġadri, believed that contingent beings form a compositional marriage of existence and quiddity in the mental plane, although both cannot be real in the external world, Shaykh is made to conclude that quiddity is principal while Mulli ġadri is led to believe in the opposite? Such a contention sounds very far-fetched. This is because:

Firstly, on studying the historical background of the concept of the principality of existence we come to understand that up until before Mġr Dġmġd the option between 'the principality of existence' and 'the principality of quiddity' never existed, and the first philosopher to have propounded the subject in this manner was Mġr Dġmġd; Although he accepted the theory of the principality of quiddity, his student ġadru'l Muta'allihġn believed in the principality of existence. Hence, the contention that Peripatetics are proponents of the principality of existence whereas Illuminationists are proponents of the principality of quiddity does not have a correct basis. What is observed from Shaykh Ishriġ is a chapter in his ġikmat al-Ishriġ under the heading "fġ 'adami ziyġdati'l wujġd 'ala'l mġhiyya" (On existence not being additional to quiddity). And there is no mention in his works whatsoever about the subject revolving between one of the two elements of existence or quiddity. Reading through the statements of Shaykh al-Ishriġ perfectly shows that according to him existence being 'real' necessitates it to be 'principal' as well; and because the theory of the principality of quiddity was an accepted presumption for him as had been the case with his predecessors as well, a mention has been made about the proofs of the second element not

being principal. It is interesting to note that even ʿadri did not propound the matter in this way by saying that the Peripatetics have said so and so whereas the Illuminationists believe in so and so. It is after him that scholars the like of Muḥaqqiq Sabzawjī had propounded the subject as such.²⁵

Secondly, in reality, although the subject of the derivativeness of existence similar to themes such as unity, thingness, possibility, etc. has been propounded in the works of Suhrawardī, and also expressions that are not in harmony save with the theory of ‘the principality of quiddity’ are also seen, however, there is no doubt that in contrast, there exist information in some of the works of Shaykh and some of the illuminationists that are not in harmony save with the principality of existence.

Were we to ponder over Ibn Kamḥna’s misconception and the response thereof as indicated in the Asfīr, we would come to realize that Sadra had taken the same course to solve this ancient problem that Shaykh had adopted in his Talwīḥī and added nothing new to the same. Shaykh in his Talwīḥī propounds a theory which he introduces to be among the divine inspirations (ilḥāmī-e-ʿarshīyye), and hence considers it to be a personal experience and specific to himself; by doing so, he draws the line of separation between his path and the path of his predecessor philosophers such as Avicenna. He is of the belief that if we do have a Necessary Being in the world of existence, its reality would not be other than existence. Hence the Self-existing Necessary Being is sheer existence, which nothing can taint.²⁶

Needless to say, ‘not having a second’ is a quality of sheer and pure existence. And this theory, i.e. introducing sheer existence in the manner that is mentioned in the works of Suhrawardī, is not seen in the works of the preceding philosophers. And as is believed by Mullī ʿadri, this is the only solution to Ibn Kamḥna’s misconception about the Necessary Being. This clearly indicates Suhrawardī’s influence on Mullī ʿadri.

What is astonishing is that ʿadri in his Asfar explicitly says that such a solution is by the grace of the theory of the principality of existence and the proponents of the theory of the principality of quiddity cannot solve it, for they cannot believe in sheer existence; and more interesting is that the followers of Mullī ʿadri on their discussion about the principality of existence introduce one of their most significant proofs as establishing the unity of the Divine Essence, and say that the incorrect consequent of negating the principality of existence, disproves the unity and oneness of God.

Sabzawjī says:

The Truth and His words would not be unified

Except by that with which unity always goes hand in hand. 28

Although ʿadri has put great efforts in harmonizing Shaykh’s opinion with the theory of the principality of existence and believes ‘the principality of light’ to be the same as ‘the principality of existence’, it is important to investigate what prevented Shaykh from employing the word ‘existence’ and being persistent in using the word ‘light’. The scope of this article, however, does not permit us to discuss this.

Nevertheless, despite all these deliberations in the works of the followers of ʿadri, Shaykh al-Ishrīq (Master of Illumination), or rather, all the Illuminationists are known to be the chief proponents of the derivativeness of existence and the fundamentality of quiddity, which principally cannot be accepted.

Notes:

1- Stark apparently is a bird that resembles a gryphon in Persian literature.

2- 'Aql wa l'tiqid –e- DÇnÇ (the Persian translation of Reason and Religious Belief- An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion by Michael Peterson, William Hasker, Bruce Reichenbach and David Basinger), translated into the Persian by Ahmad NariqÇ and IbrjhÇm SulŞjnÇ, p.98

3- Mullij ʿadrij, Asfjr, v.6, p.129

4- Naqd al-Mu |a¥¥il, p.301

5- Vide p.73

6- Issue no. 19 from the discussion on the Necessary Attributes

7- Shar | al-Man³£ma Ni¥irÇ, p.161

8- Mulla Sadra, Shawahid al-Rububiyya, p.38

9- Mulla Sadra, al-Asfar al-Arba'a, v.6, p.125

10- Mulla HjdÇ Sabzawari, Glosses on Mulla Sadra's Shawahid al-Rububiyya, p. 444: "He [Mulla Sadra] says: 'As is believed by the Mu'tazilites, the cessationists (mu 'attilun...): These are they who believe in representation (niyaba), which means that His Exalted Essence represents His Attributes; therefore to them although He has no attribute of knowledge, the effects of the attribute such as the robustness and strength of action do exist, as it is said: 'Seek the conclusions and leave the origins'. Similar is the case with the rest of His Attributes. And indeed they fell into the trap, due to confining the attribute to a meaning that depends on other than itself, such that they also defined it with the latter; and they did not realize that knowledge was in [different] grades such as, 'the meaning of the verbal noun', 'a psychic quality', 'a psychic genus' like the knowledge of the human soul about itself, 'an intellectual genus' such as the knowledge of the universal intellect about its essence, and 'the Self-Subsisting Necessary Existence', such as the knowledge of the Exalted Necessary Being about His Essence...

11- Mullij ʿadrij, Asfar, v.1, p. 148

12- Mullij HjdÇ SabzawjrÇ, Man³£ma, p.14: "Therefore if existence were to be mentally posited (i'tibjrÇ), the intellect would neither be able to judge the oneness of the concepts of knowledge, power and other real [divine] attributes, nor would it be able to comprehend them to be one with the Sacred Necessary Essence, for the assumption is that the Attributes and the Essence lack the principle of unity, namely "existence", even though in the mental plane they would be different from one another as well as from the Divine Essence which they qualify, for the Divine Essence would, according to the position taken by the opponents, be one with the "quiddities", and different from the Sacred Essence when attributed to them as well. This would necessarily entail multiplicity in the essence in accordance with the multiplicity of the Attributes."

13- Mullij ʿadrij, Asfjr, v.6, p.148

14- Mullij ʿadrij, Asfjr, v.6, p.129

15- Sharḥ mikmat al-Ishriq, pp. 309-312

16- Shaykh al-Ishriq, mikmat al-Ishriq, New ed., p.123

17- Ibn Abi al-ʿadā, Sharḥ Nahj al-Baligha, v.1, p. 172: 'And as regards his dictum 'and the perfection of sincerity in Him is to negate attributes from Him' it is an explication of the monotheism that the Mu'tazilites believe which is to negate pre-eternal concepts.

18- Ibid., p.75

19- Mullī ʿadri, Asfīr, v.6, p. 120: He [peace be upon him] said: 'and the perfection of sincerity in Him is to negate attributes from Him'. By this he meant negating those attributes that are other than the Essence; otherwise the Essence in Itself is an extension (miʿdīq) of all the perfect qualities and divine attributes without there being anything additional to the Essence imagined to be a perfect attribute of His. Thus, His knowledge, volition, life and sight, all exist by His Simple Essence, although their concepts are different and their meanings multiple; for the perfection of existential reality is in its inclusiveness of the multiple perfect attributes concomitantly with its simple existence.

20- Uḫl al-Kifḥ and al-Tawḥīd of Shaykh ʿadīq, the chapter on the Attributes of the Divine Essence.

21- Mullī ʿadri, ʿadru'l Muta'allihīn's glosses on mikmat al-Ishriq, p.310

22- Shaykh al-Ishriq, mikmat al-Ishriq, New ed., p.124

23- Mullī ʿadri, Asfīr, v.6, p.121

24- Sharḥ Manʿama, Niʿīrḥ, p.11

25- Professor Muṣahharḥ, A compilation of works (Majmʿe ye ʿasir), v.13, p.256

26- Dr. Ibrīhīm Dinīnḥ, Shu'ī'e Andḥshe dar Falsafeye Suhruwardḥ, p.655: '...Hence if there existed a Necessary being in the plane of existence it would have no quiddity beyond existence so that the mind could dichotomize it into two entities; therefore He is Sheer Existence which is not tainted by anything particular not general, and that which is other than Him is only a ray or beam of a ray of Him which is not determined save by His Perfection, and due to the reason that His entire reality is existence, and 'all-existence' is sheer existence above which there is nothing more perfect. And whenever you imagine an 'otherness' and reflect upon the same you would observe that it would be nothing but the first entity, for it is impossible to perceive distinction in the sheerness of an entity.'

27- Ibid., p.657

28- Mullī Hīdḥ Sabzawīrḥ, Manʿama, p.14

Theories of Knowledge in Islamic Philosophy: from Ibn Sīnī to Mullī ʿadri

M. Hajihosseini, Isfahan University, Iran

The wise man knows that there is knowledge greater than his and this causes him to be humble, while the ignorant one thinks that there is no limit to his knowledge. Kindç.

Abstract

The nature of knowledge and the pursuit of truth are perennial questions of philosophy. Yet, the problem of knowledge remains an elusive enigma. In Islamic philosophy, the epistemological question primarily concerns perception and the three-way relationship between the percept, the perceived object and perception. The Aristotelian/Avicennan account of knowledge as the 'illustration' of the reality of the perceived object in the soul, or the presence of its essence in the soul, lead to a category confusion between substance and accident. Thus, in response other theories of knowledge were posited, three of which the author will discuss here: knowledge as the quality by correlation, knowledge as imaging of forms, and knowledge as the inherence of quiddities of perceived objects in the soul.

In the present article, after a brief introduction to the course of epistemology in Islamic philosophy, the author will go on to analyze each one of these theories, explaining their assumptions, their sources and influences, and the objections adduced against them in terms of standards such as consistency, independence, and completeness.

Introduction

The Post-Avicennan traditions of philosophy in Islam focus upon the issues of mental existence, immediate eidetic vision and intentionality in their pursuit of epistemology. Before this shift of emphasis, the Aristotelian account of knowledge as the impression of the reality of the perceived object or the presence of the quiddity of the thing in the percept was dominant with its concomitant problem of how one obtains these accidental forms from their substances. 1 Thus one had faced a major category mistake or confusion: how could one classify an object under two different categories, one a substance, another an accident given the mutual exclusivity of Aristotelian categoriology.

This problem was tackled in various ways. Ibn Sçnj (d. 1037) maintained that substance (jawhar) did not inhere in a substrate (mawæf') and thus was not dependent upon another for its realization in extra-mental reality. 2 Shaykh al-Ishriç Suhrawardç (d. 1191) 3 approached the problem in two ways: first, by utilizing the concept of mental existence (al-wuj£d al-dihnç), and second, by distinguishing between the ideal ipseity (huwiyya) and its concrete counterpart. Suhrawardç did not, however, regard mental existence as an independent one. Rather, he considered it alongside the concepts of unity and possibility that for him were 'beings of reasons' or exhibited only 'virtuality' (i'tibriyya). 4 Fakhr al-Dçn Rizç (d. 1210) was the first Islamic philosopher to discuss mental existence as an independent issue in philosophy and he established the theory of knowledge as a correlated essence (iæifa). 5 Making a distinction between the essence (i'aqçqa) and the quiddity (mihiyya) of the thing on the one hand, and its idea and form on the other, Naççr al-Dçn ±£sç (d. 1274), 6 Dabçrjn Kitiç Qazwçnç (d. 1276), and 'Alljma °illç (d. 1325) 7 defined knowledge and perception as the idea and the form of the thing perceived. They regarded the objections adduced against the issue of mental existence as resulting from a definition of knowledge as the 'presence of the essence and the quiddity of the thing for the perceiving subject'. In this theory, mental forms are regarded as the images of the extra-mental and the similarity between the two implies the existence of the extra-mental. 'Alljma 'Alç Q£shjç (d. 1474), Mçr ¯adr al-Dçn Dashtakç (d. 1497), Jalil al-Dçn Dawjnç (d. 1502), 8 Mulli ¯adri Shçrjzç (d. 1641), 9 'Abd al-

Razzīq Lih̄j̄ (d. 1661) all held that the quiddity of the perceived object is indeed present to the percept and posited various theories of knowledge based upon the concept of quiddity. Rajab 'Alī Tabr̄z̄ (d. 1670), however, has rejected it totally.¹⁰

Given the significance of the school of Mullī 'adri, many glosses and commentaries were written on his work, facilitating the development of doctrines and positions in Sadrian philosophy. But the central theory remained the same and dominant. Thus our analysis of the development of philosophical theories of knowledge will trace the course of epistemology in Islamic philosophy from Ibn S̄nī down to Mullī 'adri.

Development of Epistemology in Islamic Philosophy

In his account of the category of quality (kayf) and its divisions, Fīrj̄b̄ (d. 950) classifies knowledge within the category of psychic quality (kayfiyya nafsiyya).¹¹ Thus he considers knowledge to be an accident that inheres in the human soul. Ibn S̄nī regards knowledge on the one hand as occurring in man's soul, and on the other as the presence of the idea of the reality of thing (and not the essence of the reality of thing) for the perceiving one.¹² Thus, he encounters the problem of the accidentality of forms obtained from substances.¹³ He considers that the definition of substance, as a quiddity, which, if it is realized in extra-mental existence, is independent of a substrate, applied to intelligible substances.¹⁴ In this way, Ibn S̄nī tackles the problem. He does not consider intelligible substances that are realized in the external world, as exceptions to this definition. That is, he does not regard the independence of intelligible substance from a substrate as a necessary part of the definition of substance.¹⁵

Suhrawardī regards intellection as the presence of the immaterial, or the presence of the thing in an essence, which is free of matter.¹⁶ The Avicennan theory distinguished between existence and individuation. However, Suhrawardī regarded individuation as an aspect of existence. The perceived object and the intelligible lacked reference because for him existence does not refer but at the same time qua individuated, the intelligible is present in the mind.¹⁷ He considers perceptual form as an ideal ipseity (huwiyya), and considers it to be the 'shadowy' appearance of extra-mental thing. He insists that the idea of the thing is not similar to the thing in all aspects. Also, he makes a distinction between the illustration (mathal) and the idea (mithl) [of the thing]. In this way, he proceeds to solve the well-known problem of the association between accident and substance. According to him, the mental object, for example 'horse', is the idea of the extra-mental thing, and thus it is not similar to the extra-mental thing in all aspects. The extra-mental thing is clearly extrinsic to the mind. If the object known in the mind is similar to the extra-mental thing even in this aspect, this would obviate the realization of the mental form in mind.¹⁸

Fakhr al-Dīn Rīzī provides proofs for mental existence by making use of necessity of the persistence of quiddities distinguished in the mind,¹⁹ and by referring to the permissibility of predicating impossibles. In response to critiques of the concept of mental existence by analyzing the locus of whiteness and blackness, he explains the difference between the two modes of existence, mental and extra-mental. The realization of the opposition between whiteness and blackness depends on external existence. Difference in the order of effects results from the difference in their receptacles. So heat in corporeal matter has certain properties, and heat in the soul, which is free of location and quantity, has other properties.²⁰ Those who deny mental existence, argue that whiteness and blackness are known independently because we know that black is opposite to white without perceiving their existence. That is, they are known a priori in the mind. This is inconsistent with the assumption that knowledge is a

quality and that knowledge of the opposition between whiteness and blackness is one and only one knowledge. Thus it is clear that the one making the objection doubts that knowledge is a pure quality, and regards it as a quality by correlation. 21 Also, Rizç rejects that knowledge is purely correlated, for what does not externally exist in the objective world can be known. 22

Naẏçr al-Dçn ±fsç proceeds to prove mental existence by considering analytic propositions. In response to the argument adduced by those who reject mental existence relying on necessity of agreement between two opposites while thinking, say, of heat and coolness, he regards knowledge, not as identical to the quiddity of the extra-mental thing, but as a form and idea of it. 23 Through making a distinction between the thing and its form, Kıtıbç Qazwçnç rejects the objection of the necessity of agreement between two opposites, and denies that the effects of extra-mental existence should be caused by mental existence as well. 24 Commenting on his view, 'Allıma °illç regards the above-mentioned objection as originating as a result of not making a distinction between thing and its cognate. He considers the object known in the mind as a form, an idea and a cognate of thing, and not as its essence and reality. 25

'Allıma 'Alç Qfshjç, who is among the commentators of Tajrıd al-i'tıqd, is of the view that when we know a substantial thing, in our mind, two things result from this substance. The first is the object known, which is in mind and it is universal and substantial, for substance is a quiddity that, if realized in the external world, does not require a substrate. The second is knowledge, which, since it occurs on soul, is particular and a psychic quality, which depends on an extra-mental thing. According to him, those scholars who define knowledge as the presence of the quiddity of the thing only consider the first result, and those who define it as a form, an idea, and a cognate of the thing, only consider the second result. 26

Another commentator of Tajrıd al-i'tıqd, adr al-Dçn Dashtakç, known as Sayyid al-Sanad, regards the view of Qfshjç concerning the existence of two things in the mind as unproved. He interprets the view of the philosophers, that is the acquisition of the forms of things in the mind, as the acquisition of the quiddities of things in mind. This quiddity, which does not engender effects, is called 'image' (shaba'). 27 Thus, Dashtakç makes no distinction between the acquisition of the quiddity of the thing in the mind and the belief in the acquisition of image in mind. He insists that according to philosophers, form is not an image or an idea, but something that occurs in the external world in external matter, and in mind in the rational faculty. Thus, Dashtakç mentions the categorical discrepancy between the mental form, which is classified as a quality, and the extra-mental form, which is classified as a substance. Then, likening the unique form to prime matter, which transforms depending on the form dwelling in it, he goes on to tackle the problem. He says,

Prime matter also turns to accident or substance, depending upon mental existence or extra-mental existence; and thus to describe quiddity as substantiality or accidentality depends upon its mode of existence. 28

Also, he discusses the vagueness and indetermination of prime matter, which leads to the acceptance of various forms, and the determination of form in itself; and as a response he mentions existence as a condition for determination. 29

'Allıma Dawınç clarifies the claim of earlier philosophers who classified knowledge under the category of quality, as an analogy. Quiddities in the mind are accidents but extra-mental quiddities are substances; hence the problem. But if quiddities in the mind are accidents they must under change in

their nature, which is denied by most Muslim philosophers. Thus he regards quiddities in the mind to be the same category as extra-mental quiddities. 30

Concerning mental existence, Mullī ʿadrij is inspired by Dashtakç, and in order to explain the latter's position, he argues that the realization of the thing is determined by either its mental or extra-mental existence. 31 According to Mullī ʿadrij, in the percept, it is the concept, and not its individual or referent or its essence or reality, which is realized in mind; that is, the soul acquires the sensual, imaginative, or rational form of thing. 32 To pre-empt a misinterpretation of his theory as a belief in the theory of the 'image' (shaba'), Mullī ʿadrij emphasizes the fact that, according to those who believe in the theory of that image, what is realized in the extra-mental world is the quiddity and the essence of the thing, and what is realized in mind is its image. According to Mullī ʿadrij, however, the quiddity of a thing and its reality obtain both in the mind and extra-mentally. Concerning the way in which essential properties are retained, he says:

While imaging things, the mind considers mental forms, not for their mental existence, but for their objective extra-mental existence, by which the category of perceived thing is decided on, and the characteristics of objective reality of perceived thing are determined and essentials of external thing are abstracted. 33

Thus, Mullī ʿadrij regards the problem of association between accident and substance, or to put it more precisely, the problem of including the same thing under two categories, as a result of the fact that some people consider all categories which can be applied to the thing in all aspects as essential for that thing. 34 Whereas, as it can be seen in Mullī ʿadrij's words, perceived form, which is same as the object known by itself, is through primary predication (al-ʿaml al-awwalç al-dhjtç) the same as the extra-mental thing, and through common technical predication (al-ʿaml al-shi'î' al-ʿinîç) the same as the psychic quality. 35

'Abd al-Razziq Lihçjç regards the use of the term 'image' (shaba') for forms of quiddities in the mind is a figurative one, since the quiddity in the mind does not display the same effects as the effects of extra-mental quiddity. He rejects, thus, the view of some philosophers who explain mental existence in two ways. Some classify mental forms under the category of extra-mental quiddities, and others regard them as the images of quiddities and realities. 36

Finally, Rajab 'Alç Tabrçzç, a disciple of Mçr Findiriskç (d. 1641), goes on to reject mental existence. 37 Relying on two premises, one of which he regards as self-evident, and the other is regarded as speculative and argued, in order to prove his own position, he argues as follows.

If knowledge is acquired through the acquisition of the form of a thing in mind, then the mental form of thing should be a kind of form of that extra-mental thing. For it is impossible to deduce substance from accident and to know the form of 'man' through the form of 'horse'.

For its realization, every material form requires a particular matter, which is capable of receiving that form.

Thus, if the mental form of fire is realized in mind, this form should be, firstly, of the kind of form of extra-mental fire, and, secondly, it should be realized in a particular matter, which is capable of receiving it. So, mental form should retain all the characteristics of the extra-mental form of fire. They cannot be different in any respect whether as a form or reality or receptive matter. The characteristic of burning,

thus, should be present in the mental fire as well. It cannot be accepted that extra-mental existence is the condition of burning, since the concomitants of quiddity can be separated from a thing that does not exist either in mind or in extra-mental reality. Thus the conceptualization of forms of things cognized does not depend upon mental existence. 38

Analysis and appreciation

The validity of every theory is a function of the validity of its assumptions, the validity of its arguments, the consistency between its internal elements as well as between, its consistency within an intellectual system, its capacity to respond to questions and provide solutions for the problems, and its robustness in the face of objections. We need to apply this standard to theories of knowledge in Islamic philosophy.

Most Muslim philosophers define philosophy as the knowledge of the realities of things, as they are in fact, so that through knowing these realities and the objective order of the world, man may realize in himself a microcosmic rational order, which corresponds to the objective world. 39 This definition is reasonable only if we recognize three assumptions: the correspondence of perception with the external world, that perception represents the external world, and the possibility of recognition of the essence and the reality of things. The assumption of a quidditative relation between perception and perceived object results from the belief in perception's representation and mirroring of external reality. Concerning the issue of mental existence, Muslim philosophers posited two claims. First, in the process of learning, a phenomenon comes into being in man's mind, and it is not the case that knowledge is merely a correlative relation between the knowing subject and object known. Second, what comes into being in the mind is, in terms of essence and quiddity, the same as what comes into being in the extra-mental world. After the appearance of the form of a certain thing, it is this fact that leads us to pay attention to the external world. In this way, it can be explained in a rational way that knowledge unveils the known and explains the essential correspondence between knowledge and known.

An analysis of epistemological theories in Islamic philosophy reveals that they rely upon the assumption of a quidditative correspondence between the mental object and the extra-mental thing. No independent proof for the phenomenon of knowledge is provided. In other words, and as we have already shown, in defining knowledge, they are affected by these above-mentioned assumptions. Even those Muslim philosophers who reject the quidditative relation did not adduce an argument to support their own definition of knowledge. Though, since they employ this definition in response to some objections, their definition of knowledge is somehow demonstrated.

The analysis of the completeness or incompleteness of the theories of Muslim philosophers also depends on the extent of the scope of each one of them. Man's perception is not restricted to the realm of primary intelligibilia (ma'qġlit awwaliyya) and quidditative concepts. Thus, if one of the above definitions can only explain man's perceptions in the field of primary intelligibilia, and if it is not able to account for man's perception in the field of secondary intelligibilia (ma'qġlit thġniyya)- whether philosophical or logical- it is not sufficiently complete. 40 If it is able to account for the whole field of human perception -whether primary or secondary intelligibilia- it is sufficiently complete.

A: The Avicennan Theory

Ibn S̄n̄j is the first Muslim philosopher to define knowledge as the illustration of the reality of thing for the perceiving subject and he discusses the well-known problem of the association between substance and accident. For this reason, he is of paramount importance.

Ibn S̄n̄j does not provide an argument for his definition of knowledge. He regards the application of substance to perceived object and the essentially known object as permissible and at the same time, as accidental. Thus, taking the dependence of substance upon a substrate for mental realization into account, he rejects the association of substance and accident. Thus he attempts to retain the quidditative relation between perception and the perceived object. This reveals his assumption of the correspondence between perception and the external world, and the possibility of the recognition of the essentials properties of things. The validity of his theory, thus, is a function of the validity of these assumptions. His theory introduces the theory of quiddity, in which the correspondence of the mind with the objective world is justified through the notion of quiddity.

Ibn S̄n̄j and his Peripatetic followers hold that the active intellect or the Giver of forms (dator formarum, w̄hib al-ʔuwar) gives the same form to the rational faculty, which was given to matter, and, as a result, all sorts of material quiddities obtain. 41 In this way, quiddities can be acquired by cognition. That is why man's intellect, which at first lacks the cognitive forms but is able to perceive them, is called the material intellect (al-ʔaql al-hayʔij̄n̄). 42 Ibn S̄n̄j's theory of knowledge is consistent with his psychology and cosmology.

Concerning the completeness of his theory, it should be admitted that the field of Ibn S̄n̄j's analysis is the field of the primary intelligibilia, and his definition for knowledge does not cover the field of the philosophical and logical secondary intelligibilia.⁴³

B: An Analysis of Suhraward̄'s Theory

Suhraward̄ also does not provide an argument for his theory. His innovative approaches include positing the perceptual form as an ideal ipseity, considering the difference between the idea and the exemplar of thing and that the idea refers to the thing, which is immanent in the definition of the perceptual form as the shadowy appearance of extra-mental object. Thus he accounts for the unity and the duality of the perceptual form and the extra-mental object. He also assumes a correspondence between perception and the perceived object.

Suhraward̄ is significant in that he is the first philosopher to use the term 'mental existence' in works that are predominantly Peripatetic in nature. 44 It should be noted that in his later work on knowledge, Suhraward̄ accepts the theory of the illumination of the soul, which is completely opposed to the theory of mental existence. 45 Thus, it is not consistent.

Concerning the completeness of Suhraward̄'s definition, his definition cannot be restricted to the field of primary intelligibilia, for the shadowy appearance of the extra-mental object is a universal concept, whose application in the field of secondary intelligibilia is not meaningless, even though its application in the former field is more conventional. It should be noted that perhaps it was the use of the term 'illustration' (tamaththul) made by Ibn S̄n̄j to define knowledge that led Suhraward̄ to assume an ideal identity for perception.

C: Analysis of Rij̄'s Theory

Rizç analyzes the nature of mental existence by considering the question of the opposition between the properties 'whiteness' and 'blackness'. On the one hand, he recognizes the problem in assuming a unique location for whiteness and blackness, while pondering the opposition between blackness and whiteness, and we know that extra-mental existence should follow cognitively from mental existence. On the other hand, he confronts the problem that knowledge of the opposition between blackness and whiteness entails knowledge of whiteness, knowledge of blackness, and knowledge of their opposition, which is inconsistent with considering the knowledge of the opposition between whiteness and blackness as a quality, that is, an accident. For, if knowledge is a quality, the plurality of knowledge of whiteness, knowledge of blackness, and knowledge of their opposition cannot be justified any more. To solve the first problem, and after proving mental existence, Rizç proceeds to describe the discrepancies between mental existence and extra-mental existence. He regards knowledge of the opposition between whiteness and blackness as being conditioned upon their extra-mental existence. Mental existence does not display the same effects as extra-mental existence because the two modes or 'receptacles' are different. To solve the second problem, he doubts that knowledge is a pure quality, and regards it as a quality by correlation.

To explain the relation between perception and the perceived object, Rizç emphasizes Ibn Sçni's theory. He insisted upon the quidditative correspondence between the two modes of existence, mental and extra-mental. Then in order to explain the relation between perception and the percept, he regard knowledge as a quality by correlation. Quidditative correspondence 'saves' the relation between perception and to perceived object. He also assumes the possibility of recognizing essential properties of things. Nevertheless in his arguments, only mental existence is proved. Quidditative correspondence remains an assumption.

Rizç's theory of knowledge is internally consistent. The completeness and soundness of his argument on the definition of knowledge, however, can be questioned, for it does not cover the field of secondary intelligibilia.

D: An Analysis of the Theories of ±Esç, Kjtibç, and °illç

±Esç, Kjtibç, and °illç define knowledge and perception as a form or idea of the perceived object in the soul of percept, like a shadow on a wall or a picture on paper. 46 So the relation between this form and the perceived object is only a relation of similarity. Mental forms are images of extra-mental things and refer to those extra-mental things merely because of similarity, in the same way that words refer to objects. The only difference is that the reference of words to objects is a conventional one, while that of mental forms is a natural one. 47 That is why the reference of words to objects is of use only for those who are familiar with the convention, while the reference of mental forms is, however, universal.

They do not provide any demonstration for their theory of knowledge, but by utilizing the concept of mental existence they proffer a quasi-proof that addresses the well-known objections. Since knowledge is an image of the extra-mental object, quidditative correspondence is not assumed. Knowledge is, thus, merely an accident and a psychic quality. Though it seems that this theory enjoys consistency, it is incomplete, because it only addresses the field of primary intelligibilia. Secondary intelligibilia do not have 'images' as they are not forms. Thus the theory does not account for knowledge of key metaphysical concepts like existence itself.

E: An Analysis on Q£shjç's Theory

Qeşhîç distinguishes between the realization of the thing in the mind and its dependence upon the mind. 48 He regards them as two separate categories. He likens the tablet of the mind to a mirror, and compares cognitive forms with reflection in a mirror. Just as observations in a mirror have forms, and what depends upon the mirror is only the essence of the form, there are also in the mind two things realized. First, the known object is universal and a substance and in the mind. Second, knowledge is particular, accidental, a psychic quality, and exists through the extra-mental object, and depends upon soul.

This theory presumes the principles of correspondence between perception and the external world, the possibility of recognition of the essence and essential properties, and quidditative correspondence. Though the theory circumvents the problematic association of substance and accident, it does not provide a coherent and rationalized theory of knowledge. Nor does it provide an argument for the realization of the two things in the mind.

Furthermore, as it is said in the previous analysis, this theory is not consistent either. Its completeness, however, can be questioned because of the fact that it does not cover the field of secondary intelligibilia.

F: An Analysis of ĩadr al-Dċn Dashtakċ's Theory

Dashtakċ rejects the interpretation of form as an image and an idea other than the quiddity of the thing. Through likening form to prime matter, he regards existence as the condition of determination, and explains the categorical discrepancy between mental form, which is a quality, and the extra-mental form, which is a substance. According to him, what is acquired in the mind during the act of perception is only the essence of the forms of things. Once it is known, this form, however, undergoes certain changes, and might be included among accidents. For existence and the realization of quiddity depends upon existence, and the quiddity of the thing will not be realized, unless the thing itself comes into being. Hence, taking the discrepancies between mental existence and extra-mental existence into consideration, the form that depends upon extra-mental existence is not the same as the form that depends upon mental existence. The external object, once it is realized in mind, thus, turns into a psychic quality.

This theory presumes the principles of correspondence between perception and the external world and the possibility of recognition of essential properties. No argument is provided in support of the claim that by image, philosophers do not mean a form and an idea other than the quiddity of thing.

Also, although he argues for the transformation of the quiddity of external object into a psychic quality, Dashtakċ believes in the principality of quiddity (aĳilat al-mĳhiyya). 49 Holding that there is an objective fact that reconciles a substantial thing and an accidental one is not consistent with the assumption of the 'virtuality' of existence. Thus he takes recourse to vagueness. This is an indicative of the inconsistency in his philosophical system. His theory is also incomplete because it is restricted to the field of primary intelligibilia and it does not cover secondary intelligibilia.

G: An Analysis of Dawĳnċ's Theory

Since he regards change within quiddity to be impossible, Dawĳnċ considers the description of cognitive forms as qualities to be analogical usage. He considers mental quiddities to fall under the same category as extra-mental quiddities. This theory has two major features.

First, it presumes the principle of correspondence between perception and reality, the principle of the possibility of recognition of the essence and reality of things, and the principle of the quidditative correspondence.

Second, the quidditative correspondence between perception and the perceived object has not been demonstrated. It is not proven to be a quality. But if it were so, then change within quiddity would be necessary. This argument is, however, questionable, since the use of term 'quality' for cognitive forms is not analogical, but it is an unquestionable fact, since man's soul is able to abstract intelligibilia from extra-mental entities, imaginative forms, and ideal images. It goes without saying, then, that the soul, while abstracting these intelligibilia, is under the influence of a psychic quality, which is, in fact, its knowledge of that intelligible. Then when unveiling this concept, the soul possesses a quality, which originated in it.

H: An Analysis of Mulli ʿadri's Theory

Concerning the issue of mental existence, following Dashtakç, Mulli ʿadri regards the determination of the thing as depending upon its extra-mental or mental existence. Believing in the realization of the concept, and not the individual referent or the essence and reality of the thing in mind, he provides a new account for the fact that essential properties are retained in the perceived object in the mind. Then, taking recourse to his theory of predication, he regards perceptual form, in terms of extra-mental existence, as an accidental perceived object, and in terms of mental existence, as an accidental psychic quality. 50 Here, he is, perhaps, under the influence of Qʿshjç. The only difference is that Qʿshjç believes in the realization of two things in mind, while Mulli ʿadri believes in the realization of one thing, which can be interpreted in two ways from two various standpoints.

According to philosophers, the unique quiddity is a permanent one, which has various manifestations in the different worlds of existence, and particularly in human world, so that it manifests in every domain of being in proportion to the ontological quality of that domain. While this quiddity has various manifestations in the modes of being, it is, at the same time, a unique essence and reality. This unique reality comes into being in the external world through extra-mental existence and in the mind through mental existence.

If we compare Mulli ʿadri's theory concerning mental existence with this interpretation, we can conclude that Mulli ʿadri's theory of quiddity is a reasonable one, inspired by mystical intuition. This theory assumes the correspondence of perception with reality and the possibility of recognizing the essence and reality of things. In addition, it assumes quidditative correspondence through Mulli ʿadri's interpretation of primary essential and common technical predication. He is probably inspired by the theories of Dashtakç, 'Alljma Qʿshjç, and more importantly, by the mystics. Thus, the validity of his theory is a function of the assumptions and the theories that he employs.

Although he does not provide an independent argument in favor of defining knowledge as the presence of thing for the percept, he tries to solve the problem of the inclusion of the same thing under two categories, through the primary essential predication and common technical predication. For this reason, his theory is of paramount importance.

Mullī ʿadrij treated the issue of perception in two ways, as a discussion of mental existence that relates perception and the perceived object, and as a discussion of the Porphyrian issue of the union of knowledge, the knowing subject, and the known object, in which he also discusses perception.

For him, knowledge is in fact only existence and a stage of the rational soul. Its subsistence as being is effusional subsistence (qiyīm fayḥḥ), and not emanationist subsistence (qiyīm ʿudḥrḥ), and so it should be regarded as a manifestation of the agent. Mullī ʿadrij, thus, regards the reality of knowledge and perception as existence.

This is completely inconsistent with his position on mental existence. For, according to the theory of mental existence, the relation between perception and the percept is an accidental one, and according to his position on the union of knowledge, the knowing subject, and the known object, the relation between perception and the percept is a relation of unity. Also, according to his position on mental existence, the object known in the mind is a quality by common predication. However, according to his position on the union of knowledge, knowing subject, and known object, the object known in the mind, at various perceptual levels, is united with the level of action of soul. Thus, it is existence and beyond the categories.

On the other hand, in his theory of mental existence, quiddity is the source of the division of substance and accident. Cognitive forms, as they exist through mental existence and depend on the soul, are classified as qualities, and regarded as kinds of accidents, which are among the divisions of quiddity. Since they refer to extra-mental reality, they are classified as accidental perceived objects. His theory of mental existence is thus compromised by the principality of quiddity and inconsistent with his metaphysical theory of the principality of existence. Hence, Mullī ʿadrij's theory lacks internal consistency.

Concerning the completeness of Mullī ʿadrij's theory, it is clear that man's perception is not restricted to the fields of primary and secondary intelligibilia, so that the definition of knowledge as the presence of thing for the knowing subject may cover all of them. Hence, this theory lacks the completeness necessary to provide a full account.

I: An Analysis of Rajab ʿAlī Tabrḥḥ's Theory

Recognition of perceived objects requires one to hold as necessary a formal unity between the perceived object in the mind and its extra-mental counterpart. The realization of material forms requires matter capable of receiving those forms. Based on these premises, Tabrḥḥ claims that if such conditions are satisfied, the perceived object in the mind should possess all the characteristics of the perceived object in extra-mental existence. Since it is not so, he concludes that the acquisition of perception cannot be explained through mental existence and above-mentioned premises. He, thus, rejects mental existence.

In this theory, Tabrḥḥ provides an argument in favor of his claim to reject mental existence. His argument is, however, philosophically questionable, for three reasons.

First, in his argument, he identifies the concomitant properties of existence with those of quiddity, and the effect as directly following the quiddity. However, according to the principality of existence, quiddity is a virtual and a universal concept, which has no effect without existence. Consequently, the

concomitant properties of existence, like existence itself, are extra-mental and cause certain effects, while those of quiddity are virtual.

Second, the reality of every material thing depends upon form, and not matter. The principle of individuation thus is form. For, matter is a non-existential thing and effects result from the form of thing, which is in turn determined by its species.

Third, in terms of the essence of concept by primary predication), concepts can be interpreted in one way, and in terms of common predication, in another. 51

Conclusion

First, the independence of some epistemological theories and their efficacy has been compromised by their assumptions. Such assumptions include the possibility of the recognition of the essential properties of things, quidditative correspondence between subject and object, and so forth.

Concerning the knowledge of the reality of things, Ibn S̄n̄j says:

Man is not able to know the realities of things, and can know nothing of things but their characteristics, concomitants, and accidents. 52

He argues as follows:

Man does not know the reality of things, for his knowledge of things is acquired through senses. Then, through reason, he distinguishes similarities between the thing and other things as well as their discrepancies; and it is in this time when man knows, through reason, some of its concomitants and effects. 53

Ibn S̄n̄j stipulates that the essences and realities of things cannot be known:

Knowledge is the acquisition of the forms of known things in soul; this is not, however, to say that their essences are realized in soul, but their effects. 54

Suhraward̄ also thinks that it is impossible to define things. 55 He considered common 'definitions' to be the same as description. 56 He deemed a historical period, in which the power of thinking was limited and the ways to unveiling and observation were closed, as the worst period of man's life. 57 He did not think that knowledge was restricted to a particular group, and blamed those who prevented scholars from inquiry. 58

Second, the influence of some theories on some Muslim philosophers, for example, the influence of the mystics concerning the unreality of quiddity and its manifestations in the stages and worlds of existence, made the theories of latter group subordinated to the former.

Third, no independent argument is provided for the definition of knowledge as the realization of a thing or as the presence of the quiddity of a thing for the knowing subject. Taking some definition as granted in order to solve some problems diminishes their rational value, and reduces them to a mere claim. Muslim philosophers approached the question of knowledge in an a priori manner and were oblivious of the history of epistemology. This is also problematic.

Fourth, the condition of internal consistency between components of a theory, as well as between that theory and other accepted theories in the same philosophical system should be satisfied. Hence, some inconsistencies, which can be seen in above-mentioned theories, diminish their theoretical value.

Fifth, definitions of knowledge, provided by Muslim philosophers, are restricted to accounts provided for primary intelligibilia and secondary intelligibilia. Yet man's perception is not restricted to these fields alone. This proves the incompleteness of these theories and definitions.

I conclude this article with a quotation on the scope of perception from Mulli ʿadri:

Perception is not restricted to what I have perceived, and it is not limited either. True knowledge is not restricted to what I have 'defined' through description. The truth is so extensive that no reason is able to grasp it and not limit can be put on it. 59

Notes:

1- For an account of the different positions on the definition of knowledge, see Mulli ʿadri, *al-ʿikma al-mutaʿiliya fī l-Asfīr al-ʿaqliyya al-arbaʿa*, eds. R. Luṣfī et al, 3rd edn., Beirut: Dīr iʿyīʿ al-turīth al-ʿarabī 1981, vol. III, pp. 284ff.

2- Ibn Sīnī, *al-Shifīʿ: al-iljhiyyit*, ed. I. Madkur et al, Cairo: al-hayʿa al-ʿimma 1960, pp. 25ff.

3- See Suhrawardī, *ʿikmat al-Ishrīq [The Philosophy of Illumination]*, eds./trs. H. Ziai & J. Walbridge, Islamic Translation Series, Provo, UH: Brigham Young University Press 1999, pp. xv-xxx.

4- Suhrawardī, *ʿikmat al-Ishrīq*, pp. 45-51.

5- Rīzī, *al-Mabīʿith al-Mashriqiyya*, Hyderabad: Osmania Oriental Publications 1343 qamarī, vol. I, p. 331. See the critique of Mulli ʿadri, *al-Asfīr*, vol. III, pp. 344-45. On Rīzī, see S.H. Nasr, "Fakhr al-Dīn Rīzī," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. M.M. Sharif, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz 1966, vol. I, pp. 642-56.

6- See H. Dabashi, "Khwījah Naṣīr al-Dīn al-ʿaṣṣ: the philosopher/vizier and the intellectual climate of his times," in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, eds. S.H. Nasr & O. Leaman, London: Routledge 1996, vol. I, pp. 527-84; Mudarris-i Raḥawī, *Aʿwāj va jthīr-i ustīd...Khwīja Naṣīr al-Dīn*, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1955.

7- See Sabine Schmidtke, *The theology of al-ʿAllīma al-ʿillī*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 1991.

8- For a brief introduction to some of these figures after ʿaṣṣ and before Mulli ʿadri, see John Cooper, "From al-ʿaṣṣ to the school of Iṣfahīn," in *History of Islamic philosophy*, vol. I, pp. 585-96. On Dawīnī specifically, see John Cooper "Jalal al-Dīn al-Dawānī," *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* vol. 2, pp. 806-7, and Bakhtyar Husain Siddiqi, "Jalīl al-Dīn Dawwīnī," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. II, pp. 883-8.

9- The best study of Mulli ʿadri remains Fazlur Rahman, *The philosophy of Mulli ʿadri*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1975.

- 10- On this later Safavid figure, see Henry Corbin, *Histoire de la philosophie Islamique*, Paris: Gallimard 1974, pp. 472-73.
- 11- Firjibç, *Al-manşiqiyyit*, ed. M.T. DînishpazhĒh, Qum: Maktabat ʿayatullih Marʿashç Najafç 1408 qamarç, vol. I, p. 51. Cf. Mulli ĩadri, *al-Asfir*, vol. I, p. 323.
- 12- Ibn Sçni, *al-Ishirĳt wal-tanbçĳt maʿ sharĳ li l-±Esç*, ed. M. Shihjibç, rpt., Qum: Daftar-i nashr-i kitjb 1403 qamarç, vol. II, p. 308.
- 13- Ibn Sçni, *al-Shifĳʿ: al-iljhiyyit*, ed. I. MadkĒr et al, rpt. Tehran: Niųir-i Khusraw 1363 shamsç, p. 140.
- 14- Ibn Sçni, *al-Mabdaʿ wa l-maʿjd*, ed. ʿA. NĒrinç, Tehran: Tehran University Press in association with the McGill Institute of Islamic Studies 1363 shamsç, p. 105.
- 15- Ibn Sçni, *al-Shifĳʿ*, p. 140.
- 16- Suhrawardç, *al-Talwçĳit in Opera metaphysica et mystica* tome I, ed. H. Corbin, Istanbul: Maarif matbaasi 1945, rpt., Tehran: Muʿassasa-yi muşjiliʿit va taĳqçqit-i farhangç 1373 shamsç, vol. I, p. 72.
- 17- See the clarification of ShahrazĒrç, *Sharĳ ʿikmat al-Ishriq*, ed. H. Œijʿç, Tehran: Institute of Cultural Studies and Research 1993, p. 182.
- 18- Suhrawardç, *ʿikmat al-ishriq in Opera metaphysica et mystica* tome II, ed. H. Corbin: Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien 1951, rpt., Tehran: Muʿassasa-yi muşjiliʿit va taĳqçqit-i farhangç 1373 shamsç, vol. II, pp. 256-57.
- 19- Fakhr al-Dçn Riçç, *al-Mabiĳith al-mashriqiyya*, rpt., Qum: Intishirĳt-i Bçdĳr 1411 qamarç, vol. I, p. 41.
- 20- Riçç, *al-Mabiĳith*, vol. I, pp. 319-22.
- 21- Riçç, *al-Mabiĳith*, vol. I, pp. 321-22 & 327.
- 22- Riçç, *al-Mabiĳith*, vol. I, pp. 326-37.
- 23- ±Esç, *Tajrçd al-lʿtiqid*, Qum: Muʿassasa-yi muşjiliʿit-i dçnç 1366 shamsç, pp. 10-11 and eadem, *Talkhçų al-Muĳaųųal*, Cairo: al-matbaʿa al-ʿusayniyya 1323 qamarç, pp. 156-57.
- 24- Kĳtibç, *ʿikmat ayn al-qawjʿid*, ed. ʿA. Munzawç, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1327 shamsç, p. 16.
- 25- ʿillç, «ųĳĳ al-maqiųid fç sharĳ ʿikmat ʿayn al-qawjʿid, ed. ʿA. Munzawç, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1327 shamsç, p. 17.
- 26- QĒshjç, *Sharĳ al-Tajrçd*, Tehran lithograph, rpt., Isfahan: Dînishkada-yi adabiyĳit n.d., pp. 13-14.
- 27- Dashtakç, ʿjshiya bar Sharĳ al-Tajrçd, MS Majlis-i ShĒri fol. 14.
- 28- Dashtakç, ʿjshiya, MS Majlis fol. 13r-14v.

- 29- Dashtakç, °jshiya, MS Majlis fol. 14r.
- 30- Dawjñç, °jshiya bar Shar' al-Tajrçd, lithograph rpt., Isfahan: Djnishkada-yi adabiyijt n.d., p. 14.
- 31- Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, p. 322.
- 32- Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, pp. 291-92.
- 33- Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, pp. 292, 323.
- 34- Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, pp. 298-99.
- 35- Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, pp. 295-96.
- 36- Ljhçjç, Shawjriq al-ilhjm fç shar' tajrçd al-kaljm, Tehran lithograph rpt., Isfahan: Intishjrit-i Mahdavç n.d., pp. 51-2.
- 37- Cf. Tabrçzç, U¥l-i a¥afiyya, MS Majlis-i Sh£ri.
- 38- For a critique of this type of objection, see Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, pp. 275-76.
- 39- Cf. Mulli 'adri, al-Asfir, vol. I, p. 21.
- 40- A primary intelligible refers to a primary substance such as 'man' referring to Zayd. A secondary intelligible is an abstract concept of a higher order that may have generic reference. Thus 'existence' or 'substance' refers to a wider class of possible objects. Thus if one considers Zayd, in the first instance one might notice that he is human, thus one associates a primary intelligible in the mind with him, and in the second instance one notices that he exists, assigning a secondary intelligible 'existence' to him. Logical secondary intelligibilia are pure concepts of use in logic such as 'logical necessity'.
- 41- Ibn Sçni, al-Mabda', pp. 98, 102-3.
- 42- Ibn Sçni, al-Mabda', pp. 97-100.
- 43- Secondary intelligibilia cannot refer to material forms.
- 44- Suhrawardç, al-Muqjwamjt in Opera, vol. I, p. 163.
- 45- Suhrawardç, °ikmat al-Ishrijq in Opera, vol. II, p. 15.
- 46- Cf. Mulli Hjdç Sabzawjrç, Shar' ghurar al-fari'id ma'r£f bih Shar' man"£ma-yi 'ikmat, eds. M. Mohaghegh & T. Izutsu, Tehran: McGill University Institute of Islamic Studies 1969, pp. 60-1; M. Mohaghegh & T. Izutsu, The Metaphysics of Sabzavari, Tehran: Iran University Press 1983, p. 58.
- 47- That is, there is a natural relation in the form of a quiddity between the mental form of 'horse' and the extra-mental 'horse', while one calls the object 'horse' by convention and not because there is something essential to the form and meaning 'horse' that implies equinity.

48- That is, he distinguishes between subsistence and presence in the mind. See Sabzawjīr, *Sharḥ-i manẓuma*, p. 60; Mohaghegh & Izutsu, *Metaphysics of Sabzavari*, p. 57.

49- Cf. Sabzawjīr, *Sharḥ-i manẓuma*, p. 61; Mohaghegh & Izutsu, *Metaphysics of Sabzavari*, pp. 58-9.

50- Cf. Sabzawjīr, *Sharḥ-i manẓuma*, pp. 62-65; Mohaghegh & Izutsu, *Metaphysics of Sabzavari*, pp. 61-65.

51- S.J. Āshtiyānī, *Muntakhabāt az ijthir-i ḥukamī'-yi ilāhī-ye ḥurūfīn*, Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien 1972, rpt., Tehran: Mu'assasa-yi muṣīlī'it va ta'līqāt-i farhangī 1363 shamsī, vol. I, pp. 263-64.

52- Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ta'līqāt*, ed. 'A. Badawī, Cairo: GEBO 1973, p. 34.

53- Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ta'līqāt*, p. 82.

54- Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ta'līqāt*, p. 82.

55- Suhrawardī, *ʿikmat al-Ishrīq*, pp. 8-11.

56- Suhrawardī, *ʿikmat al-Ishrīq in Opera*, vol. II, pp. 31-36.

57- Suhrawardī, *ʿikmat al-Ishrīq in Opera*, vol. II, p. 17.

58- Suhrawardī, *ʿikmat al-Ishrīq*, p. 1.

59- Mullī ʿadrij, *al-Asfīr*, vol. I, p. 10.

Survey Article:

Approaching the Study of Mullī ʿadrij Shīrīzī (d. 1641): a survey of some doctoral dissertations

Sajjad H Rizvi, Pembroke College, UK

Abstract

This brief survey considers some of the major methodological approaches in Islamic philosophy to the study of the thought and the corpus of the Safavid philosopher Mullī ʿadrij Shīrīzī (d. 1641). I consider how some recent doctoral dissertations in English and French reflect these approaches and how successful they are at rendering an accurate, philosophically sophisticated and coherent image of the mental world of this most important of Islamic philosophers.

Sadrian studies have a venerable history. Comte Auguste de Gobineau, ¹ the French diplomat and traveller, and Max Horten, ² the Bonn University Orientalist, initiated the study of ʿadrij in European languages at the turn of the century. These early works were inspired by an Orientalist and even romantic quest for a mystical, other-worldly philosophy that might characterise the thought of

Islamdom in the later centuries. These early introductions are marred by serious errors of fact and misreadings. For Horten, this resulted from his Christian apologetics and his enthusiasm for Nietzsche. 3 Gobineau's work derived from his knowledge and acquaintance with Mulli Hıdç Sabzawırç (d. 1873), ʿadri's most influential commentator and perhaps the individual who contributed most to establishing Sadrian philosophy at the heart of the Shi'i intellectual tradition, by establishing the *Asfir* as a school-text. This makes Gobineau's assessment all the more puzzling. 4 But such introductions were on the whole forgotten and it was not until the voluminous work of Corbin 5 and Nasr 6 that ʿadri was truly introduced to western academia in the 1960s. In this short study, I want to consider some of the major methodological trends in the study of Mulli ʿadri illustrating these approaches with some of the key dissertations written since the 1970s. One can discern four different approaches to the study of ʿadri.

The first is Seyyed Hossein Nasr 7 and Henry Corbin's mystical reading of ʿadri focussing on the mysterious notion of 'being'. The problem with their approach is their insistence on describing the later philosophical tradition of ʿikmat as 'theosophy', 8 and as an essentially esoteric and arcane discipline. Corbin translates 'ʿikmat-i iljhç' as 'theosophia', a science that bridges the divide between theology and philosophy. 9 But this explanation remains unsatisfactory because one associates the word 'theosophy' with forms of 'irrationalism' such as the Theosophical movement. 10 To be fair, both Nasr and Corbin disassociate themselves from the Theosophists but it is difficult to reclaim the term. While it may be true that ʿadri described his philosophy as prophetic without any hint of dissimulation (pace Strauss), 11 it retains analytical features.

Morris's translation of al-'Arshiyya 12 stresses the mystical and mysterious nature of Sadrian philosophy and follows in this tradition. He sees ʿadri in Straussian terms as an oppositional persecuted intellect. The choice of text is significant being a late work on philosophical theology that is profoundly marked by the fruits of mystical intuition. Morris' annotation is especially helpful in tracing the Neoplatonic and Sufi resonances, as well as clarifying the critical issue of wiljya that marks this Shi'i thinker. Following Corbin, Morris is interested in Sadrian philosophy as a soteriology as a 'path of enlightenment' and of salvation. Knowledge and the quest for knowledge transcend the self and lead to self-realisation and fulfilment. Knowledge and practice are intimately linked and indeed Morris argues that 'philosophy begins where the discourse of practical spirituality ends'. 13 Philosophy is thus verification:

Verification of the symbolic and conceptual expression of the Truth (al-ʿaqq) which is inseparable from its immediate realisation in experience.

This is philosophy as a spiritual practice and an intensely religious commitment.

Zailan Moris 14 undertook research on the reconciliation of reason (al-'aql), revelation (al-wa'ç) and mystical insight under the supervision of Nasr. Focussing upon the 'Arshiyya, she argues that such a reconciliation was achieved and circumvents, without any explanation, Rahman's reservations about the inconsistencies of the Sadrian system. 15 In many ways, it is a culmination of Nasr's statement on this 'reconciliation' in his pioneering article of the 1960s. 16 Moris illustrates her thesis of synthesis and reconciliation by considering four central doctrines of Sadrian philosophy, namely, the unity, primacy and gradation of being, trans-substantial motion, the unity of cognition and the transcendence of the imaginal faculty. However, she does not clarify some of her basic assumptions about Islamic thought, at least about the 'sapiential traditions' to which she refers that consider man to be a 'theomorphic being' nor does she provide an adequate description of the key term and concept of ʿikma. Three further criticisms come to mind. First, Moris explains much of the metaphysical doctrines of ʿadri in terms of the thought of the Andalusian Sufi Ibn 'Arabç (d. 1240) but she does not discuss or explain this

relationship or its significance but assumes on the part of the reader a familiarity with it. Second, the work is intended as a companion to Morris' book but as a result is rather derivative with respect to the earlier work. Third, the chapters overlap extensively and there is much repetition of material. The overall coherence of the work and the thesis remains an issue that is unresolved. Hopefully, these matters have been resolved in the printed edition that is forthcoming from Curzon Press.

What is ironic about this approach, despite its attempts at presenting Ṭadrī as a serious and important thinker in the Islamic tradition, is that these interpreters share certain 'Orientalist' assumptions about the nature of later Islamic philosophy. They regard the ḥikmat tradition as essentially esoteric, mystical, and oppositional with respect to the 'exoteric jurists'. Ṭadrī is thus positioned in opposition to jurists, their authority and their epistemology of taqlīd (a term they would translate as 'blind imitation'). Thus, Nasr privileges Ṭadrī's mystical writings over his ḥikmat writings and defines his division of sciences not from the opening chapter of the *Asfjīr*, which represents Sadrian philosophy, but from *Iksīr al-ḥirifīn* (Elixir of the Mystics) with its mystical language of the science of the states over and above the noetic and discursive sciences.

The second approach is the 'comparativist' in which an attempt is made to map Sadrian philosophy onto paradigms that may be more familiar to contemporary philosophers. One can discern three distinct trends:

The first trend is the phenomenological paradigm. Corbin in a pioneering introduction to his translation of *al-Mashī'ir*, made a critical comparative analysis between Sadrian 'existentialism' and continental existentialism. Such a comparison was quite natural given Corbin's own existentialist background and his own project of existential phenomenology and hermeneutics. Devising a common hermeneutics for comparative philosophy remained at the heart of Corbin's work, to discern the realities beyond the phenomena and 'extricate ourselves from historicism.' In his magisterial *History of Islamic philosophy*, a most un-historical history, Corbin explains that phenomenological research is

based on the rule *sozein ta phainomena*, saving the appearances - that is to say, of taking account of the underlying ground of the phenomena, as these phenomena appear to those to whom they appear. The phenomenologist is not interested in material data as such - it is too easy to say of such data that they are 'out of date'...What the phenomenologist endeavours to discover is the primordial Image - the *imago mundi a priori* - which is the organ and the form of perception of these phenomena.

The mystic's vision is irreducible and his ontological horizon is the real arena for intellectual investigation. One's saving of the phenomena whilst unveiling the essences is a hermeneutics that locates itself on the horizon of history, indeed beyond it.

The second is the Platonic paradigm. Corbin suggested that Ṭadrī, like Suhrawardī (d. 1191), was essentially a Platonist and ought to be compared to the well-known circle of Cambridge Platonists, such as Henry More, who were his contemporaries, and to Descartes. However, this is an ambivalent endorsement since most Anglo-Saxon historians of philosophy regard More as a second-rate philosopher. Neither Platonism nor Cartesianism is an attractive philosophical option any more. This approach is visible in Trad Hamade's dissertation at the Sorbonne in 1992, although the real success of that work lies in his presentation of Ṭadrī's range with recourse to a spread of his texts and mainly considering him on his own terms. This hefty thesis is the only one that I have come across that considers so many different Sadrian texts and deals with them in an integrated manner, discerning a common approach in his vast corpus. He suggests a novel approach to the *Asfjīr*; instead of considering it

as the main work, he regards it as a major 'history of philosophy' and instead focuses on other works. The dissertation contains long excerpts as Hamade tries to explicate Sadrian doctrines in Ṭadrī's own words, covering the three main areas of interest: theo-ontology, cosmology and psychology ('ilm al-nafs). The two opening chapters on historical context and the life of Ṭadrī can easily be skipped as they derive from Corbin and Nasr and thus are rather flawed. The chapter on method by contrast is critical in understanding the unity of the Sadrian corpus and method. Metaphysics as the study of being is profoundly hermeneutical and complements exegesis. The Neoplatonic roots of Sadrian method are significant in providing a major paradigm for approaching his work. Furthermore, he stresses the significance of Ṭadrī as an independent and innovative thinker who is, contra Nasr, quite separate from the 'school of Isfahan'. The major contribution of Hamade's thesis lies in the exposition of the psychology. After tracing the history of the doctrine of the soul, he examines the soul and its faculties as presented both in the Qur'ānic works and in the *Asfjīr*. The soul is the seat of cognition of the self, the world and of God, and in this way does the psychology reconcile ontology, theology, epistemology and cosmology. 29 It is a creative substance that imitates the creative power of God. It is a producer of forms that mirror things in the world. It manifests God to the self.

The third is the analytical paradigm. Ziai and Morewedge try to present Ṭadrī as a thinker to contemporary analytic philosophers through their use of philosophical terminology and formalisations. Ziai argues that it is critical for Sadrian studies to move beyond the 'theosophical' and reintroduce the logical and semantic bases of Sadrian philosophy, urging problem based studies. 30 Morewedge clearly states that his translation of *al-Mashj'ir* is intended for analytic philosophers 31 and is an attempt at convincing them of the analytic nature of Sadrian argumentation. He insists that later Islamic philosophy ought to be studied through modern lenses and that one ought to break out of this tendency 'to force every Muslim thought into the artificial Greek-into-Arabic syndrome.' 32 He further argues for a 'processist' understanding of later Islamic philosophy, 33 which had broken out of the substantivist Aristotelian mould of the earlier tradition. Ziai and Morewedge provide an important corrective to the Nasr/Corbin approach since analytic (and many post-analytic) philosophers take neither mysticism nor Heidegger seriously.

My own dissertation on the modulation of being in Ṭadrī's philosophy is an attempt at presenting the philosophical arguments about being, its word and concept to a wider audience of philosophers trained in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. 34 At the same time by insisting on the essentially hermeneutical struggle that is Sadrian philosophy I also try to connect it with the phenomenological tradition. Taking my cue from the Aristotelian dictum that 'being is said in many ways', I focus on three central 'senses' of being in Islamic philosophy as presented by Ṭadrī, namely, the reality of being, mental being and the language of being. The central motif of the thesis is the notion of modulation that each of these senses undergoes. Along the way I try to address some issues that are of central importance to contemporary philosophers, drawing on the excellent precedent of analytical works of scholars in Indian philosophy such as the late Bimal Matilal. In the chapter on mental being, I consider the issue of consciousness and present Ṭadrī as a panpsychist, while in the chapter on language I try to tackle the complex discussion of his theory of meaning. Throughout my approach remains one of explicating the extracting the philosophical significance of his ideas that are communicable to philosophers.

The third approach to Ṭadrī is an Avicennan reading that closely locates him within the continuities of Islamic philosophy by scholars of philosophical sophistication such as Rahman, Izutsu and Shehadi. Rahman remains the best introduction to Sadrian philosophy through a study of the *Asfjīr*, although it suffers from infelicities and incompleteness at times, no doubt partly resulting from the brevity of the work. 35 Shehadi 36 focuses on the development of the discussion of 'being' from early grammatical

issues through Firjibç (d. 950) and Avicenna to ʿadrij. But in his focus on ʿadrij's dialogue with the Suhrawardian tradition, he ignores the importance of the Shīʿi and Akbarian 37 influences. Izutsu 38 provides nuanced and precise studies of Sadrian metaphysics within the wider ʿikmat debates and focuses on the Avicennan and Suhrawardian roots of those ideas. Their main contribution is to contextualise ʿadrij's arguments within the wider discourse of intellectual traditions in Islam. This is critical given ʿadrij's constant dialogue with the 'ancients' as well as the 'moderns'.

An impressive example of the Avicennan or medievalist approach is Bonmariage's two-volume dissertation on the concept and structure of reality in Sadrian philosophy undertaken under the supervision of the Avicennan specialist Yahya Michot. 39 Bonmariage analyses Sadrian ontology, the texture of being and the ways and modes in which one studies and understands being according to Mulli ʿadrij. Her introductory section on pedagogy and the practice of philosophy is illuminating about Sadrian method. Knowledge, experience of reality and intuition makes up components of an integrated cognition that as an instrument of the illuminated philosopher transcends the limitations of the ordinary human intellect. 40 The study itself is predicated upon the twin pillars of Sadrian ontology: ontological primacy and the analogical gradation of being. Thus the structure of being is analysed as the fundamental architectonics of 'what there is' and disaggregated into the levels of the divine, the world as the deployment of divine being and the return to the One that is a key to Sadrian soteriology. The paradox of the One and the many, this coincidentia oppositorum that is at the heart of much philosophy remains a vexing problem. If being is one and everything is but a mode or deployment of the divine true being, then in what sense can it be said that particular beings really are? 41 And the issue is further complicated by ʿadrij's own seeming equivocation on the subject. It is to Bonmariage's credit that she tries to grapple with this problem. But it remains unresolved. It is indeed difficult to see how one can have a satisfactory account that explains this paradox anyway. Her analysis remains solid and rooted in an impressive knowledge of the Avicennan and Sufi background to Sadrian discussions and a comparative analysis that shows a sophisticated understanding of wider medieval issues and trends in Neoplatonisms. A further major contribution of Bonmariage is the second volume of the dissertation that comprises large excerpts translated from the major works into clear and philosophical French and it is hoped that some of them may be printed at a future date. 42

The fourth approach encompasses various Iranian attempts at appropriating ʿadrij for their traditionalist, nativist and modernist discourses of authentic culture. 43 All these trends in different ways seek to claim the legacy of ʿadrij and impose their own preconceptions and Weltanschauungen upon the Sadrian text. Nasr uses ʿadrij for his own Sufi agenda, while ʿashtiyinç places him within the larger philosophical and mystical enterprise in Iran in his extensive study of the doctrine of being in Sadrian thought based upon an analysis of al-Mashj'ir. 44 Ziai 45 points out the importance of the work of the ʿakçm Mihdç ʿi'irç Yazdç (d 1999) in constructing a traditionalist Islamic philosophy that uses Sadrian thought and is informed by the Anglo-Saxon analytic tradition. 46 The influence upon intellectuals and modernising liberals like 'Abdul Karim Surush (b. 1945) 47 has been no less striking. He argues in his first work on ʿadrij 48 that the principle of 'substantial motion' (ʿaraka jawhariyya) permeates everything and hence is a basic tool of scientific analysis that can even be extended to the dynamic development of jurisprudence and religious thought in Islam. 49 The world is a collection of flows of being and a processist metaphysics is envisaged.

Two important doctoral dissertations submitted to Durham University show how ʿadrij is used in the modernist discourse in Iran. Khorassani's 50 dissertation reinterprets ʿadrij as an empiricist with an essentialist epistemology of the objective world in which quiddities constitute the nature of reality. It shows the need in some Iranian circles familiar with debates within the history of science and influenced

by Popper and others to present ṭadrj as Popperian. 51 Concerned with the problem of knowledge, Khorassani seems ontological and linguistic issues in Sadrian philosophy as cognitive problems. Most troubling about his thesis is his presentation of ṭadrj as an essentialist. He says that because essences are the essential accidents of existence,

To say that the reality of objective entities is nothing but existence is tantamount to saying that existence is nothing but the quiddities that occupy the scope of the objective world. 52

Thus because existence presents itself in its multiplicity through essences, then a study of essences is the key to epistemology and metaphysics. But this is not the Sadrian point. Existence presents itself as essences but in themselves, essences are radically 'not-being'. A unified vision of reality and a transcendent intuitive metaphysics does not necessarily render an essentialist and rather sceptical philosophy. A similar mistake is often made when scholars label Buddhist epistemology as essentialist and sceptical. But the two main contributions of Khorassani are methodological: a critical engagement with the Sadrian oeuvre and a sophisticated discourse and metalanguage of his philosophy drawn from analytical philosophy.

Khatami's recent thesis proposes Sadrian philosophy as a solution to the 'crisis in modern theories of the self'. 53 ṭadrj's 'unitary consciousness' and 'ontetic reduction' ellipses the epistemic problem of the knowing self and its stress upon the primacy of being makes knowledge possible. 54 These two rather convoluted terms are merely ways of rendering the Sadrian doctrines of the unity and primacy of being. Khatami represents a Heideggerian strand in contemporary Iranian philosophy and considers his thesis within the parameters of phenomenological epistemology and existentialism. The aim of his work as he rather boldly puts it is

To investigate the possibility of employing the illuminative elements for solving the ontological crisis in Western (sic!) epistemology of the self. 55

Unfortunately the work is far too jargon-ridden to be clear and one often wonders exactly what the argument is. Sadrian philosophy is used to slay far too many an 'ism' and no clear Sadrian theory of the self emerges. Given the paradigm within which he conducts his analysis it is unsurprising that he considers ṭadrj to be concerned with 'eidetic reduction'. 56 However, that surely contradicts his own presentation of the 'ontetic reduction' at the heart of Sadrian ontology! 57 This latter process is explained in rather Heideggerian terms as

A return to Being as such; a return of things to their reality in general; a return of self to its principle. 58

By rooting ontological inquiry in the self, he articulates a psychology of unity and ontological reduction that is at odds with the epistemology that he seems to espouse for ṭadrj.

Nader and Fereshteh Ahmadi also use him in their attempt at articulating a peculiarly Iranian form of Islam that draws upon Sufism and mystical philosophy to enunciate a rather modern notion of spiritualised and individualised man. 59 ṭadrj is thus a 'peculiarly Iranian phenomenon' since Iran is exclusively privileged by the 'ceaseless synthesis of religion, philosophy and mysticism'. 60 Finally, ṭadrj has been co-opted by a variety of Iranian Islamists and members of the political and hierocratic establishment in Iran. At the recent World Congress on Mulla Sadra, one senior seminarian philosopher proclaimed the political importance of his philosophy: the Islamic revolution was based on Sadrian

thought. In this way, Ṭadrī has become the official philosopher of the revolution. He, like many other thinkers, has not been spared the spectacular presumption of posterity.

Although these studies focus upon ontology, they fail to work through the implications of Sadrian ontology for his epistemology, logic and semantics. They fail to integrate the insights that Ṭadrī has about the ontology to which one is committed. Most of them fail to make their case through the texts that they marshal as their evidence. They all repeat pretty much the same information about his life (very little) and recount the same influences on Ṭadrī: Avicennism, Illuminationist (ishrāqī) philosophy, Shi'ī esotericism and theology and the mysticism (ʿirfān) of Ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240).⁶² Since this account of his life borrows heavily from Corbin, they repeat the same platitudes and mistakes. Although Sadrian studies are approaching a critical mass, we still lack major studies of particular ideas, a definitive intellectual biography or even good critical editions of his work.⁶³ We lack major studies of his hermeneutical and exegetical theory.⁶⁴ It remains a major problem in Sadrian studies that there are no serious translations of his work in English that would facilitate teaching him in philosophy courses. Nevertheless, Sadrian studies is a growing sophisticated branch of the study of Islamic philosophy and is being fostered well in Iran and elsewhere. The dissertations discussed in this article point to the richness and variety of approaches and methods deployed to consider Sadrian philosophy and each makes an important contribution. What we now need to do is take the task further, consider specific problems and begin the process of collating and collecting inquiries that will aid future research and teaching in this important sub-field of Islamic philosophy.

Notes:

1- Gobineau, *Les philosophies et religions de l'Asie Centrale*, 2nd edition, Paris: Ernest Leroux 1900, pp. 80-90.

2- Horten, *Die Gottesbeweise bei Schirazi*, Bonn: Friedrich Cohen Verlag 1912 and *Das philosophische System von Schirazi*, Strassburg: Tuebner 1912.

3- Wild in Wahba (ed), *Averroes and the enlightenment*, New York: Prometheus Books 1996, p. 161; Daiber, "What is the meaning of and to what end do we study the history of Islamic philosophy?" in *A Bibliography of Islamic philosophy*, Leiden: Brill 1999, vol. I, p. xxiv.

4- Gobineau, *Les philosophies*, p. 88 assesses him negatively by stating that '[il] n'est pas un inventeur ni un créateur, [il] est un restaurateur seulement'.

5- Two main works: the magisterial *En Islam Iranien*, Paris: Gallimard 1972 and *History of Islamic philosophy*, tr. P. Sherrard, London: Kegan Paul International 1993. An excellent example of a work influenced by Corbin (for the better) is Hernandez, *Historía del pensamiento en el mundo Islámico*, 2 vols., Madrid: Alianza 1981, in which philosophy in the East is given extensive coverage, while a work contemporary to it, Fakhry, *A history of Islamic philosophy*, 2nd edition, New York: Columbia University Press 1980, still only devotes one chapter to the same material.

6- Nasr, *Islamic life and thought*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1981; Nasr, *The Islamic intellectual tradition in Persia*, ed. M Aminrazavi, Richmond: Curzon Press 1996.

7- Nasr wrote the first major piece on Ṭadrī in English in Sharif (ed.), *History of Muslim Philosophy*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz 1966, vol. II, pp. 932-61.

8- Corbin, *En Islam Iranien*, vol. I, p. xvi.

9- Corbin, *En Islam Iranien*, vol. I, p. 24.

10- For a strong critique of 'theosophy', see ʿĀḍr al-Dġn Shġrjzġ va bayġn-i falsafġ-yi 'ġġkmat-i muta'ġliya'," *ġrġnshenġsġ* 5 (1993), pp. 353-64.

11- This is in reference to the exegetical method of the late Leo Strauss, the prominent political philosopher at Chicago. He advocated an esotericist reading of much political philosophy and especially of philosophy within a religious environment since he assumed that there was an inevitable clash between 'reason' and 'revelation'. See especially his *Persecution and the art of writing*, Glencoe: The Free Press 1952.

12- Morris, *The wisdom of the throne*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 1981. The work originated in his Ph.D. dissertation at Harvard and much of the research was carried out in Iran supervised by Sayyed Jalalodin Ashtiyani, while his supervisor at Harvard was Muhsin Mahdi, the eminent expert on al-Firġbġ.

13- Morris, *The Wisdom of the throne*, p. 6.

14- Moris, *Revelation, intellectual intuition and reason in the philosophy of Mullj ġadri: An analysis of al-'ikma al-'Arshiyya*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The American University 1994; it is forthcoming from Curzon Press.

15- Rahman, *The philosophy of Mullj ġadri*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1975, pp. 14-15, 296, focuses on the central tension between monism and pluralism.

16- Sharif (ed.), *History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. II, pp. 938-9.

17- Moris, *Revelation*, p. 24.

18- Genequand, in his article, 'Metaphysics' in Nasr (ed.), *History of Islamic philosophy*, London: Routledge 1996, vol. II, p. 798, argues that the only way philosophical inquiry could survive in Islam after Averroes was through a merger with mysticism and Shi'i esotericism.

19- See ġadri, *Rasi'il*, Tehran lithograph 1885, pp. 278-340.

20- Sharif (ed.), *History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. II, p. 941, quoting the text in ġadri, *Rasi'il*, p. 279-86.

21- In which he was followed by Aġikgenġ, *Being and existence in Sadra and Heidegger*, Kuala Lumpur: ISTAC 1993, based on his 1983 Ph.D. at the University of Chicago supervised by Fazlur Rahman. This work is the first major comparative study in English and a major shift in approach to ġadri, firmly locating Sadrian studies within continental and phenomenological discourses of intellectual inquiry.

22- Corbin, *Qu'est-e que c'est la mġtaphysique?* Paris: Gallimard 1938. See 'De Heidegger ġ Sohravardi' in Jambet (ed.), *Cahiers de l'Herne: Henry Corbin*, Paris: l'Herne 1981.

- 23- Corbin, The concept of comparative philosophy, tr. P. Russell, Ipswich: Golgonooza Press 1981. For Corbin's defence against the charge of ahistoricity, see his *En Islam Iranien*, vol. I, pp. 159-76, which if anything, actually confirms the charge for his critics!
- 24- Corbin, *History of Islamic philosophy*, p. 275.
- 25- Corbin, *En Islam Iranien*, vol. IV, p. 158. Followed by Mĕsawĕ, *al-Jadĕd fĕ falsafat ĩadr al-Dĕn al-Shĕrĕzĕ*, Baghdad: *al-Dĕr al-Ārabiyya li l-ĖĭbiĀ'a* 1978, pp. 213-6 (this work was originally a doctoral dissertation at the Sorbonne in Paris); *Mishkĕt al-dĕnĕ*, NaĀarĕ ba falsafa-yi ĩadr al-Dĕn Shĕrĕzĕ, Tehran: *Intishĕrĕt-i bunyĕd-i farhangĕ-yi ĕrĕn* 1355 Sh.
- 26- Trad Hamade, *Dieu, le monde, et l'Āme chez Mollĭ ĩadrĭ al-Shĕrĕzĕ*, doctorat de nouveau rĕgime, *Universitĕ de Paris I-Panthĕon Sorbonne* 1992.
- 27- Hamade, *Dieu*, p. xviii.
- 28- Hamade, *Dieu*, p. 104.
- 29- Hamade, *Dieu*, pp. 534-36.
- 30- Nasr (ed.), *History of Islamic philosophy*, vol. I, pp. 638-9.
- 31- ĩadrĭ, *Kitĕb al-Mashĭ'ir*, ed./tr/ P. Morewedge as *The Metaphysics of Mulla Sadra*, New York: SSIPS 1992, p. 9.
- 32- Morewedge, *Essays in Islamic philosophy, theology and mysticism*, Oneonta, NY.: Department of Philosophy at SUNY Oneonta 1995, pp. xii-xiii.
- 33- On Process philosophy, see Rescher, *Process metaphysics*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1996.
- 34- Sajjad Rizvi, *Modulation of being (tashkĕk al-wujĕd) in the philosophy of Mullĭ ĩadrĭ Shĕrĕzĕ*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University 2000.
- 35- Rahman, *The philosophy of Mullĭ ĩadrĭ*.
- 36- Shehadi, *Metaphysics in Islamic Philosophy*, New York: Delmar Books 1982.
- 37- Derived from *al-shaykh al-akbar*, a popular title for the Sufi Ibn Ārabĕ (d. 1240).
- 38- Izutsu, *Creation and the timeless order of things*, Ashland, ON: White Cloud Press 1994. His translation with Mohaghegh of the ontology of Sabzawĕrĕ in Izutsu (tr.), *The metaphysics of Sabzavari*, Tehran: Iran University Press 1983 is an excellent contribution to our understanding of ĩikmat.
- 39- Cĕcile Bonmariage, *Le rĕel et les rĕalitĕs: La structure de la rĕalitĕ de l'ĕtre chez Mullĭ ĩadrĭ Shĕrĕzĕ*, 2 parties, dissertation du grade de Docteur en Philosophie et lettres, *Universitĕ Catholique de Louvain* 1998.

40- Bonmariage, *Le réel*, p. 22.

41- Bonmariage, *Le réel*, p. 188ff.

42- Bonmariage is also currently working on a translation of «qj'' al-nj'imĉn, a late text that has a strong mystical flavour.

43- Boroujerdi, *Iranian intellectuals and the West*, Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press 1996. Dabashi, *The theology of discontent*, New York: Columbia University Press 1993 shows how ĩadri remains at the heart of the traditionalist discourse in Iran.

44- ĩshtiyjnĉ, *Hastĉ az na''ar-i falsafa va 'erfjn*, Tehran: Nahĉat-i zanjn-i musulmjn 1980.

45- Nasr (ed.), *History of Islamic philosophy*, vol. I, p. 639.

46- ĩj'irĉ, *Kivush-hj-yi 'aql-i na''arĉ*, Tehran: Shirkat-i Sehjmĉ-yi Intishjr 1981, *Knowledge by presence*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1992 and especially *Hiram-i hastĉ*, Tehran: Mu'assasa-yi mušili'it va ta|qĉqit-i farhangĉ 1982. Cf. Aminrazavi, "Persia," in Nasr (ed.), *History of Islamic philosophy*, vol. II, p. 1042.

47- Cooper, "Epistemology of the sacred," in Cooper et al (eds), *Islam and modernity*, London: I.B. Tauris 1998, p. 41 notes that the Asfir was a critical influence on the formation of the thought of this controversial Iranian thinker. Cf. Matin-asgari, "'Abdul Karim Surush and the secularization of Islamic thought in Iran," *Iranian Studies* 30 (1997), pp. 85-115.

48- Surush, *Nihjd-i nj-irjm-i jahjn*, Tehran: Qalam 1978. This work, along with *Az ta'rĉkh-parastĉ ti khudj-parastĉ*, Tehran 1980, was written while Surush was participating in the formative discourse of Islamic ideology that influenced revolutionary rhetoric in Iran.

49- Surush, *'Ilm chĉst, falsafa chĉst?* Tehran: ĩriš 1989 and *Qabĉ va basš-i ti'Erĉk-i sharĉ'at*, Tehran: ĩriš 1991 develops a sociology of religion based upon the concept of substantial motion and on the Sufi psychology of the expansion and contraction of mystical states. The latter work is his controversial manifesto for (post-)modernist thought in Islam. However, his position on ĩadri and ĩikmat has shifted as a result of his constructivist reading of tashkĉk and substantial motion as he explained at his talk entitled 'Is there an Islamic epistemology?' at the Philosophy Group of the Association of Muslims Researchers, London, 19th December 1998.

50- Khorassani, *Mulla Sadra's philosophy and its epistemological implications*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham 1976.

51- Boroujerdi, *Iranian intellectuals*, pp. 163-70.

52- Khorassani, *Mulla Sadra's philosophy*, p. 110.

53- Khatami, *The unitary consciousness: towards a solution for the ontological crisis in modern theories of the self*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Durham 1996.

54- It seems that these two terms are rather convoluted expressions for the Sadrian doctrines of the unity and primacy of being.

55- Khatami, *The unitary consciousness*, p. 1.

56- Khatami, *The unitary consciousness*, p. 36.

57- Khatami, *The unitary consciousness*, p. 42.

58- Khatami, *The unitary consciousness*, p. 43.

59- Ahmadi & Ahmadi, *Iranian Islam*, Basingstoke: Macmillan 1998, pp. 31-3.

60- Ahmadi, *Iranian Islam*, 31; Fashahi, *Aristote de Bagdad*, Paris 1995 is similarly naïve.

61- A philosophical school originating with Suhrawardī.

62- For example, Corbin in *ʿAdrī*, *Kitāb al-mashjūr*, Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien 1964, pp. 13-4; Khijavī, *Lavjmi' al-ʿirifīn*, Tehran: Intishārī-i Mawlā 1988, pp. 26-32. For a short introduction to this thinker, see Chittick, "Ebn al-ʿArabī," *Encyclopaedia Iranica* vol. VII, pp. 664-70.

63- It is in response to this first need that I undertook my own research and which inspires two dissertations currently underway: Ibrahim Kalin at George Washington University studying the unity of the intellecting subject and object in Sadrian epistemology, and David Dakake at Temple University investigating allegory and ambiguity in the Qurʿānic hermeneutics of *ʿAdrī*.

64- There are only a few short studies of his Qurʿānic hermeneutics: the brief article of Latimah Peerwani, "Quranic hermeneutics: The views of *ʿAdrī* al-Dīn Shīrīzī," in BRISMES Proceedings of the 1991 International Conference on Middle Eastern Studies, SOAS, London July 1991, Exeter: Brismes 1991, pp. 468-77, and S.H. Nasr, "The Quranic commentaries of Mulla Sadra," in *Consciousness and reality*, eds. S.J. Ashtiyani et al, Leiden: Brill 2000, pp. 45-58. More significant, because it contains a complete translation of the *tafsīr* on the famous light verse, is Mohsen Saleh's *The verse of light: A study of Mullī ʿAdrī's philosophical Qurʿān exegesis*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University 1994.

The Principle of Primacy of 'Existence' over 'Quiddity' and its Philosophical Results in the Ontological System of Mullī ʿAdrī

Reza Akbarian, Tarbiat Modarres University, Iran

Abstract

Mullī ʿAdrī considers 'being' or 'existence' (also referred to as *esse*, *actus essendi*, *das Sein*, or *wujūd*) as the most important issue in his philosophical deliberations. The views of Mullī ʿAdrī on existence include a precise and masterful system based on the principle of 'primacy of existence over quiddity' (*aḥīlat al-wujūd*) or the issue of the 'principality of existence'. This issue is a firm philosophical idea that has deep

roots in the metaphysical experience of 'existence'. Mulli ʿadri utilizes this background to unite rational analytical thought with our direct experience of truth. He presents this unity in a clear, systematic manner to transform his own metaphysics from an Aristotelian philosophy to a philosophy which is essentially non-Aristotelian.

In this paper, we analyze a central doctrine of Sadrian ontology relating to his account of 'existence'. 'Existence' here denotes the 'reality of existence' (ʾaḳḳat al-wujʿd) and not the 'concept of existence' (mafḥm al-wujʿd). The distinction between the reality of existence and the concept of existence is of such importance that one cannot truly and properly understand the metaphysics of Mulli ʿadri without understanding this distinction. 1 Mulli ʿadri believes that, although other fields of study, especially the knowledge of soul, are important in understanding divinalia, the basis of all teachings is the 'reality of existence' (ʾaḳḳat al-wujʿd). 2 In the beginning of his book, Kitāb al-Mashjʿir (The Book of Metaphysical Penetrations), Mulli ʿadri discusses the most fundamental issues about 'existence'. Indeed, this text is a concise and comprehensive introduction to Sadrian ontology. Referring to this issue he says:

The issue of existence is the foundation of theosophical principles and the groundwork for divine issues and of *Tawḥīd* (Allah's Oneness), eschatology and the resurrection of the body and the soul, and other issues which I have personally followed, and which, prior to me, no one had dealt with. All of these issues revolve around the reality of 'existence'. Anyone who is ignorant of the reality of existence will not be able to understand these fundamental and weighty subjects. Lack of attention to these subjects will make one unable to understand mysteries and symbols. It will make it impossible for him to gain access to knowledge, divinity, prophecy, and the principle of all principles and the Goal of all Goals. On this basis, I have decided to begin my discussion in this treaty, which aims to clarify the principles of the reality of faith, theosophy and mysticism, with a discussion on existence, and in conclusion prove that existence is essential in every existent (*mawjʿd*). This is a reality and everything that is other than 'existence' (meaning quiddity or *mihyiah*) is like a reflection, a shadow, or a phantom. In proving this reality, I succeeded to present subtle principles and elevated discussions, which were absent in the works of my predecessors. 3

The Reality of Existence and the Subject of the first Philosophy in Transcendent Philosophy

Mulli ʿadri designates the 'reality of existence' as the basis of his philosophical discussion. Undoubtedly, a true understanding of his philosophy requires understanding the 'reality of existence', its levels and degrees. The key term in Mulli ʿadri's ontology is 'existence' (*wujʿd*) and not 'the existent' (*mawjʿd*). From a rational analytical standpoint, the term 'existent' refers to the quiddity that exists in actuality, or the quiddity in the process of realization. This is different from the act of existence, through which quiddity comes to be.

This view is properly understood when we take into account the precise distinction between the two qualifying modes of existence (*ḥast*), meaning 'the existent' (*mawjʿd*, that which exists at present), and the act of existence - 'to be' (*bʿdan* in Persian) and 'to exist' (*wujʿd dīstān* in Persian). The above-mentioned distinction is an important point in transcendent philosophy (*al-ʾikmah al-mutaʾjliyah*).

Preoccupation with the concept of 'existence' (wujʿd) or the act of existence characterizes Mulli ʿadri's philosophy, and this unique characteristic of his methodology revolutionized the study of metaphysics in Islam.

The analysis of Mulli ʿadri on the question of existence, which is the main question in philosophy, differs from that of Ibn Sʿni (d. 1037).⁴ According to Ibn Sʿni, the subject of the first philosophy is 'being qua being' (al-mawjʿd bimj huwa mawjʿd), meaning 'the whole existent' (al-mawjʿd al-muṣlaq) and not 'absolute existence' (al-wujʿd al-muṣlaq). Ibn Sʿni believed that 'existence' is a metaphysical element different from 'quiddity' and divided 'existents' (mawjʿdīt) into two categories- necessary (wajjib) and contingent (mumkin). He used the meaning of 'existent' (mawjʿd) in order to refer to 'the existent' itself, for pure existence, without other aspects, is not divisible into the categories of necessary and contingent beings. According to Ibn Sʿni, the thing that can be divided into the necessary and contingent categories is the concept of 'existent' that can be either essential (mijhuwʿ) or non-essential. Based on this, we must conclude that Ibn Sʿni remained faithful to Aristotelian metaphysics, whose primary and direct concern is 'the existent' and which considers 'existence' as a secondary issue.

Mulli ʿadri focuses his attention on 'existence' (wujʿd) rather than on 'the existent' (mawjʿd). He bases his metaphysics on the principiality of existence and alters the course of traditional concerns in philosophy into a discussion of 'existence' (wujʿd). As such, he finds it necessary to differentiate between the two meanings of existence. First, he defines the meaning of 'the existent' (mawjʿd) as the secondary intelligible in philosophy. The existent, Mulli ʿadri believes, can be understood through comparison and intellectual analysis. Second, he argues that the issue of 'the concrete and extra-mental reality of existence' (al-ʿaqʿqah al-ʿayniyyah wa al-khrijiiyyah li-l-wujʿd), which can be understood through knowledge by presence (al-ʿilm al-ʿuḫḫr).⁵

By shifting the emphasis from the existent to existence, Mulli ʿadri no longer categorizes the synthesis of 'existence' (wujʿd) and 'quiddity' (mijhiyyah) as contingent (mumkin) or as dependent on the necessary (wajjib). He also shifts his emphasis from 'essential possibility' (imkīn mijhuwʿ) to the 'possibility in the sense of dependence' (imkīn faqrʿ). Finally, Mulli ʿadri concentrates on the differences between the levels of the 'reality of existence' (ʿaqʿqat al-wujʿd) instead of the differences between the referent of the 'necessary' (wajjib) and the 'contingent' (mumkin), both of which relate to existence. He does not consider the differences between quiddity, existence and the categorization of the existent (into necessary and contingent) as sufficient explanation for the existent world created by God. Mulli ʿadri, however, uses this principle as the foundation of his demonstration of the 'argument of the righteous' (burhīn al-ʿiddʿqʿn).⁶ In this way, he infuses Ibn Sʿni's spirit in his proofs, thus freeing himself from differentiating between the necessary and the contingent in the existent.

The primary concept in the metaphysics of Mulli ʿadri is the reality of existence. This concept refers to the evidential principles and the apriority of 'to be' (bʿdan) and 'is' (hast). The opinion of Mulli ʿadri on this issue is different from that of Ibn Sʿni. In his discussion of existence, in his book al-Shifj', in the section of metaphysics, Ibn Sʿni begins by asserting that existence (wujʿd) is one of the first and most fundamental concepts.⁷ His exact meaning is that 'the existent' (mawjʿd) has priority and is self-evident; in other words, the concept of an existing thing (shay' mawjʿd) is that the thing exists. One cannot, however, interpret Ibn Sʿni's words to mean that existence is primary and self-evident. In his book, al-Najit, Ibn Sʿni uses the word 'existent' instead of existence:

We say that explaining and defining 'the existent' (mawjʿd) is not possible, except as a nominal definition (sharj al-ism), for 'existence' (wujʿd) is the basis of every explanation and definition. Hence,

the term 'existent' itself will not have a definition, but its form, without any intermediaries, will emerge in man's mind. 8

Ibn S̄n̄j discusses 'existents' (mawjʿdīt) as 'the things that exist'. Mullī ʿadrī's concern is 'existence' (wujʿd) rather than 'the existent' (mawjʿd). Existence in his opinion is self-evident at the level of 'meaning', which means that it is primary and self-evident (badḥḥ). What is proven and understood directly is the definition of existence and not the existent. The definition of existence is indicative of the reality of existence, which encompasses all diverse stages and external objects in an indivisible and unified manner.

The concept of existence is being and realization, either objectively or subjectively. And this evident and universal concept is a subject of simple and luminous truth. This concept is simpler than any concept. It is the first of all concepts and it is a manifestation of its own essence. Therefore, defining existence through one of its own manifestations is impossible, due to its intense appearance and the scope of its definition. The concept of existence is something universal and common among all existents. And the reality of existence is simple and encompasses all contingent beings, although in the mind it is extraneous to quiddities. 9

It is important to note that although existence has a simple definition, in reality it is beyond any theoretical analysis. Existence is not of quiddity, nor is it quiddity itself. We must therefore attempt to understand existence through knowledge by presence. 10 If someone were bestowed with this knowledge, he would be able to achieve a unity that is the very unity of multitudes (kathrah) and the diversification of multitudes (tashakhkhuṣṣīt kathḥrah). This unity is neither a conceptual unity (waḥdat al-mafhʿm), nor a generic unity (waḥdat al-jins), nor is it a specific unity (waḥdat al-nawʿ). It is unity in an absolute sense (waḥdat al-iṣṭiq), which can only be comprehended by the true and the perfect gnostic. The gnostic philosopher, like the discursive sage, can present his conceptual achievements through acquired concepts. These acquired concepts are the signifiers of truth, but are limited to a narrow conceptual scope. For example, based on our knowledge of our self, we formulate the concept of 'I'. The definition of this 'I' is a narrow concept as compared to the real and presential truth [of I]. The same analogy can be applied to existence. Everyone knows what the word 'existence' means and everyone has some metaphysical intuition about it.

From the point of view of metaphysics, this intuition can be explained by stating that the reality of existence is mysterious and hidden, even though the 'conceptualization of existence' is self-evident. Mullī ʿadrī believes that the fact that something is self-evident does not mean that metaphysically it is clear and evident as well. He therefore aims to fully explicate the meaning of existence and its necessary principles in his philosophy.

The Primacy of 'Existence' over 'Quiddity': The most fundamental principle in Mullī ʿadrī's philosophy

The most fundamental and important issue, which assists Mullī ʿadrī in the explication of the meaning of existence and its necessary principles, is the primacy of existence over quiddity or the principiality of existence (aṣḥlīyat al-wujʿd), which is particularly significant in his metaphysics.

Mullī ʿadrī, who believed in the principiality of existence, adopted the view that the thing that really exists in the external world is existence. What he means by existence is the reality of existence and its degrees and modes. The external world's equivalent for the mental combination (murakkab dhihḥ) of quiddity and existence is nothing but existence in different forms and manifestations. 11 Those forms,

which intellect considers as independent quiddities, are essential demonstrations of existence. They seek to specify an essence for existence. They merely encompass the manifold forms of the internal existence. Existence itself can be found everywhere and manifests itself in different forms and shapes; however, since these forms and shapes are all from one united existence, they are in reality one and the same. The differences between various things are their differences in degrees and stages. This view has been entitled 'the unity of the reality of existence' (waḥdat al-wujūd). That is why mystical philosophers and gnostics agree upon the principality of existence. 12

The issue of the principality of existence, as the highest principle in metaphysics, was established for the first time in the history of Islamic philosophy by Mullī ṭadrī. His theory on existence owes a great deal to the tradition of Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240), who emphasized existence as the basis of his mystical thought. In the opinion of Ibn 'Arabī and his followers, since the different stages of existence are nothing but diverse manifestations of the 'absolute being' (wujūd muṣṭaq), all the things in the universe (from heavenly secrets to corporeal bodies) are one metaphysical entity. This is the same concept as the 'unity of existence' (waḥdat al-wujūd). Although the unity of existence is different from the theory of Mullī ṭadrī, the unity of the reality of existence, it has strongly influenced his opinion about existence. It is an important criterion for understanding his philosophy and metaphysics.

Mullī ṭadrī's intellectual transition and his thinking process are bestowed with special merits. He, like Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, Shaykh al-Ishrīq (d. 1191), considers the knowledge of the soul as the origin of all knowledge, and begins the period of his seclusion and spiritual purification from the intuition of the reality of the soul. He seeks knowledge of the self through immediate knowledge ('ilm ḥaṣrī) and discovers existence. He concludes that what is real is existence and not quiddity. He further witnesses the gradation (tashkīk), the simplicity (bisīṣah) and the unity (waḥdah) of existence. This transition is not only a change of viewpoint; it is a strongly founded philosophical concept which stems from a personal experience based on a different intellectual level with deep roots in gnostic experiences of reality. For this reason, the issue of principality of existence becomes the foundation of his philosophy and transforms its course.

Mullī ṭadrī, who came to be known as the chief advocate of this doctrine (principality of existence), was at one time a proponent of the other camp, that is, principality of quiddity. He later praises God for illuminating his heart and allowing him to reach the truth and later says:

In the past, I held the opinion 13 that quiddity is real and existence is non-factual, until the Creator guided me and demonstrated His truth to me. Suddenly, my spiritual eyes opened and I fully realized that the truth is contrary to what most philosophers believe. All praise is to God whose Spiritual Light emancipated me from darkness and made me believe in a lasting doctrine which will never change in this world or in the hereafter. That is why I now believe that 'existences' (wujūdī) are essentially and fundamentally real and that 'quiddities' are 'immutable essences' (a'yīn thābitah), which have never been existent. Existences are nothing but illumination and radiation from the true light -which is self-subsistence- that is everlasting. They (existences) are manifestations of God's essence and attributes, the quality of each has been determined, and which have come to be wrongly known as quiddity. 14

The last section of the above passage best clarifies the relation of Mullī ṭadrī's view on quiddity and existence. Quiddities have been described as 'intelligible qualities' (kayfīyyāt ma'qūlah), meaning those subjective qualities that intellect grasps in certain existences and serves to separate quiddities from these existences. These existences possess the essence of the reality of existence (al-wujūd al-ḥaqīqī).

and are essentially and internally determined. And thus they can abandon the absolute stage and become particular. Mulli ʿadri explains this point in some of his works:

Beware that the existence of quiddities is not dependent on the existence of a 'characteristic' (ʿifah); it is rather dependent on the intellect's grasp of quiddity in certain existences that are externally united with quiddity. The thing that can be understood by intuition (shuhūd) is existence and the thing that can be understood in the form of intelligible qualities is quiddity, to which I have referred in the past. 15

When existences are diffused with God's will and take a distinct reality in various forms, with each is a united quiddity that is seemingly independent from existence, but it united to its illuminated spirit. The distinct relation of quiddity to existence is of this case and as a result quiddity does not precede existence in any of its levels. A quiddity relates to existence and its certainty is dependent on the certainty of existence. 16

The opinion of Mulli ʿadri on the relation of quiddity to existence is different from that of Ibn S̄ni. Mulli ʿadri, who believes in the principality of existence, does not accept the 'qualification' (ittiʿif) of quiddity and its relation with existence outside the mind. He is not, however, completely against the qualification of existence outside the mind and believes that in the objective world qualification (ittiʿif) can apply to existence. Nonetheless, he adds that qualification in the outside world occurs in a reversed form: instead of quiddity becoming endowed with existence, existence becomes endowed with quiddity. Therefore, although conceptually and analytically it may seem that existence is an accident ('araʿ) of quiddity and quiddity is the receptacle for the accident, in reality existence is not an accident. On the contrary, existence is something real and all quiddities are nothing but determined and limited forms of a unified true existence. The real existence cannot be a fraction of something. In its absoluteness it is unlimited and undetermined. Only when it descends from the highest stages of absolute metaphysical simplicity does it take metaphysical form in various limited and determined things.

In a few of his works, Mulli ʿadri compares the relation between the reality of existence and its limitations (maʿd̄diyyit) to a shadow ('ill) and the actual shadow (dh̄c 'ill) or an image (shabaʿ) and the actual thing (dh̄c shabaʿ). He says:

The truth about quiddity and existence is that existence precedes quiddity, but that quiddity is not active in existence, because, as we said, quiddity is not fabricated. Existence is the actual principle and quiddity is dependent upon it. This relation is not analogous to the dependence of a creature upon another creature, but it is rather similar to the dependence of a shadow upon a person or that of an image upon the actual thing. It is worth noting that in this example a person or a thing does not create a shadow or an image, nor can it interfere with it. It should therefore be said that existence is in reality and in its own essence existent, while quiddity is existent through its relation with existence. Thus are existence and quiddity united. 17

Existence, although its forms are different with respect to its quiddities, and although its categories and kinds are distinct with regard to essence and definition, is self-subsistent. Existence has a single entity with different stages of higher and lower degrees.

The above arguments are based on the gradation of existence and the participation of quiddity in existence. There is, however, another interpretation regarding the 'personal unity of existence' (waʿdat al-wujūd al-shakhṣiyyah) and the non-participation of quiddity. 18

Mullī ʿadrij considers the simultaneous unity and plurality of existence as one of the most important principles of his metaphysics. This paradox can be best understood in his explanation of the 'gradation of existence' (tashkīk al-wujūd). Mullī ʿadrij proves that existents are what they are due to their illuminated relation with the 'absolute true existence' (ʾaḥqāqat al-wujūd al-muṣlaq). We should not consider them as separate entities that are self-subsistent. This understanding of the ontological status of 'specific existents' leads us to think that existence is a unique reality which possesses different levels and stages based on degrees of intensity, weakness or strength, on perfection and deficiency, on priority and order, etc. These differences are consistent with the reality of existence, for their differences are exactly similar to their unity.

To support this theory, Mullī ʿadrij uses 'light' (nūr) as a suitable example in describing the unity and gradation of existence. 19 He praises those Illuminationists who believe in this. Quite clearly he owes the concept of 'light' as 'metaphysical reality' to the founder of the Illuminationist (ishrīqī) school of philosophy, Suhrawardī. It was Suhrawardī who explicated the meaning of 'light' (nūr) as 'the reality of metaphysics' (ʾaḥqāqat mi ba'd al-ṣabʿah) and considered light (nūr) as identical with existence. The result of this analysis is that existence (wujūd) is a 'luminous truth' that manifests itself in different levels and degrees. Mullī ʿadrij believes that existence or the ultimate reality is luminous in nature and that it shines upon other things, and, as something that transcends the faculties of mind or logic, it can only be understood and proven through inner illumination and intuitive knowledge. 20

Philosophical derivation based on the primacy of 'existence' over 'quiddity'

One of the important conclusions derived from the basis of the principality of existence, which is very significant in Mullī ʿadrij's philosophy, is the principle of 'existential possibility' (imkān wujūdī). Based on this principle, he tries to clarify and explain the different stages of 'gradational existence' (wujūd tashkīkī) and concludes that what is considered as the stages of existence are the modes and the manifestations of absolute existence. In this analysis, cause is considered as the essence of effect and effect as the appearance of cause. On the one hand, this viewpoint changes all discussions regarding cause and effect, the dependence of effect on cause, their bases and criteria, the kind of relation between cause and effect, the creator and the creation, and gives the philosopher a novel, deeper outlook. On the other hand, it expands the field of philosophy and prepares new grounds for philosophical growth and gives concepts like appearance (ʾuḥūr), manifestation (tajallī), dignity (tashāʾun) and the revealed verse (iyah) philosophical significance. In this way, Mullī ʿadrij sows the field of knowledge for a new and unique approach to the study of philosophy.

The concept of 'existential possibility' (imkān wujūdī) is a turning point in the history of Islamic philosophy. The unique brilliance of Mullī ʿadrij and his extensive research in this field remains among the best of human accomplishments. He discovered the reality of causation and revealed its mystery. He proved that effect is like 'dependence' (niyāz) and that relation belongs to a cause and is not independent of cause. An effect, he believed, depends on cause.

The cause and merit of a mode (aṣwāj) is manifested in other modes. 21

It was Mullī ʿadrij who was able to establish a relation between an 'effect' (maʾlūl) in philosophy, an 'appearance' (ʾuḥūr) or 'manifestation' (jilvīh) in gnosticism, and the 'revealed verse' (iyah) in the Qurʾān. He was able to give these things meaning and establish a unity between them. In this way a great philosophical step was taken towards uniting mysticism with rational demonstration, conjoined with the Holy Qurʾān.

But why didn't this theory play any of the roles in Ibn S n 's philosophy as it did in Mulli  adri's? Mulli  adri admits that in his thinking Ibn S n  had posited 'existential privation' (faqr wuj d ). 22 In reality both philosophers have discussed the dependence of the existence of effect upon cause. The difference lies in the fact that whereas Ibn S n  sought to prove this relation alongside many other philosophical issues and came to believe in it in the end, Mulli  adri constructed a philosophy based on the principality of existence that puts aside quiddity and its essentials such as contingent possibility (imk n m jhuw ). Actually, it is only in the framework of the 'principality of existence' that this concept of 'existential possibility' (imk n wuj d ) can be fully expressed and analyzed.

Second, a profound issue in Mulli  adri's philosophy is his argument for the 'existence of God' (wuj d al- aqq). In his various works, he uses different methods to prove the existence of God. The result of his theory is called the 'argument of the righteous', which asserts that all things are created by God and are dependent upon Him and whatever exists in the world belongs to Him and nothing has an existence independent of Him. Mulli  adri proves not only the existence of God, but also the true meaning of God as that existence which has an encompassing authority over all other existences. It is only God who truly exists and all creation is 'manifestation' ( uh r) of Him. This theory rejects any possibility that a creation can exist without it being the shadow ( ill) of the Creator. Mulli  adri considers the 'argument of the righteous' as the way for true seekers, theologians and gnostics. They, with the spirit of the reality of existence, prove the existence of the 'Necessary Being' (wajib al-wuj d), and witness Him based on His attributes, and witness his attributes based on His creation and act.

The path that we mentioned at the beginning of this exposition was the essence of reality of existence and what necessitates the reality of existence. This principle is the strongest and the most honorable and expedient path in reaching the Truth. It is the path of  idd q n (righteous men), who hold the existence of God as a proof for the existence of everything else, not holding everything else as a proof for His existence, although the latter way can also be used as a proof for His existence, as it is written in the Holy Qur' n about the way of the righteous men in regarding the creation of the world: Soon We will show them Our signs in the (furthest) regions (of the earth), and in their own souls, until it becomes manifested to them that this is the Truth. (S ra 41, al-Fu  il t,  yah 53) The latter part of the same verse also corresponds with the path of the scholars and the  idd q n regarding the creation of the world: Is it not enough that your Creator is a witness upon all things? The views of the righteous cannot be anything but the essence and reality of existence. They see the Divine Essence as a witness and a testimony to His Essence and the essence of everything else. Hence, they witness the congregation of existences and their essence as a manifestation of the Divine and they identify all of His names and attributes through His own names and attributes. For, there is no existence that does not partake of the complete and true names and attributes of Him. 23

Mulli  adri believes that Ibn S n 's argument does not merit the title of 'argument of the righteous'. He does not consider it as a desirable demonstration. 24 It is true that Ibn S n  did not consider God's Creation and His acts as means of demonstration, 25 but his proof, much like the one presented by theologians (mutakallim n) and natural philosophers, utilizes possibility, which is a characteristic of quiddities, as a mean of demonstration.

When Mulli  adri criticizes the reasoning of Ibn S n  and disqualifies it from being the 'argument of the righteous', he does not mean that Ibn S n 's argument is conceptual and has nothing to do with the world outside. Mulli  adri believes that in Ibn S n 's philosophy there is a discussion of the concept of

the existent, of course as a representative, whereas his philosophy deals with the reality of existence. In Ibn S̄n̄j's

philosophy, the concept of the existent includes both the necessary and the contingent and it also applies to quiddity, whereas in Mulli ʿadri's philosophy the only thing that is under consideration is the reality of existence, which includes nothing except different levels of existence.

Generally, two different approaches are used in Islamic philosophy to prove the existence of God. One is the approach used by the Avicennan philosophers and the other is the philosophical methodology used by Mulli ʿadri. The demonstration of Ibn S̄n̄j divides existence - according to intellectual arguments - into two categories of necessary and contingent. In the next stage, he proceeds to prove that contingent beings without necessary beings lead to an infinite regression, which would be impossible to justify. Mulli ʿadri's philosophy starts off from the notion that the existent- which is the subject of the first philosophy and admitting to the reality of which is the first necessary step that separates true philosopher from sophist- is either quiddity or existence, and of these two one is real (aʿḥl) and the other is non-factual (i'tibj̄r̄). In the next stage, Mulli ʿadri proves that what is real is existence and not quiddity. In the third stage he asserts that the reality of existence is a single truth and whatever exists in multiples or variances is the manifestations of the different stages of this reality, meaning that whatever exists is the reality of existence and that these things are not second to existence itself. Lastly, Mulli ʿadri mentions that the reality of being, which is real and unique, is equal to and the same as essential necessity and, notwithstanding any causal or determining quality, it excludes non-existence. And since the world is constantly changing and accepts the notion of non-existence, we believe that the world is not like the reality of existence. The world is the shadow, the image or the manifestation of existence.

Having said this, it becomes clear that Mulli ʿadri's first philosophical discovery is the reality of being. 26 He must then investigate the realm of contingent things and in order to prove their existence he must use as his proof the 'necessary essence' (dh̄jt al-wj̄jib). And of course, he does not believe that contingent things belong in the second stage of creation. They are rather manifestations of God's essence; although they are not at the same level of God's essence, His essence is present at that stage.

This belief in God that Mulli ʿadri reaches through the 'argument of the righteous' is because of centuries of extensive research and intellectual advances during which philosophers and thinkers strove to solve difficult issues in philosophy. This implication reveals the deeper and the more complete implication of the course of religious experience as it can be found in the Holy Qur'j̄n and the traditions of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his purified family (ʿA). In Mulli ʿadri's philosophy, the existence in things - compared to the existence in God - is not real existence (wuj̄d ʿaḥḥ); rather, they (things) are a manifestation of God, even before they become a manifestation of their own existence. Based on this philosophical attitude, created things are manifestations of God and not the outward appearance of God - meaning that the essence of things (in creation) is this manifestation and reflection. When we are bestowed with the knowledge to understand creation as it is, we shall understand that absolute and real truth belongs to a pure essence.

Based on this, the explanation that Mulli ʿadri presents on God is different from the one that Fj̄rj̄b̄ or Ibn S̄n̄j presented. They, in explicating God relied on the Necessary Being and saw God as an existence whose essence and quiddity is identical to His Being. Mulli ʿadri who believes in the principality of existence, rejects their notion of essence and existence or the relation of the two. The Farabian and Avicennan belief is based on the fact that existents are real existents and not non-factual existents. Based on this, in order for a thing to be a necessary being, apart from having true existence, it must be

free from any determination and dependence on any cause. There is no condition and stipulation for a being whose existence is identical with his realization, and it is absolute being.

Third, in his inquiry into the reality of existence, Mulli ʿadri presents an idea that relates to his theory of the ‘absolute’ (al-muṣṭaq). In the order of metaphysics, the reality of existence is a single truth, which takes multiple and variant stages due to determination. The highest of these stages must necessarily be the state of the ‘absolute’, which is also referred to as the level of the unseen of the unseen realities (ghayb al-ghuyb), or the level of pure entity, and it is said that ‘one cannot know His name nor His description’ (li isma wa li rasma lah) in this stage, and there is no way to understand Him at this level. As for the lowest level, it is the limitation of ‘truth’ that manifests itself in this level and shows itself in stipulated things.

What is of primary importance is that in Transcendent Philosophy when we say that the essence of God is absolute, we do not mean that the essence of God is the most universal concept and that this concept, like the concept of corporeal things, does not have any limitation. We mean that it has a kind of existential connotation, for the essence of God is limitless and is not limited by place, time, space, quiddity or existence.

According to Mulli ʿadri, the reality of existence has three levels: 27 The first level contains existence itself and has no relation to anything other than itself. From a theological point of view this existence is God, Who is absolute and distinct from and higher than His creation. According to this view God is the absolute light (al-nūr al-muṣṭaq) and for this reason is hidden from human intellect. The second level pertains to the ‘unfolded existence’ (al-wujūd al-munbasi). Existence at this level is still pure, meaning that it is still simple or unfolded and a single truth (ʾaḥdīyah wāḥidāh). But apart from this, it has the potential of effusion to all directions. From a theological point of view, it is the basis of the appearance and the manifestation of God. The third level relates to ‘particular existences’ (wujūdiyyāt khāṣṣah). These things are the stages and the levels of the realization of the ‘unfolded existence’. At each of these levels, when human intellect considers existence as an independent entity in relation to itself, it changes itself into quiddity. However, if quiddities that are formed in this way are compared to the ‘unfolded existence’, they are mere shadows.

A man of knowledge and wisdom can discern the reality of being and its absoluteness at one glance and at the next glance he can see different and variant things. He will see the truth behind the veil of variant things and realize that it is the ‘pure existence’ (wujūd maʾḥad) and the ‘simple (non-composite) identity’ (huwiyyāt basīṭah), which has by no means any trace or sign of multiplicity (kathrah). The reality of existence in this sense is ‘one’ (wāḥid) with the ‘absolute unity’ and is free from ‘absoluteness’ (iṣṭiq) and ‘determination’ (taqyīd). The reality of existence encompasses all levels and signs. 28

Fourth, Mulli ʿadri’s thoughts on participation (ishtirāk) and intensification (ishtidād) of existence lead to the issues of matter (maddah) and form (ṣūrah). He believes that matter accompanies form during its descent and it is at the same time united with it. For this reason, before it can reach the highest stage, the world of rationality, it accompanies form. It is only in the world of rationality that existences are exempt from having even the smallest amount of matter.

This issue carries with it the issue of motion (ʾarākah). Mulli ʿadri, much like gnostics, believes that the universe is constantly in motion and in a state of change. He refutes the possibility of the annihilation of one’s essence and its transformation into a new essence, which is a belief held by Ibn Sīnā. Mulli ʿadri believes that motion is but the revival and renewal of universe in every moment. This principle applies

not only to accidents but also to substances. This motion is not perceivable by our senses and keeps the identity and the continuity of each entity in spite of constant trans-substantial motion. The principle can only be based on the belief that the existence of a thing is the thing itself and that quiddity is non-factual. With the acceptance of principiality of existence, constant change becomes part of existence and the question of what happens to the thing itself in the course of its 'trans-substantial motion' (ʾarakah jawhariyyah) becomes a non-issue, for the thing is its own existence and motion is a mode of existence.²⁹

Trans-substantial motion has the two aspects of changing and constancy (thabit). Each aspect has two faces, a face towards the constant and eternal universe and a face towards the world of nature. The first face emphasizes constancy, and the second, revival and renewal. That is why it is not as if existence and being are incompatible with 'becoming and changing', for becoming is a kind of existence. In Mulli ʿadri's opinion, existence is basically of two kinds: One is constant and the other is changing.

Mulli ʿadri, using the concept of trans-substantial motion, proves many difficult natural and metaphysical issues, including the temporal creation of the world (ʾudʿth al-ʾilam), the relation between permanence and change, the creation of the world, the creation of the soul, the resurrection of the body and other issues relating to resurrection. This should actually be considered as one of the basic characteristics of his philosophy. On the issue of creation, Mulli ʿadri disagrees with theologians, who believe that God 'created the universe out of nothing, ex nihilo. He also disagrees with Ibn Sʿni, who only accepts 'essential contingency' (ʾudʿth dhīṭ) and rejects 'temporal contingency' (ʾudʿth zamīn). Mulli ʿadri rejects the theory of atemporal creation (ʾudʿth dahr) of his teacher, Mʿr Dimīd (d. 1631) as well. He believes in temporal contingency. He believes that because of trans-substantial motion the universe is constantly regenerating. In a sense it can be said that the existence of the world in each moment is its non-existence in the previous moment. Thus the whole world is a collection of parts and is created and of temporal contingency. Its whole does not have an existence independent of its parts. Hence, the question of when the world was created is absurd. This question is valid only when we can have an independent 'fixture' of time in the world and can determine at which time the world was created. But it is not possible to determine such a time, for time itself is a product of matter and not an independent entity.

Fifth, Mulli ʿadri, like the gnostics, ascertains that the knower (ʾilim) and the known (maʾlēm) in essence are one and the same, and considers the existence of things as that of God's knowledge. Based on the principiality of existence and the important principle of 'simple reality' (basṣ al-ʾaqṣa), Mulli ʿadri believes that God has an immediate knowledge (ʾilm ʾuḫṛ) of things. The fact that God is aware of His own essence, allows Him to have knowledge of all things. ³⁰

Mulli ʿadri, much like Illuminationist philosophers, divided knowledge into the two categories of 'acquired knowledge' (ʾilm ʾuḫṛ) and 'knowledge by presence'. As with Illuminationists, Mulli ʿadri further divides intuitive knowledge into three categories: the knowledge that self has of itself, the knowledge that cause has of its effect, and the knowledge that effect has of its cause. Knowing in his opinion is the movement from potentiality to actuality and the promotion of existence. During this process, the perceiver or the knower surpasses this stage and reaches the stage of perceptibility (mudrak), where the known and the knower or the intelligent and the intelligible achieve a kind of unity which is characteristic of intellection. It is worth saying that acquired knowledge, or the knowledge that human soul has of anything but itself is not merely the reflection of things on the soul; rather, the soul has a power of creativity similar to the Creator. That is to say that it can create forms in the soul - forms

that are dependent upon the soul, in the same way the external universe is dependent on the essence of truth.

Sixth, Mullī ʿadrij's emphasis on psychology (*ʿilm al-naḥs*) is an important philosophical achievement. Mullī ʿadrij considers this topic important, more important than what Ibn Sīnā believed. He also excludes the topic of the soul from his physics and includes it in a branch of metaphysics and in a part that is supplementary to the science of the principle of things.

Mullī ʿadrij, based on the principality of existence, thought of the soul as 'the corporeality of its contingency and immortality of its soul' (*jismāniyyat al-ʾudʿth wa rʿāniyyat al-baqiʿ*). In his opinion, the soul is an independent substance that at first appears like a body and is then transferred by trans-substantial motion into a vegetable stage, and then into an animal stage and finally into the soul of man. All of these stages are in the first substance or the first life-germ (foetus), which passes through all the substantial stages as a result of trans-substantial motion, until it frees itself from matter and potentiality and achieves immortality in the plenum of intellects. In other words, the soul in the beginning is corporeal and then passes through several stages, until it finally frees itself from matter and changing.

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Although the inner potentialities that Mullī ʿadrij presents are basically the same as those Muslim thinkers before him presented following Aristotle, he takes these concepts far and beyond the peripatetic philosophers before him. We know that Aristotle thought that only the universal intellect (*ʿaql kullī*) is eternal. Muslim peripatetic philosophers, like Ibn Sīnā, expanded this concept of eternity and included in it the intellectual faculty of the human soul. Mullī ʿadrij, following the tradition of some gnostics, also counted the faculty of imagination as eternal, or at the very least an independent entity from body.

Mullī ʿadrij considers the corporeal resurrection of the body in the hereafter as part of Divine mysteries and gives it a unique interpretation. He believes that the individuality and the distinction and the unique characteristics of each human being are because of his soul and not his body, for the substance of the body alters every few years without affecting personal unity. Intellection and imagination are essentially a part of the substance of the soul, while vegetable and animal faculties, like senses, are transmitted through the body. He believes that in the hereafter all souls are given the power to create external forms. For example, every soul, without dependence on an external member, can attain the pleasure of seeing from within. In other words, bodily parts that seem external to the soul in the hereafter are created from within the soul, and in this body and soul truly accompany one another during the time of resurrection.³²

Notes:

1- Cf. Fazlur Rahman, *The philosophy of Mullī ʿadrij*, Albany: State University of New York Press 1975, pp. 27-31. The distinction between the concept and reality of existence is related to the analytic distinction between the essence and the existence of a thing – see Sajjad Rizvi, "Roots of an aporia in later Islamic philosophy: the existence-essence distinction in the metaphysics of Avicenna and Suhrawardī," *Studia Iranica* vol. 29 (2000) pp. 65-70.

2- Mullī ʿadrij *Shāriḥ*, al-ʿikmah al-mutaʿiliyah fī l-asfīr al-ʿaqliyyah al-arbaʿah, eds. R. Luḥfī et al, 3rd edn., Beirut: Dīr iʿyīʿ al-turīth al-ʿarabī 1981, vol. VIII, p. 224, vol. IX, pp. 278, 318.

- 3- Mulli ʿadri, Kitāb al-Mashīʿir [Le livre des pénétrations métaphysiques], ed. H. Corbin, rpt., Isfahan: Intishārāt-i Mahdāvī 1990, p. 4; see tr. P. Morewedge in *The Metaphysics of Mulla Sadra*, New York: SSIPS 1992, pp. 3-4. Cf. Mulli ʿadri, *al-Shawāhid al-Rubʿiyyah*, ed. S.J. ʿashtiyānī, rpt., Tehran: Iran University Press 1360 shamsī, p. 14.
- 4- Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ: al-iljhiyyāt*, eds. I. Madkūr et al, rpt., Qum: Maktabat ʿayātullāh al-Marʿashī al-Najafī 1404 qamarī, pp. 5, 14; eadem, *ʿUyūn al-ʾikmāh*, ed. ʿA. Badawī, 2nd edn., Beirut: Dār al-qalam 1980, p. 47. Cf. Mulli ʿadri, *al-Shawāhid*, pp. 16-17.
- 5- Rahman, *Philosophy*, pp. 213-14.
- 6- On the Avicennan proof, see Toby Mayer, "Ibn Sīnā's *Burhān al-ʾiddiq*," *Journal of Islamic Studies* vol. 12 (2000) pp. 18-39.
- 7- Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ: al-iljhiyyāt*, p. 29.
- 8- Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, ed. M. Fakhry, rpt., Tehran: Tehran University Press 1364 shamsī, p. 496.
- 9- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Mabdaʾ wa l-maʿūd*, ed. S.J. ʿashtiyānī, rpt., Qum: Maktabah-yi Mustawfī n.d., p. 6.
- 10- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Mashīʿir*, p. 6.
- 11- Rizvi, "Roots of an aporia," p. 87. See al-ʿillī, *«ḥijāh al-maqāʾid*, ed. ʿA. Munzawī, Tehran: Tehran University Press 1959, p. 7.
- 12- The doctrines of the principiality, simplicity and pure unity of being are inspired by the Sufi school of Ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240). See Dīʿād al-Qayyārī, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ʾikmāh*, rpt., Qum: Intishārāt-i Bāḍir n.d., pp. 5, 93, and ʿĪn al-Dīn ʿAlī Turka, *Tamḥīd al-qawāʾid*, ed. S.J. ʿashtiyānī, Tehran: Anjuman-i Islāmī-yi falsafah va ʾikmāh 1360 shamsī, pp. 33, 56-59.
- 13- Mulli ʿadri has a variety of views on distinguishing truth from falsehood and considering its relationship to existence and pre-existence. His views on theology changed from Avicennan positions to regarding God as a simple entity more akin to the Neoplatonic One. Detailed distinguishing knowledge (*ʿilm tafḥīḥ*) is not found in earlier Peripatetic or Illuminationist thought. See Mulli ʿadri, *al-Asfīr*, vol. VI, p. 249, and vol. VIII, pp. 391-93.
- 14- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Asfīr*, vol. I, p. 49; eadem, *al-Mashīʿir*, p. 35.
- 15- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Asfīr*, vol. II, pp. 348-49.
- 16- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Asfīr*, vol. II, pp. 349-50.
- 17- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Shawāhid*, p. 8.
- 18- Cf. Mulli ʿadri, *Sharḥ al-hidāyah*, lithograph, rpt., Qum: Intishārāt-i Bāḍir n.d., p. 285.
- 19- Mulli ʿadri, *al-Shawāhid*, p. 36.

- 20- Mulli ġadri, al-Shawġhid, p. 7.
- 21- Mulli ġadri, al-Mashġġr, p. 54; eadem, al-Asfġr, vol. II, pp. 300-301; eadem, al-Shawġhid, p. 51.
- 22- Mulli ġadri, al-Asfġr, vol. I, pp. 46-47.
- 23- Mulli ġadri, al-Shawġhid, p. 46.
- 24- Mulli ġadri, al-Asfġr, vol. VI, pp. 13-14; eadem, al-Mashġġr, p. 68.
- 25- That is, he did not regard cosmological proofs to be logical demonstrations.
- 26- Mulli ġadri, al-ġikmah al-ġArshiyyah, ed. G. ġhanġ, rpt., Tehran: Intishġrit-i Mawlġ 1982, p. 219; cf. idem, al-Mashġġr, p. 45.
- 27- Mulli ġadri, al-Mashġġr, p. 41.
- 28- Mulli ġadri, al-Asfġr, vol. I, p. 262.
- 29- Mulli ġadri, al-Asfġr, vol. III, p. 97.
- 30- Mulli ġadri, Sharġ al-hidiyyah, pp. 308-9.
- 31- Mulli ġadri, al-Rasiġil, Tehran lithograph 1885, p. 240.
- 32- Cf. Mulli ġadri, al-Shawġhid, pp. 152ff.

Book Reviews

Laxman S. Thakur, *Buddhism in the Western Himalaya: A Study of the Tabo Monastery*

New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.0

This is an important contribution to our understanding of a particular religious institution which has played a role within its region for over a thousand years. The monastery represents the expansion of Tibetan influence in the Himalayas in the tenth century and developed as a symbol of Indo-Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism. It is well known for its mural, and Thakur goes into detailed analysis of their iconography. The whole complex is replete with artistic work which serves to represent not only various conceptions of Buddhism but also the influence of the local cultures, and the changes which took place during the long period of the monastery's existence. The murals are especially important in reflecting non-Indian ideas, including Achaemenid, Persian, Central Asian, Nepalese and Chinese themes. An institution such as this which has existed over such a long period inevitably acts as a sort of cultural sponge, absorbing and transforming a variety of influences. It is unfortunate that contemporary attempts to preserve the site seem to be doing more harm than good, but on the other hand it is encouraging to learn that there are now more full-time monks at the monastery than in 1042.

The colour illustrations are of a very high quality, and give a good indication of the magnificence of the local work. On the other hand, the black and white pictures are of variable quality, and it is difficult to see what they represent in many cases. The discussion is splendid, however, a really scholarly approach to the topic, and anyone concerned with the aesthetics of Buddhism will find this an invaluable source of information.

Oliver Leaman

University of Kentucky, USA

David Ray Griffin, *Reenchantment without Supernaturalism*

A Process Philosophy of Religion. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 2001, PP 426.

The author of this book is Professor of Philosophy of Religion at Claremont School of Theology and Claremont Graduate University in California. He is also the co-director with John B. Cobb, Jr., of the Whitehead Claremont Process Studies Centre. The title of the book is no accident; it is part of a project, within a context of postmodernism, which intends to lead us into a reenchantment of science, religion and political thinking. Professor Griffin presents us with a proposal of what he calls a process philosophy of religion. The basic premises is based upon the philosophy of the British mathematician-philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (1863-1947), the late Charles Hartshorne (1897-2000), and the natural theology of John B. Cobb, Jr., a student of the latter.

Thus, the complex construction of idea Griffin follows is a Whitehead-Hartshorne-Cobb Jr. version of what is called a Process Theology. The author makes a brave attempt at presenting his own brand of process theology as natural theism as equivalent to supernaturalism. The situation for the novice reader will be difficult at times, but not hopeless.

The present book is divided into ten chapters with an excellent index. The reader is well advised to make use of the index systematically. Instead of following the respective chapter as presented in the book, we propose to the prospective reader a more didactic and pedagogic approach. First, read the introduction carefully and note the definitions and respective commentaries of these definitions, e.g. naturalism; then proceed to chapters ten, nine, one and eight, in that order. In these chapters the reader will find Griffin's discussion of the range and contents of his proposed process philosophy of religion: the phenomenon of religion in the context of science, ethics, civilization, tested by common sensism (the William James variety rather than Peirce) in terms of language and truth criteria. Warmed up and prepared, the reader should now tackle chapters four and five dealing with naturalistic dipolar theism or natural theology based on naturalistic theism. These are the centrefold chapters of the whole book; they are theses of Griffin's process philosophy of religion derived from the process theology of Hartshorne and Cobb Jr. Other chapters on panexperientialism, the mind-body problem should make the reader curious and attentive. The problem of evil is well discussed within the respective context. After this, the reader should return to the introduction and re-read these well-written and balanced paragraphs presenting the core of Griffin's process philosophy of religion. The style and presentation throughout the book is normative and analytic, but not historical. The authors makes bows to the older generation

of the analytic school such as the late Quine, Putnam, Plantinga, Alston, Strawson, who are discussed, at times excessively, in numerous footnotes. Perhaps this strategy was invoked in order to draw-in analytically oriented philosophers in English-speaking communities who, usually, are not so fond of Whitehead, metaphysics or related perspectives. Wittgenstein, surprisingly, is little discussed not to mention Heidegger, aside from his membership of the Nazi party. Heidegger's very early critique of technology and environmental concerns, considering that the book also carries the title of 'Reenchantment', seems curious.

Let us follow Griffin's definition of religion in general, "... a complex set of beliefs, stories, traditions, emotions, attitudes, dispositions, institutions, artistic creations, and practices - both cultic and ethical, both communal and individual - oriented around the desire to be in harmony with an ultimate reality that is understood to be holy and thereby to provide life with meaning " (p. 12). This definition is repeated on page 249 in the chapter on two ultimates and religions. Needless to say, Griffin's topics would need some basic preliminary explanation for those who feel more at home in the house of Islam. However, the author is to be commended for the scope of the enterprise; yet, a historical dimension and less analytically oriented presentations would have helped to underscore his supposed " reenchantment project ". Much more could be said, but the complexity of the text, although very well written at times, makes it difficult reading. The numerous quotes, quite extensive from Whitehead's works, add to the difficulty. This reviewer, having worked in the vineyard of Whitehead for more than two decades, not to mention his labours in the house of Max Weber and associates, such as Bendix, Berger, Luckmann, Schluchter, Habermas, Giddens and not least Bauman, has a few things to say to the author and prospective readers.

Griffin focuses upon Weber's definition (distilled via Habermas) of the disenchantment of the world. Weber, of course, spoke of the process of industrialization, the process of urbanization, the process of old forms of community transformed into modern society. Religion, especially in its Protestant Lutheran and Calvinist version plays a prominent role in the drama. Weber delivered a famous speech to the students at Munich University in 1918 (about the disastrous consequences of the First World War) entitled " Science as a Vocation " (Wissenschaft als Beruf) in which he introduces to a larger audience his idea of " disenchantment " (Entzauberungsprozess). This process has received some attention in the areas of psychoanalysis, architecture (Bauhaus), and critical theory (Rochlitz on Benjamin 1996). Yet, nowhere do we find a treatment in book of the enchantment process, such as the Romantic Movement in art, e.g. Turner in England, or C.D. Friedrich, considering the treatment of religiosity in the field of romantic art. This is a serious weakness: the reader is not exactly sure where the process of reenchantment enters into his process philosophy of religion. The numerous bows to analytical philosophers are not enough. The concessions to the analytical style of handling things, not to mention such sensitive areas as religion and art, are inadequate. A sample of what is meant is demonstrated by the reviewer in a constructive contribution to the well known Library of Living Philosophers Series in honour of the first Muslim thinker so to be honoured, namely Seyyed Hossein Nasr. This reviewer points out the original programme of Nasr of a " reenchantment project " on behalf of Islam (see E. Wolf-Gazo, " Nasr and the Quest for the Sacred ", in Lewis Hahn, editor, *The Philosophy of S.H. Nasr*. Chicago: Open Court 2001, Pp. 279-305). It was Nasr who developed the idea of reenchantment for Islam in the 1960s within the context of a constructive critique of the modern world. Environmental concerns were already a part of Nasr project in the early 1960s, when this topic was not yet fashionable. Be that as it may, Griffin feels that he can have a reenchanting world without supernaturalism, by revising our theories of experience and perception with the help of Whitehead and Hartshorne.

In his own critique Griffin differentiates between naturalism in terms of non-supernaturalism in Darwinian style and naturalism as a "sensationalist-atheistic-materialism". Griffin uses the strategy in order to isolate those who might entertain a crude form of scientism in terms of the opium of the scientists, not to mention the masses. Griffin is out to make serious naturalism, without the *deus ex machina*, respectable again. He argues and fights his way through modern literature by analytically oriented writers and thinkers, yet holds on to the safety net of Whitehead and Hartshorne with a Protestantistic William James type of empiricism. The historically argued metaphysical background of natural philosophy in terms of Descartes and Newton, as for instance the masterly portrait by the late E.A. Burt, in his classic *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Science* (a text assigned by Whitehead to his Harvard students) is nowhere to be encountered in Griffin. To be sure, Whitehead's concept of "prehension" is innovative. Griffin makes good use of it, yet, narrows this concept within the confines of mere intuition. Science, religion and art can meet in prehesion (this is a classic Hegelian theme). The common sensism we meet in the book is a sort of mix between William James and Hartshorne. Peirce's pragmatic empiricism would have served Griffin's purpose much better and is more closely aligned to Whitehead's own understanding of human experience, at least in his later phase of thought. Griffin, unfortunately, does not make use of Peirce nor of Royce, not to mention Santayana, thinkers who could have served his version of a process philosophy of religion. That we need an expanded and a more extensive understanding of human perception compared to the classic expositions of Locke, Berkeley, Hume is clear. Yet, how do get towards a basis of an extended understanding of perception without supernaturalism? The relation of Plato's Demiurgos and Newton's Pantokrator to Whitehead's supposed dipolar theism is never explored, although, this reviewer confesses that would be a hypothetical treatment of the respective topic, since Whitehead himself was not consciously aware that there was, perhaps, a subtle historical and unconscious relation to his attempted theistic dipolarism. Another matter of concern is that Griffin deals casually with outstanding contributions by other Whitehead scholars who do not fit into his version of process philosophy. Whitehead interpreters, such as the late Victor Lowe (1907-1988), the late Ivor Leclerc (1915-1999), or the late Dorothy Emmett (1904-2000), not necessarily congenial to process theology in Claremont, from which Griffin emerges, are hardly noticed. Their concern was with process philosophy as philosophy in its positive metaphysical endeavour, i.e. philosophy not as disguised protestant natural theology, but philosophy as a phenomenon of wonder. However, Griffin deserves high marks for elevating process thought onto a level of respectability, even among analytically oriented thinkers. Perhaps Whitehead in the long run will emerge alongside Wittgenstein and Heidegger as one of the three sages of Western thinking in the twentieth century. To talk of reenchantment we must take the romantic sources into account, such as the likes of Novalis, the Schlegel brothers, Schelling, Caspar David Friedrich, not to mention the English version in Wordsworth, Coleridge, Turner, or the American transcendentalists such as Emerson or Royce, or contemporaneously John E. Smith, Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at Yale, who did commanding work in the field of philosophy of religion, if not necessarily designated as reenchantment. These thinkers are absent from Griffin's reenchantment project without supernaturalism. If there is one item this reviewer agrees wholeheartedly with Griffin it is this: we need a reformed version of empirical perception and human experience in the light of the authority of Kant's perspective, especially in his transcendental analytic in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Yet this requires a good deal of preparatory work and that includes historical analyses, exactly the kind of approach Griffin shies away from. Be that as it may, Griffin's work is an interesting challenge to those who have problems with natural theology of the non-supernaturalistic kind. In the end we may ask, is a naturalistic theism more adequate in the face of Novalis' dictum that we must romanticize the world anew? And may I add, not necessarily in Hollywood style.

Ernest Wolf-Gazo

The American University, Egypt

Sabine Schmidtke, *Theologie, Philosophie und Mystik im Zwölferschiitischen Islam des 9./15. Jahrhunderts: Die Gedankenwelt des Ibn Abċ JumhĒr al-Aċsiċ* (um 838/1434-35 – nach 906/1501)

Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science vol. XXXIX, Leiden: Brill 2000, pp. 355, cloth, \$114.

Until this pioneering work by Schmidtke, the intriguing Shi'ī polymath, Ibn Abċ JumhĒr al-Aċsiċ has been the subject of a couple of short biographical articles by Madelung and a shorter survey piece in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* by Todd Lawson. The Safavid period and its philosophical and culture efflorescence has been studied by Nasr and Corbin and their students, and the earlier Avicennan period in Islamic thought has held sway amongst orientalist for some time. But the period between Naċr al-Dċn al-ċfċċ (d. 1274) and Mulli ċadri (d. 1641) remains to a large extent virgin territory. Yet we suspect, and Corbin indicated to us a few decades ago, that the intellectual synthesis of Sadrian philosophy did not emerge ex nihilo as it were. The problematic of explaining that synthesis lies at the heart of this study, an attempt at explaining the naturalisation of Mu'tazilċ theological discourse of the school of AbĒ l-ċusayn al-Baċrċ (d. 1044), Avicennan philosophy, illuminationist (ishriċċ) philosophy and the theoretical mysticism of the school of Ibn 'Arabċ (d. 1240) in Shi'ī minds.

Schmidtke has built upon her earlier work on Shi'ī kalċm and furthered the project of explaining the development of Shi'ī theology and philosophy initiated by her doktorvater, Madelung. Her work began life as a habilitation presented in the philosophy faculty at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn. She presents to us the man through his major works, cataloguing them, tracing manuscripts, tracing citations (one long appendix indexes the unacknowledged citations of al-Shajarah al-Ilċhiyyah of the philosopher ShahrāzĒrċ [d. 1288] in Ibn Abċ JumhĒr's *Kitċb al-Mujlċ*) and discussing major doctrines, their origins and their consequences. It is a work of meticulous scholarship which one would expect from the scholar who wrote her doctoral dissertation on the Shi'ī theologian 'Allċmah al-ċillċ (d. 1325). It is also a major contribution. Although we know very little about this fifteenth century individual, his works have been influential and often cited in the Safavid period. In that busy period of lithographing major philosophical and theological works in Tehran in the later part of the nineteenth century, his magnum opus, *al-Mujlċ* was lithographed three times. Schmidtke's study reveals the intellectual continuities in the Shi'ī scholarly community.

The work comprises seven major chapters, three appendices, an exhaustive bibliography (although with exceptions: she does not cite one important work in Arabic by MĒsi al-Hċdċ published in Beirut in 1993 and another one by Ghulċmriċċi Shċdċċyċn in Persian published in Iran in 1999), and useful indices. Chapters one and two deal with his life and works and are a major development on Madelung's article and fix his dates. The central chapters are arranged around the headings that reveal Schmidtke's interest in mu'tazilċ kalċm, namely divinity, divine justice, prophecy, resurrection and the divine promise and threat (al-wa'd wa l-wa'ċd). The concluding chapter brings together elements of the synthesis in his thought and recognises it as a major precursor to the thought of Mulli ċadri.

The focus of the study is Ibn Abġ JumhĒr's magnum opus, al-Mujlġ, a vast supercommentary on his own work of mystico-philosophical theology. Only Corbin in his magisterial *En Islam Iranien* has mentioned and discussed this work in a European language. The arguments and traditions cited resonate in later work of the ġikmat tradition in Iran. He presents a monistic philosophy and light mysticism that locates the doctrine of a singular reality or waġdat al-wujĒd in Shi'i source texts and theology and tries to offer a philosophical account for it. Such an endeavour found much favour in the Safavid period and indeed even now arouses interest among Shi'i intellectuals. However, due to the consequent popularity of the work and thought of Mulli ġadri, Ibn Abġ JumhĒr has been somewhat eclipsed and is often now cited mainly for his use of ġadġth that are popular in ġikmat circles.

Given Schmidtke's interests, little attention is given to his works in fiqh and ġadġth. This is a shame since his fatwas suggest an interesting use of legal reasoning and belie that assumption of many a researcher that Eastern Arabia and Bahrain was a centre of traditionist, non-rationalist Akhbġrs with little recourse to intellectual arguments in the discernment of the law. His collection of the dicta of the Prophet and the Imams, *Awġilġ al-la'ġilġ* has been popular since the Safavid period and was published in four volumes at the beginning of the 1980s by the library of the late ġyatullġh Shihġb al-Dġn Mar'ashġ Najafġ, who himself prefaced a short treatise praising the author and his work and defending him against charges of fabrication, extremism and heresy.

The study of the history of Islamic philosophy and thought requires that we discern the various paths and trends of different doctrines and schools over the centuries and fill in the gaps in our knowledge. Schmidtke's work has successfully dealt with one major lacuna, that of Timurid Shi'i philosophy that influences Safavid philosophy. Many others still await diligent research.

Sajjad Rizvi

Pembroke College, UK

Antony Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought: From the Prophet to the Present*

Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2001.

It should be said from the outset that this is a remarkably good book. The author covers a long period, from the jahaliyya up to today, and the coverage is uniformly clear and judicious. The style is that normal for similar books on Western political theory, linking the local cultural context with the particular types of political theory that arose, and the discussions of the nature of the state are shown to be part and parcel of varying conceptions of power and authority. In books like this the scope is so vast and the space available relatively restricted that one inevitably expects to find important lacunae and variations in the accuracy of treatment. Such expectations are not realised here, Black is to be congratulated for having provided such an extended discussion of high quality. Many of those who approach Islamic political thought from a Western perspective spend a lot of time comparing and contrasting the various Islamic models with Western concepts, and Black does this to a certain extent, but his comparative touch is light and inevitably illuminating. Although he does try to produce some generalisations about Islamic political thought, he avoids the temptation to reify Islam as though it imposed a common model

on very different cultures and personalities, and he is alert to the ways in which local context have led to particular interpretations of political principles. There is always a fine balance between insisting that a system of thought such as Islam consists of general concepts which specify what must be done, and looking at how particular individuals have used that system to realise their own aims and objectives. An over-emphasis on the former leads to a simplistic account of how religion dominates the thought of its adherents, while concentrating on individual actors makes religion seem arbitrary in its effects and merely a reflection of something else which is going on. Black gets the balance right in this book. Islam is seen to provide the vocabulary, as it were, out of which political concepts were created, and the particular historical contexts which he describes provide the occasions on which that vocabulary was and is used to make sense of the local situation. It is difficult to get this balance right in accounts of the history of political thought, especially such long histories as of Islamic political thought, but readers will be impressed by the objectivity of Black's account.

A lot of books have appeared in recent years on Islamic political thought, and this is undoubtedly one of the best. It will play an important role in the teaching of the subject for many years to come.

Oliver Leaman

University of Kentucky, USA

John Walbridge, *The leaven of the ancients: Suhrawardī and the heritage of the Greeks*

SUNY Series in Islam, Albany: State University of New York Press 2000, pp. xviii + 305, paper, £18.50.

John Walbridge is one the pre-eminent experts on the Illuminationist (ishrīqī) philosophical tradition in Islam and has made serious contributions to our understanding both of the philosophical sophistication of the tradition and its location in Islamic cultural history. His published doctoral dissertation was a study of the later Illuminationist thinker and commentator, Quṣb al-Dīn Shīrīzī (d. 1311). 1 The present work under review, along with a companion volume on the Eastern roots of Illuminationism that is forthcoming in the new year, is an exposition of the Greek heritage and roots of this form of later Platonism in Islam. It is a study of the appropriation of non-Aristotelian Greek thought in Islamic philosophy. Specifically, it is a study of the thought of Suhrawardī (d. 1191) and his (self-)location within a Pythagoreanising Neoplatonic tradition. Every philosophical tradition has its own conception of its history and its heritage. The Illuminationist tradition imagines and fashions itself within a long line of philosophy with three clusters of thinkers. Two major histories of philosophy from an Illuminationist perspective that describe these lines of intellectual descent are Shahrazīrī's *Nuzhat al-arwāʾ* and Quṣb al-Dīn Ashkewarī's *Maʾbūb al-qulūb*. The first genealogy constitutes a Prophetic line that passes from Adam through Hermes (the prophet Idrīs) to the Sufi thinkers of the early Islamic period. This line blends prophetic, Hermetic and Sufi elements. The second line traces back through the Greeks and revives a Neoplatonic Neo-Pythagorean tradition that was popular in late antiquity. The third heritage is an Eastern 'invented tradition' that links Illuminationism with ancient Persian thought and Zoroastrian cosmo-angelology. Walbridge's interest lies in the history of philosophy and the historical self-fashioning of the Illuminationist school. A central concern is to what extent Illuminationism is, indeed as claimed, a

revival of ancient wisdom. In his attempt to discern continuities and influences of a doxastic nature, he suggests that his work may be of interest to classicists and scholars of late antique philosophy.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 is a brief introduction to Suhrawardī (d. 1191) and the philosophy of the *ishraqī* school which he founded as an independent alternative to the dominant Peripatetic/Avicennan school of his time. He made major contributions to the systematisation and structure of philosophy. First, criticising the Aristotelian organon, he simplified and reorganised logic into three parts: semantics, proof theory and fallacies. The significance of the 'fallacies section' on *sophismata* is that unlike the Aristotelian tradition of the *sophistici elenchi*, he considered fallacies pertaining to metaphysics (such as considering that the term 'existence' has reference) and to epistemology. As such, it reveals a more 'modern' approach to fallacies. The critique of Aristotelian propositional logic led to a simplification of the conversion rules of the syllogistic. Second, his metaphysics is defined by the (Neoplatonic) language of the hierarchy of lights and he reacted against the substance-based metaphysics of *ousia* characteristic of the Avicennan tradition which he felt fell into the trap of reifying 'beings of reason', of too strong a principle of plenitude that considers all conceivables as though they exist in some mode and in some time. Concomitant to this ontology is his cosmology and cosmogony that equated intellects with angels from the Zoroastrian mythic pantheon and multiplied both the number of intellects and hypostases between the One and the sub-lunary realm of existence. This may well reflect the influence of Iamblichean Neoplatonism. Finally, his epistemology is based upon direct experience and mystical intuition of reality. All knowledge may be reduced to the form 'I know x' and since the 'I' is immediate and indubitable, all knowledge is simple and immediate and not cumulative based on axioms and propositional 'working-out'. This is the doctrine of knowledge by presence (*al-'ilm al-ḥuḍūrī*). Walbridge's brief exposition of Illuminationist philosophy reveals his mastery of the subject and is clear and accessible. He demonstrates also the continuities and connections with the Neoplatonic traditions within which he locates Illuminationism.

Part 2 is the core of the book and examines the Greek heritage of the Illuminationist philosophical tradition and traces its roots in pseudo-empedocleana and the Neopythagoreanising Neoplatonism of late antiquity. In a sense, this section deals with the sources of Illuminationism and focuses on key figures from the Hellenic tradition as seen by Muslim thinkers.

The first of these thinkers is Empedocles, who for the Muslims was the key mystic and philosopher, along with Pythagoras of the Presocratic era. [It is a surprising that despite the Neoplatonic concern with Parmenides, at least with the Platonic dialogue of that name and its relevant doctrinal positions, that this Presocratic plays little part in Islamic philosophy, certainly not in any explicit sense]. The late antique tradition includes 'empedocles arabus'. 2 So far the pioneering work of the late Asin Palacios had attempted to discern Empedoclean (or at least pseudo-Empedoclean) themes in the thought of the Spanish school of Ibn Masarra (d. 931). 3 Little attention, apart from some references noted in the doxographical literature (such as the *Aetius arabus*), has been paid to Empedoclean features in the Eastern traditions of Islamic philosophy. 4

The second key figure is Pythagoras as represented in the *carmina aurea* (Golden verses), extant in Arabic and through the pseudo-Plutarchian doxography and *moralia* extant in the edited '*Aetius arabus*'. Pythagoras links Illuminationism with a theory of philosophy as practice and as theurgy, as taken up by the Iamblichean tradition in late antiquity.

The third and fourth key figures are the two giants of medieval philosophy, Plato and Aristotle. The divine Plato (which in fact includes the doctrines of Plotinus and Porphyry) presents Illuminationism with

key aspects of their philosophical theology and cosmology and is the source of philosophical allegory. On page 103, Walbridge, quite correctly in my view, dismisses the philosophical importance of many of Suhrawardċ's allegories and insists that their Avicennan metaphysics suggests that the true Illuminationist doctrine is located in his systematic worlds like the Philosophy of Illumination (°ikmat al-ishriq). This is a useful corrective to the approach of Nasr and Corbin, though Walbridge's approach will, no doubt, be hotly disputed by followers of that interpretation. The chapter on Aristotle is mainly concerned with the apocryphal works such as the Theology. Walbridge (page 136) is quite justified here in pointing out that Illuminationists and others familiar with the abundant translations of genuine Aristotelian works could judge with ease that the work belonged to the Platonic school (pace Zimmermann) and indeed Suhrawardċ says so quite explicitly in his Intimations (al-talwċ; it).

Illuminationism as a form of Platonism champions Plato against the Peripatetic school and in two chapters, Walbridge looks at their deployment of Plato against Aristotle in the critique of Aristotelian logic and the espousal of Platonic epistemology. The final chapter in this section considers the role of Stoicism in Illuminationism and judges the traditional Safavid equation between Stoicism, Platonism and Illuminationism made by Mulli ċadri. Certainly, Suhrawardċ himself made the equation. But more research as Walbridge admits is required on this influence, though Ziai has suggested some influences and features of Stoic-Megarian logic visible in Illuminationism. If Walbridge does eventually publish his findings on elements of Stoicism in Islamic philosophy, it will be of great interest to colleagues in classics and medieval philosophy.

The final part is a short excursus on the legacy of Suhrawardċ, his political ambitions and thought and the influence of his philosophy in later Islamic philosophy in Iran and India especially from the Safavid and Mughal periods onward. Walbridge espouses the possibility of considering a contemporary Illuminationism and considers the question of contemporary Islamic philosophy, critical since those Muslims engaged in the endeavour do not regard themselves as indulging in antiquarianism within the ivory tower of academia. Philosophical questions are live and relevant and the thirst for a more enlightened debate is evident. Walbridge contributes to this debate by making clear the historical roots and self-image of Illuminationism and places it squarely in opposition to much contemporary philosophy and science that no longer communicates to most educated people.

Although the volume is well-produced and (on the whole) devoid of the sorts of transliteration and typographical errors common to much academic publishing these days, there are some omissions. Many works are cited in the notes but not found in the bibliography. Certainly, for students wishing to use Walbridge's book as an introduction to further inquiry, this ought to be remedied. More substantially, there will be experts and historians of philosophy who might take issue with his approach and method. Nevertheless, Walbridge's work on the Illuminationist tradition will stand the test of time and the two volumes on the sources of this philosophical tradition are major contributions to our study of Islamic philosophy.

Sajjad Rizvi

Pembroke College, UK

Alparslan Açıkgenç, *Scientific Thought and its Burdens: An Essay in the History and Philosophy of Science*
Istanbul, Fatih University Publications, 2000.

The author provides an interesting survey of the ways in which science has both developed and been assessed historically in a variety of environments. Alparslan considers several periods of scientific advance, and looks at the context which provided those periods with the necessary characteristics to permit science to flourish. He is especially interesting in the detail he provides on science in the Islamic world, arguing very plausibly that science did not take off in the past in just any kind of environment. On the contrary it was only because the intellectual environment was appropriate that science became firmly established, and grew into one of the most important intellectual activities in the Islamic world. He suggests, again to my mind very plausibly, that this suggests that the policy of 'importing' science into some parts of the Islamic world today is doomed to failure if the cultural context within which it is supposed to operate is inappropriate. On the other hand, it is understandably difficult to see what was favourable about the initial conditions in the Islamic world which made science so successful, and we should not forget that a powerful group in that world were opposed to anything coming from non-Islamic sources. It is tempting to see those legal schools which put more emphasis on reason and less on tradition as part of a scientific way of thinking, and yet we know that many scientists are themselves very narrow in their conception of religion. There is nothing unusual in a brilliant and creative scientific thinker having very traditional and even intolerant religious views, so one has to be a bit sceptical of the idea that particular aspects of Islamic civilization were more appropriate to the growth of science than others. On the other hand, the hypothesis of a connection between intellectual environment, general cultural background and the advance or otherwise of science looks undeniable, and Alparslan argues well for it in this book. We are still a long way from having a clear grasp of the precise connections here, but readers will find here a clear account of the problem and many interesting observations on possible solutions.

Oliver Leaman

University of Kentucky, USA

Wilferd Madelung & Toby Mayer, *Struggling with the Philosopher: A Refutation of Avicenna's Metaphysics*

London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2001, vi pp. + 105 pp. (English) + 135 pp. (Arabic), with English and Arabic indexes, cloth.

The general consensus among great scholars of Islamic philosophy when translating Arabic into English is that the only accurate Arabic translation is one's own. This attitude is regrettable and one hopes it will be overcome so that new scholars will be encouraged with the work of translation. Those who have given more than a passing thought to the question may realize why Greek philosophy is taught so much more than Islamic (Arabic-language) philosophy on university campuses. There is a dearth of English translations of basic Islamic philosophy texts, while—at the same time—a new translation of Plato's *Republic* appears every two years. Maybe we will learn to view the text as the original and all

translations as suggestions—and necessary tools. It is always more valuable to have the Arabic text available in the same volume either for reading, or for comparison on points where the reader might wish to make a further note than to have to search the library shelves for an (often scarce) Arabic edition.

Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Karim b. Ahmad al-Shahrastani wrote one of the earliest books of comparative religion *Kitab al-Milal wa 'l-Nihal*. It has remained well-regarded because of the author's scientific observation and reportage on both non-Muslim religions and various Muslim groups. This work has been translated into French. Among his other notable works is the one under consideration here, *Kitab al-Musara'a*, dedicated to an official in the court of Sultan Sanjar. The twelfth-century work, *Kitab al-Musara'a* or here translated as *Struggling with the Philosopher*, is al-Shahrastani's rebuttal of Ibn Sina's opinions about various metaphysical questions. Since Ibn Sina was considered the major Islamic philosopher, an author who claimed to be able to engage in intellectual combat with him was engaging in an interesting business. Taking on Ibn Sina might be viewed as heroic or foolhardy, depending on one's perspective. This work prompted Nasir al-Din al-Tusi's refutation—*Masari' al-musari'*—which Madelung in the Introduction calls "a brilliant and incisive defense of the philosophy of Ibn Sina" (p. 13).

This first-time translation of al-Shahrastani's *Kitab al-Musara'a* into English provides a valuable addition to the catalogue of works by Islamic philosophers now available to a wider audience. Mayer has produced a readable, comprehensible English text, for which he is to be strongly commended. Topics include the nature of God's being, God's unity, and whether or not God has knowledge of the particulars. Al-Shahrastani does raise interesting issues, for example the quality of existence belonging to the Necessary of Existence and how it might relate to things with contingent existence. It is interesting to note that while al-Shahrastani disputes what the term 'the Necessary of Existence' (*wajib al-wujud*) means in its existential details, he accepts and uses Ibn Sina's terminology throughout this work. Although *al-Musara'a* was planned to cover seven questions, in the event it only contained five. It then ended abruptly, due to disasters that had befallen him, most probably the defeat of Sultan Sanjar in Samarkand in 536/1141, according to the Introduction. With the collapse of this royal court, the intellectuals the sultan had gathered around himself found themselves without a home.

The book consists of an Introduction, English translation and Arabic text. The Arabic follows the English text, forming a book with two front pages, which meet in the middle. The Introduction gives a brief contextualization of al-Shahrastani and describes the author's purpose in writing *al-Musara'a* as a rejection of Ibn Sina's metaphysical views. His method is to present Ibn Sina's position on a subject, such as the existence of the Necessary of Existence, quoting or paraphrasing the philosopher from the *Najat* (with page numbers given in the footnotes) and then analyzing the problems he finds in the text. The translation is careful and consistent; additional information, such as references to the surahs and ayahs cited and of hadiths given in the footnotes, will also be welcome to readers attempting to follow al-Shahrastani's thought.

The only criticism I have is that the paragraphs are not numbered in the Arabic text. Also (and more unfortunately) the same paragraph divisions are not maintained between the text and the translation, making cross reference in the middle of a section tedious.

It is interesting to watch the translator make choices, for example the pronoun for referring to the Necessary of Existence is the English neuter *Itself*, capitalized (p. 33). This reading alerts the reader to the fact that God has no gender, avoids the usual English problem of using the masculine pronoun and indicates that the referent is God through the convention of capitalization. The reader may also be

stimulated by al-Shahrastani's objections to Ibn Sina's envisioning of the quality of existence for the Necessary of Existence. This translation appears to follow in the tradition and terminology of George Hourani's translations of Ibn Sina's sections on the Necessary of Existence. The Arabic edition of the text incorporates two major mss., giving variations in the notes. The typeface is clean, the word breaks are distinct, and in general, it is a pleasure to read.

Purists think they are working to an ideal translation. Each translation gives of its translator and the culture the translator is working in. That is why a translator who does not put of himself or herself in a translation is denying the reader the opportunity to see into the translator's mind and time. In a nutshell the problem is one of Greek ideal-ism, of looking for the Platonic translation. All in all, the authors have done their part to help with getting more good translations of Arabic-language philosophy into print and thus making Islamic philosophy more accessible.

Kiki Kennedy-Day

New York, US

'Yid', Sayyid MashkEr °usayn, Mullj ʿadri ki qibil-e 'amal falsafah

Lahore: al-Razziq Publishers 1998, pp. 168, cloth, Pak Rs. 120.

The philosophy of Mullj ʿadri has been part of the curriculum in the intellectual disciplines of the Indian madrasa for a couple of centuries at least. Yet, despite this significant presence, the experience of colonisation and the pedagogical rupture brought on by the British presence has led to a chasm, an intellectual gap, that has opened up between the religious scholars trained in traditional seminaries and the secular elites trained both at Sub-continental universities and at Oxbridge. For the latter, Islamic philosophy is an oddity, a medieval hangover viewed with amusement, much like medieval philosophy is (or at least was) considered within contemporary metropolitan academia. It is thus all the more refreshing to see a new work in Urdu, written by a poet and addressed to a literary, secular educated audience that attempts to locate Sadrian philosophy within the immediate practical and intellectual needs of a post-colonial, post-secular educated elite. Sadrian philosophy is championed as the representative of an authentic and living Islamic intellectual voice, which concerns itself with our contemporary problems and challenges that are faced in Muslim post-colonial societies.

The book comprises twenty-three short chapters. The introduction sets out the view of Sadrian philosophy as a spiritualised Sufi, intellectual and non-materialistic weltanschauung. In his address to an increasing materialistic and secularised Pakistani intellectual elite, Yid presents a contrasting philosophy, one which he suggests is a practical and practicable philosophy. Sadrian philosophy is thus an antidote to intellectual stagnation and the loss of a culturally authentic voice and worldview. But such a kerygma, a call to philosophise cannot be a populist one, contrary to Yid's reading. ʿadri is careful to place true wisdom and philosophy in the circles worthy of them, like his predecessors in ʿikmat. This is the first questionable insight in methodology. The author goes on to make three further errors in approach. First,

he suggests that the Sadrian hermeneutic of ta'wċl, of elucidating the truth is akin to a relativistic concept of truth that locates different manifestations and narrations of truth in differing cultural contexts. He seems to suggest that meaning is quite separate and often at odds with the form and 'phenomena' that carry it (page 12). But in ĩadrij's philosophy, ta'wċl is not a form of deception or of 'explaining away' articulated inconsistencies. The form and essence work hand in hand as he states clearly at the beginning of his exegesis on the Qur'anic chapter al-Sajdah, a position that concurs with the many sayings of the Shi'i Imams, which he mentions on the complementarity of the form and essence, the ĩĥir and the bĥin.

Second, he is right to focus on the doctrine of being, its singularity, its comprehension and its gradation as central to Sadrian philosophy. But he rather peculiarly describes the doctrine as contradictory (and paradoxical – page 28). For ĩadrij, there is no contradiction between the one and the many, between an account of the unity of reality and the phenomenal multiplicity to which we all attest. Reality can be considered at different levels and through layers of understanding without entailing, for ĩadrij, contradiction as such which has quite a specific technical usage.

Third, like Nasr and Corbin (and others), he sees ĩadrij as a Sufi oppositional figure setting himself against an 'official' philosophy and thought associated with the theologians of the Safavid court (page 21). Such a view cannot wholly be justified from the historical sources or from the textual evidence. ĩadrij is critical of the mediocrity of much of the philosophy and theology of his time and decries the 'rehearsal of doctrines' (taqlċd) popular amongst soi-disant thinkers. But he never makes a contrast between a public and a private philosophy, between an official and an oppositional philosophy.

He mentions certain Sadrian doctrines such as the possibility of stripping the body of the soul through spiritual exercises as the goal of one's journey of the self and the roots of Sadrian methods in Sufi thought. But he fails to explain the connections and does not adequately address issues that arise and objections that could be philosophically posed. It is as if Yĥd as a Sadrian spokesman has himself ill-digested Sadrian thought. Yet at times, he is spot on such as his recognition that existence and consciousness as intimately linked in Sadrian philosophy, that psychology and ontology cannot be wholly distinguished.

The early chapters rehearse old and worn (and incorrect) conjectures about the life and times of the philosopher, which are of little value, except for drawing attention to him. The core chapters follow the order of Fazlur Rahman's book, upon which the author relies heavily for his philosophical analysis. Thus he discusses epistemology, metaphysics and psychology ending with a discussion of Sadrian positions on the afterlife. So it seems that the core of this study is a summarised reading of Rahman's analysis as it is clear that the author does not read Arabic with sufficient mastery to be able to offer his own reading of the text. The key chapter on the Sadrian notion of gradation and unity in being, the doctrine of tashkċk follows Rahman's analysis but confuses the concept of ambiguity (ibĥjm) with 'systematic ambiguity', the term by which Rahman renders tashkċk into English. This is rather unfortunate because the subtlety of an organised class of variables arranged whilst remaining, in themselves, indeterminate is lost. Being is not ambiguous – it is a priori and self-evident for ĩadrij. Such misreadings do a disservice to Rahman's work.

As with many subcontinental publications, the quality of the paper (and the editing) leaves a lot to be desired. The English typesetting within the Urdu text is uneven and often afflicted with humorous spelling mistakes.

Despite the misinterpretations and misreadings, the author ought to be congratulated for bringing the attention of literary and intellectual elites back to the heritage of Islamic thought in the Indian subcontinent. He is right to remind them of the immediacy and vibrancy of Sadrian philosophy and it is hoped that the present work will encourage further research and interest in the thought of Mullī ʿadrij.

Sajjad Rizvi

Pembroke College, UK

Pascal Engel (ed) Précis de philosophie analytique

Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2000.

This admirable collection of essays marks the growing significance of the analytical tradition of philosophy in France, a country which hitherto one might not have expected to find much interest in the subject. One of the changes in recent years is that so-called continental philosophy has become much better known and respected in the Anglo-American world, while in continental Europe there has been interest in the sort of philosophy which is often called analytical and which has set up home in the United States and Britain. All the different areas of analytical thought are discussed by various authors in this collection, and although readers will no doubt find some chapters more interesting than others, it is nonetheless pleasing to find that the general standard is high and there are no chapters which do not meet a good standard of exposition. It is always difficult to write these survey chapters, one has to encapsulate so much material in such a short space, and one has to try to present a balanced view. The authors here have done a splendid job, they have really been objective and have tried to avoid allowing their own views on the material they are discussing to dominate the analysis.

It is invidious to pick out any of the chapters, but I shall comment in a bit more detail on two, which I found particularly interesting. In his account of epistemology Engel points out that many of the significant issues in modern epistemology are logical issues, in particular aspects of the logic of justification. He skates very neatly around the major lines of demarcation and conflict, giving an accurate perspective on what the current state of play in the area is. The other essay which I really enjoyed was by Claude Panaccio and is on the apparent conflict between analytical philosophy and the history of philosophy. Again, the author picks carefully through much of the controversy here, and clearly distinguishes between the variety of positions which can be adopted on approaching issues in the history of philosophy. This is a key topic for this book, of course, in that the authors are pursuing a way of doing philosophy which is not the leading paradigm in the French-speaking world, and they need some theory of how to approach the subject. As one might expect with analytical philosophy, one does not get an answer, but rather an analysis of what feasible answers are available.

Oliver Leaman

University of Kentucky, USA

Rachel Fell McDermott, *Singing to the Goddess*

New York, Oxford University Press, 2001.

To most western minds, the Goddess Kali stirs images of a quasi-vampirical deity whose devotees consist of thugs bent on murder mayhem and dacoity, thanks largely to books and films like 'Around the World in Eighty Days' and 'Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom'. The author has extensively researched not only from biographical and literary sources but also from songs and by consulting scholars and holy men to produce a codex of poetry of the Sakta tradition, from the early eighteenth century to the present day. Ms. McDermott divides the poetry into categories which illuminate the several different facets of Sakta devotion to the complex and diverse manifestations of the Goddess. Although Saktism is by no means exclusive to Bengal, it is most highly concentrated there, as demonstrated by the vibrant festivals of Kali-Puja and Durga-Puja every autumn in Calcutta and surrounding areas.

This is an important work of research, translation and scholarship of interest not just to theologians social anthropologists and sociologists, but for all those who appreciate devotional poetry. Since these poems were often originally set to music, perhaps the author could be prevailed upon to create a parallel musical anthology from her extensive discography as a later work? One can but hope.

The anthology includes offerings from the saint-poet Ramprasad Sen, his devotee Kamalakanta Bhattacharya and Kaji Najrul Islam. The latter is of particular interest inasmuch as his Muslim faith did not preclude him from composing devotional poetry to a Hindu Goddess.

The author devotes a section of the book to the relationship between Saktism and Tantra and the practice of Kundalini Yoga as the best path to the Goddess in the eyes of some of the poets in contradistinction to others, who favour simple sincere heartfelt love.

In whatever manifestation the goddess is worshipped, whether as demon-destroyer, devoted daughter, mother, wife or righter of worldly wrongs, she remains the universal Goddess of the Sanskrit scriptures. This anthology serves to provide an illuminating insight into a major aspect of Hindu devotional practices.

Notu Hoon

London, UK

John L. Esposito & John O. Voll, *Makers of Contemporary Islam*

Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001, 257 pp., paper.

In the Introduction the authors define their subjects as "activist thinkers [who] have shaped the conceptual world and set the terms of most debates in the Muslim world" (p. 3). One can only hope not. The activists they profile number eight men and one woman. The woman, Maryam Jameelah, is an American convert to Islam, who immigrated to Pakistan where she lived with Mawdudi's family and later

married one of his disciples as a second wife. She spent her time writing conservative apologia in English for a very traditional Islam. Jameelah is a throw-back to stagnant thinking, she cannot be considered as playing a "pioneering role" (p. 67). There are many activist-thinking women in the Muslim world—scholars, film makers, and journalists, in or from Iran, Lebanon and Algeria, for instance: Azizah al-Hibri, Leila Ahmed, Heiny Srour, and Randa Chahal Sabbagh are a few who come to mind—but they have not found their place in this book.

Much of the material in this collection is not original here, but recycled from earlier works. Chapter 7 is a "revised version of an earlier essay" (n. 1, p. 229). This essay by Valla Vakili is repetitious, vague and unreadable. The chapter on Rachid Ghannoushi, the Tunisian activist and exile, is one of the better profiles, although at times it too drifts into parroting slogans, such as, "At the same time, it is a movement of liberation from cultural alienation/Westernization, economic exploitation, and moral corruption, based on Islamic principles of equality, equity, and social justice" (p. 106). Although many of the subjects may have stated views that are highly moral and ethical, they have either been unable to put them into effect because of circumstances (Ghannoushi in exile) or ineffectiveness (al-Turabi). In their analysis of al-Turabi, the authors seek to treat him as an individual; however, the picture that emerges is not of an individual; they never give us the essence of Turabi-ness. Indeed, immediately after stating they will treat him as an individual they state that the portrait he draws of his family is "similar to many of the established 'holy families' in Sudanese history" (p. 119). On its face, this remark militates against the individuality they claim to seek. Rather, we are left with the picture of a man with fine beliefs as a human being who either hypocritically does not believe them when viewed in contrast with his actions, or one who is a wishy-washy leader, unable to sway others to go along with his program. For example, although he had originally stated that Shariah based punishments would not be enforced on the southern (Christian) Sudan because the inhabitants did not follow Shariah, in fact Shariah punishments were imposed in the southern provinces. This has been a major cause of continued disruption. The authors state that "The continuing civil war has made it difficult to judge the effectiveness of the political system created by Turabi. . ." (p. 149). If he were such a successful leader, he should have been more influential in ending the war and hewing to his stated beliefs.

Furthermore Esposito and Voll first state that the intellectuals they have selected are not traditional ulama (p. 21). Yet al-Turabi had a traditional religious education and comes from a family of traditionally educated men; his father was a Shariah judge (p. 121). Secondly, the authors quote Max Weber, that intellectuals should be politically disinterested (p. 4). The indications are that al-Turabi is not politically disinterested given his role in various Sudanese Islamic governments—as a writer of the constitution, as Speaker of the National Assembly in 1996 (p. 142-43). The authors are disingenuous also in claiming that political and religious power can be separated in Islam. Al-Turabi again is the perfect example of combined political and religious power. Much more than in the West, Islam combines religion and government and has a different theoretical framework for legitimization of power.

The material is generally dated: for example, the interviews with al-Turabi took place in 1992 and 1993, according to the authors' notes. The interviews with Ghannoushi are from 1989. The interviews with Khurshid Ahmad was in 1988 and those with Abdurrahman Wahid in 1991. It must have been a source of embarrassment when Wahid was relieved of the presidency of Indonesia earlier this year for corruption, after the authors wrote him up as a "Scholar-President."

No Turkish intellectual is profiled, which is an important lacuna when considering the "Muslim world." Why not a profile of Ayatollah Khomeini? A serious analysis of the ayatollah from the perspective of a

conservative thinker would make him a good starting-point. Abbasi Madani of Algeria also would be fascinating.

Chapter 1, about Ismail Ragi al-Faruqi begins with the mention of his murder, but raises many questions. Esposito and Voll give no information about the circumstances of his death, leaving the reader to wonder about those circumstances. In a particularly awkward aside they mention his wife was also killed at the same time – this in parentheses.

Overall, the reader feels this is a poorly planned selection, based on materials the authors had at hand-- recycled subjects, middle-of-the-road thinkers, nobody too controversial. Some authors have made a cottage industry of explaining "Islam" to an unsuspecting American public, always in respectful tones, but without depth. If readers want a really trenchant analysis of some modern Islamic thought they might read *Islamic Fundamentalism: Myths and Realities* edited by Ahmad S. Moussalli (Ithaca Press, c. 1998).

Kiki Kennedy-Day

New York, USA

Idoia Maiza Ozcoidi, *La concepción de la filosofía en Averroes: Análisis crítico del Tahafut al-tahafut*

Madrid, Editorial Trotta, Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, *Al-Andalus Textos y Estudios*, 2001.

This carefully written book does not present any exciting new theses on ibn Rushd's *Tahafut al-Tahafut*, but it does outline accurately the nature of the text and its context. The author discusses the main issues which ibn Rushd raises and their origins in the thought of al-Farabi, ibn Sina and al-Ghazali. What is rather innovative in her approach is her argument, surely plausible, that ibn Rushd has not only philosophical but also theological topics in mind in his text, and it is important to understand what these are while examining it. She also brings out nicely that while defending Aristotelian thought ibn Rushd is far from defending the sorts of ideas which many of his philosophical predecessors produced, and he is just as critical of them as he often is of al-Ghazali. She is particularly clear on the ibn Rushd's philosophical psychology, and brings out the rather complex relationships which exist between the different faculties of thought and our ability to make our thinking more abstract. This is a notoriously difficult area, and it is good to see it discussed here in a way which actually sheds light rather than gloom on what is going on.

As a clear approach to the *Tahafut al-Tahafut* this book can be recommended. It provides a close analysis of the text, and the author follows a philosophical approach throughout. She does not waste time speculating about hidden motives or intentions which the author may have had, but addresses the central issues and explains them in philosophical terms, thus respecting the text for what it is, something replete with argument and analysis. This book is indicative of much work which is taking place today in Islamic philosophy and which is now being conducted by competent philosophers.

Oliver Leaman

University of Kentucky, USA

Notes:

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2- Daniel De Smet, *Empedocles arabus. Une lecture néoplatonicienne tardive*, Bruxelles: Koninklyke Akademie 1998.

3- M. Asin Palacios, *The mystical philosophy of Ibn Masarrah and his followers*, trs. E.H. Douglas & H.W. Yoder, Leiden: E.J. Brill 1972.

4- Daniel De Smet, "Le souffle de miséricordieux (nafas al-raċmċn): un élément pseudo-empédocléen dans la métaphysique de Mullċ ċadri Shċrjzċ," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* vol. X (1999) pp. 467-86.

5- G. Hourani, "Ibn Sina on Necessary and Possible Existence," *The Philosophical Forum* 4, no. 1 (1972): 74-86.

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Sabine Schmidtke, *Theologie, Philosophie und Mystik im Zwölferschiitischen Islam des 9./15. Jahrhunderts: Die Gedankenwelt des Ibn Abī Gumhār al-Aḥṣī'ī (um 838/1434-35 – nach 906/1501)*, *Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science* vol. XXXIX, Leiden: Brill 2000, pp. 355, cloth, \$114.

Wilferd Madelung & Toby Mayer, *Struggling with the Philosopher: A Refutation of Avicenna's Metaphysics*, London: I.B. Tauris & Co., 2001, vi pp. + 105 pp. (English) + 135 pp. (Arabic), with English and Arabic indexes, cloth.

Yūd, Sayyid Mashkūr ḥusayn, *Mullī ḥadri kī qibil-e ʿamal falsafah*, Lahore: al-Razziq Publishers 1998, pp. 168, cloth, Pak Rs. 120