

Philosophical and Mystical Dimensions
In the
Thought and Writings of Mîr Findiriskî
(ca. 970-1050/1560-1640)

With Special Reference to his *Qaṣ̣dah Ḥikmîyah*
(Philosophical Ode)

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**Bism-i al-Allâh-i al-Raḥmân-i al-Raḥîm
wa Ṣalâ Allâh-u `alâ Muḥammad-in
wa Âlih-i al-Ṭayyibîn al-Ṭâhirîn**

“عقل کشتی، آرزو گردباد و دانش بادبان --- حق تعالی ساحل و عالم همه دریاستی”

“*`Aql kishî, ârizû girdâb wa dânish bâdbân-Ḥaqq ta`âlâ sâḥil wa `âlam hamah daryâstî.*”

The intellect is ship, desire is a maelstrom and knowledge is the sail, God, exalted, is the shore and the whole universe is the sea.

Mîr Findiriskî

**This Humble Work Is Dedicated to Imâm Mahdî Peace Of Allâh,
All of His Angels and Prophets
Upon Him and His Pure, Infallible Ascendant Family**

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Abstract

Mîr Abu al-Qâsim Findiriskî (970/1560 1050/1640) a prominent scholar of the Şafawîd period (906/1501 1148/1736) played an important role in the development of Shî'î *Irfân* and *Hikmah*. He was a classmate and close friend of Mîr Dâmâd (950/1543 1041/1631) and Shaykh-i Bahâ'î (953/1546 1030/1622). Beside the other major juridical, traditional, philosophical, and mystical accomplishments of the School of Isfahan, the philosophical and mystical contributions of Mîr Findiriskî are invaluable. Although he was not a fertile writer, the uniqueness of his works has drawn remarkable attention. Many considered him a great teacher of peripatetic philosophy. This thesis aims to display Mîr Findiriskî's achievements in these fields and attempts to exhibit the originality in his exceptional mystico-philosophical ode (*qaşîdah hikmîyyah*). In this ode Mîr Findiriskî summarized the principles of *hikmah*. Considering his mystical and scientific writings, and various narrative accounts of his spirituality and super-natural powers, his reputation as a great philosopher and mystic of the Şafavîd period appears to be well deserved. This thesis evaluates various aspects of his life in some detail and a number of ambiguities surrounding the corpus of his writings are resolved through a complete list of his works. Finally, an overview of his doctrines on ontological as well as epistemological problems in his work is presented.

Résumé

Mîr Abu Al-Qâsim Findiriskî (970/1560 1050/1640) un important érudit de la période des Safavîdes (906/1501 1148/1736) a joué un rôle primordial dans le développement du *Irfân Shîite* et de *l'hikmah*. Il fut un camarade de classe et un ami intime de Mîr Dâmâd (950/1543 1041/1631) et de Shaykh-i Bahâ'î (953/1546 1030/1622). Son compter les importantes matières telles que la juridiction, la tradition, la philosophie, et ses œuvres mystiques accomplies à l'école d'Ispahan, les contributions philosophiques et mystiques de Mîr Findiriskî sont de valeurs inestimables. Bien qu'il ne fut pas un auteur fertile, l'authenticité et l'excellence de ses œuvres ont remarquablement attiré l'attention. Beaucoup l'ont considéré un grand professeur de la philosophie péripatéticienne. Cette présente thèse vise à démontrer la réussite de Mîr Findiriskî dans ces domaines et essaye d'exposer l'originalité de son exceptionnelle ode mystico-philosophique (*qasîdah 'ikmîyyah*). Dans cette ode Mîr Findiriskî a récapitulé les principes de *l'hikmah*. Vu ses écritures mystiques et scientifiques, et ses divers livres narratifs de la spiritualité et des pouvoirs surnaturels, sa réputation de grand philosophe et mystique de la période des Safavîdes semble être bien méritée. Cette thèse évalue les divers aspects de sa biographie de manière assez détaillée et un certain nombre d'ambiguïtés entourant le corpus de ses écritures sont résolues dans une liste complète de ses œuvres. En conclusion, une vue d'ensemble de ses doctrines ontologiques ainsi que les problèmes épistémologiques de ses œuvres est présentée.

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**“All praise is for Allāh the Lord of all universe and
Imam Mahdi the awaited guide and the divine source of peace and justice.”**

Part I

Introductions

- Chapter 1: The Scheme of the Thesis and its Justification
- Chapter 2: The “School of Isfahan”
- Chapter 3: Biography of Mîr Findiriskî

Chapter 1

The Scheme of the Thesis

&

Its Justification

Introduction

The existence and nature of man's soul are matters of interest to most people, but especially to philosophers and mystics. Thinkers of all backgrounds have sought answers to such questions as: "What is the reality and the origin of human life and thought?" "Has a human being only a body with a physical existence or does he have a soul or a spirit, too?" "What is soul if man really does have one?" "Is it essential or accidental?" "Does the human soul have any relation to its body?" "Who is the creator and the cause of the human soul?" "Is it Active Intellect (as the Peripatetic philosophers, or Mashshâ'ûn believe) or is it universal soul (as the Illuminationists, or Ishrâqîyûn would have it)?"

Recognition of the soul is sometimes considered the source for the identification of the Creator and His creatures. Since scholars also consider it to be the key to understanding the truth and perfection of life, therefore it is a subject that has long exercised the greatest minds. Eastern scholars, including Islamic thinkers, believed in the immortality and incorporeality of the soul. They endlessly discussed the means toward its

purification and perfection. Certain Greek philosophers also believed in the existence of the soul or spirit and discussed its essence, signs and effects, leading to the emergence of different opinions and schools. Socrates for instance believed in the existence of a soul and insisted that knowledge of other creatures amounted to knowledge of their souls. Plato believed in the incorporeality and immortality of the soul and strongly believed in the substantive and perfect motion of the soul (*ḥarakat-i jawharî wa kamâlî-i nafs*).¹ Aristotle believed² that soul is originated (*ḥâdith*) and that it is the perfection form of the natural substance. Plotinus whose ideas had a tremendous influence on the Muslim world and Muslim philosophers, also considered the problem of the soul; in his book known as the "Enneads,"³ he expressed his belief in the descent of the soul from the incorporeal world and its desire to return to its home once again.

In Islam the question of the human soul has been addressed in various philosophical, mystical, ethical and theological contexts. Other very basic and fundamental problems in Islam (God's unity and the doctrine of resurrection) are closely linked with the problem of the soul. The soul is also a central concern in Islamic ethics and mysticism.

The same may be said of the sources of man's knowledge, which have been one of the most controversial problems in Islamic philosophy. This epistemological question explores the essential elements that constitute man's knowledge, and determines the nature of human intellect.

¹ Abdurrahman Badawi, *Platon en pays d'islam*, eds. Mehdi Muḥaqqiq & T. Izutsu (Tehran: The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Tehran Branch, 1974), p. 312. See also Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), pp. 70, 71 & 85 (Phaedo).

² Aristotle, *Introductory Readings*, trans. Terence Irwin & Gail Fine (Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), pp. 412a-414b (De Anima).

³ Plotinus, *Uṭhûlûjîyâ*, ed. Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtiyânî (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1976), pp. 38-43.

These issues, fundamental in themselves and yet linked on many levels, have preoccupied Muslim philosophers and mystics for centuries, and have been subjected to many attempts at resolving them - not the least important of which is the contribution of Mîr Findiriskî, a Şafavîd Muslim philosopher. Mîr Findiriskî dealt with the above questions (among others) using his "Irfânî"-philosophical methodology, in a very allegorical and highly coded approach.

Mullâ Şadrâ's focus, by contrast, is very different from that of Mîr Findiriskî. He deals with these issues from a completely different angle. He bases himself on the principality and gradation of existence (*'aşâlat wa tashkîk dar wujûd*) and on substantial motion. The present study will deal with these problems chiefly from the standpoint of Mîr Findiriskî but often in reference to the thought of Mullâ Şadrâ.

In his philosophical ode (*Qaşîdah Hikmîyah*) Mîr Findiriskî deals both directly and indirectly with diverse ideas and schools regarding the existence of the soul, the body-soul relation, the soul-intellect relation, and the immortality and incorporeality of the soul. Moreover, the whole structure of the poem is built around the problem of the soul and knowledge. He expresses all his concerns and ideas in the *Qaşîdah*, where he views the soul as being at times the foundation of ethics, at other times the basis of mystical expression, and even sometimes the subject of philosophy. In his philosophical thought, he investigates the theory of knowledge and how human knowledge is formed.

Mîr Findiriskî draws in this work both directly and indirectly on different philosophers and elaborates on their philosophical ideas; sometimes even criticizing them severely. He devotes his attention above all to Plato, Aristotle, Ibn Sîna, Fârâbî, Nâşir Khusraw, Qustâ ibn Lûqâ, and Galen. Although Mîr Findiriskî's ode is relatively brief,

containing only forty-one lines, it nevertheless deals with many philosophical, mystical and ethical concerns.

Since Mîr Findiriskî lived in a distinct period in the history of Islamic philosophy, i.e., the Safavid age, I shall discuss the philosophical and mystical issues related to the emergence and development of the school of Isfahan, particularly the issues raised and developed by Mîr Dâmâd and Mullâ Şadrâ. I will also proceed to discuss the theory of knowledge in Islamic philosophy and ascertain the part played by Mîr Findiriskî. I have attempted to show how his thought, which is fundamentally characterized by a combination of Qur'ânic and Irfânî elements, prevails throughout the entire structure of his philosophic ode.

I should mention at the outset of my thesis that it will hardly be possible to deal exhaustively with all the issues raised by Mîr Findiriskî in this work, if only due to limitations of time and space. I will, however, try to build a model of Mîr's thought on the basis of the above-mentioned subjects. Such an attempt has not been made so far. In addition, a critical Persian text of the poem, a scholarly translation and a detailed commentary on it will be offered in an independent chapter. In this way, I hope to make a difficult but important philosophical work available in a reliable form to Islamic scholars, historians of philosophy, and students of Persian literature.

Mîr Findiriskî

Though the Şafavid dynasty (906/1501),⁴ which symbolizes a turning point in the history of Shî'î thought, has been studied in detail, less consideration has been given to the

⁴ H. R. Roemer, "The Şafavid Period," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, volume 6, *The Timurid and Şafavid periods*, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 189.

scientific and philosophical dynamism of this period. Among which the philosophical and mystical contributions of Mîr Findiriskî are noteworthy.

Mîr Abû al-Qâsim Husaynî-i Findiriskî,⁵ (b. 970/1563, d. 1050/1640-1) is regarded by many scholars as one of the greatest mystics and philosophers of his time. Though he was well versed in a number of difficult languages such as Sanskrit and Pahlawî, nevertheless⁶ it must be accepted that he was considered somewhat weak in the divine sciences and even in Arabic. One of the greatest works of Mîr Findiriskî is his commentary in Persian upon the *Yoga Vasistha*. It seems possible that Mîr Findiriskî discovered certain similarities between Islamic and Hindu mysticism. This also may explain his interest in traveling so often to India.

Among Mîr Findiriskî's several works we may call his philosophical ode (*Qaṣṣidat Ḥikmîyah*), essays on motion (*Risâla-i Ḥarakat*), on technique (*Risâlah-i Şinâ'iyah*) and on Hindu wisdom (*Muntakhab-i Jug Basasht*),⁷ to note only the more important ones.⁸ Mîr Findiriskî though wrote little, but what he did write is considered significant.⁹ He frequently taught Peripatetic philosophy (concentrating on texts such as Ibn Sînâ's *al-Shifâ'* and *al-Najât*), mathematics and medicine.¹⁰ Corbin has rightly stated:

⁵ Mîrzâ Muḥammad `Alî Mudarris, *Rayḥānat al-Adab fî Tarâjîm al-Ma`rûfîn bi al-Kunya wa al-Laḡab*, vol. 4 (Tabriz: Chapkhâni-i Shafaq, 1967), p. 357.

⁶ `Abdullâh Afandî-i Işfahânî, *Rîyâḡ al-'Ulamâ' wa Ḥîyâḡ al-Fuḡalâ* (Qum: Maṭba'at Khayyâm, 1981), p. 499.

⁷ Fathullâh Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab-i Jug-basasht or Selections from the Yoga-Vâsiṣṭha attributed to Mîr Abu al-Qâsim Findiriskî* (Ph.D Dissertation, Harvard University, 1976).

⁸ S. H. Nasr, "Spiritual Movements, Philosophy and Theology in the Şafavîd Period," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, volume 6, *The Timurid and Safavîd periods*, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 676.

⁹ Nasr, "Spiritual Movements" p. 676.

¹⁰ Nasr, "Spiritual Movements," pp. 675-6.

Mîr Abû al-Qâsim Findiriskî (d. 1050/1640-1641), who taught philosophical and theological sciences to several students at Isfahan, was a powerful personality who remains shrouded in a certain mystery.¹¹

Many eminent scholars such as S. J. Âshtîyânî¹² and H. Corbin consider him a Peripatetic (*mashshâ'î*) philosopher. Yet, considering his philosophical ode as well as the contemporary witnesses who believed that Mîr Findiriskî possessed supernatural powers,¹³ we may consider him as a mystical philosopher who played an important role in the development of Shî'î *'irfân* (mystical cognition).

Mîr Findiriskî's writings indicate that in philosophy he was a peripatetic philosopher and a faithful follower of Ibn Sînâ. Apparently all of his students except Mullâ Şadrâ (if we do accept that Mullâ Şadrâ studied with Mîr Findiriskî) were Ibn Sînâ in orientation. Some of his distinguished students were Aqâ Husayn-i Khânsârî (d.1080/1669-70), Mullâ Muḥammad Bâqir Sabzawârî (d. 1098 or 1099/ 1686-7), and Mullâ Rafî'a Gîlânî (d. 1082/1671-2).¹⁴ Though he was respected by both Shâh 'Abbâs in Iran and the Mughal court in India,¹⁵ he was not concerned with the material world and dressed very simply.¹⁶

Mîr Findiriskî's most famous work, *Qaṣîdah Hikmîyah*, which is very similar to the *Qaṣîdah Yâ'îyah* of Nâşir ibn Khusraw Dihlawî, survives in three Iranian manuscripts. This authentic work has been commented upon by three important scholars; Mullâ Muḥammad Şâlih-i Khalkhâlî (1095-1175 solar), Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî (13th

¹¹ Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, trans. Liadain Sherard. London: Islamic Publication, 1993. p. 340.

¹² S. J. Ashtîyânî, *Anthologie des philosophes iraniens*, pref. Henry Corbin, vol. 1 (Tehran/Paris: Institut Franco-Iranien, 1971), p. 62.

¹³ S. H. Nasr, "Findiriskî" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., Supplement, p. 308.

¹⁴ Nasr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676. See also Ashtîyânî, *Anthologie*, p. 62.

¹⁵ Mudarris, *Rayḥânât al-Adab*, p. 358.

¹⁶ Mudarris, *Rayḥânât al-Adab*, p. 359. See also Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

century solar) and 'Abbâs Sharîf Dârâbî (ca. 1255-1300 solar). All these commentators attributed this work to Mîr Findiriskî. It is still admired by contemporary philosophers and mystics in Iran. Though Mîr Findiriskî was not a prolific writer his *Qaṣīdah* essentially explains the principles of *ḥikmat*, or wisdom, in the sense of esoteric knowledge.

Although it is beyond the limits of this introduction to bring all these principles forward and explain them one by one, it is worth commenting on a few lines from the ode.¹⁷ In this way we may consider the first three lines of the *Qaṣīdah*, which raise the issue of epistemology and Platonic ideas. I would therefore like to quote the verses in a literal transliteration and translation and then explain the four theories concerning knowledge that Mîr Findiriskî may have intended to convey. I shall follow this approach in an independent chapter.

Text (Lines 1-3)

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. چرخ با این اختران نغز و خوش و زیباستی | صورتی در زیر دارد آنچه در بالاستی |
| 2. صورت زیرین اگر با نردبان معرفت | بر رود بالا همان با اصل خود یکتاستی |
| 3. این سخنها را در نیابد هیچ فهم ظاهری | گر ابونصرستی گر بوعلی سیناستی |

1. Charkh bâ 'în 'akhtarân naghz wa khush wa zîbâstî,

Sûratî dar zîr dârad 'ânc̣h-i dar bâlâstî.

2. Sûrat-i zîrîn 'agar bâ nardibân-i ma`rifat,

Bar rawad bâlâ hamân bâ 'aṣl-i khud yiktâstî.

¹⁷ The entire Persian text of *Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah* (forty-one lines) is included in Appendix I below.

3. 'în sukhanhâ râ dar nayâbad hich fahm-i zâhirî,

Gar 'Abûnasrastî, gar Bû 'Alî Sînâstî.¹⁸

Literal Translation:

1. Heaven with these stars is excellent, happy and beautiful,

Whatever there is above has a form below as well.

2. The lower form - if the ladder of inner knowledge

Be climbed – is one in origin with the higher.

3. No exterior understanding can discover this word,

Whether it be that of an Abû Naşr (al-Fârâbî) or of an Abû 'Alî (Ibn) Sînâ.¹⁹

The Theory of Knowledge

The question of the sources of human knowledge has long been discussed both in the Islamic world and in the West. The epistemological question attempts to find the essential elements forming man's knowledge and tries to determine the broader nature of human intellectual life and how thought itself is constructed.

Perception (*idrâk*) is of two types: (i) representation (*taşawwur*) which is a simple and single perception, like the perception of light (*nûr*) or of sound (*şawt*); (ii) confirmation (*taşdîq*), such as when we say, "the sun is brighter than the moon." Representation, in turn, is itself of two kinds: (i) simple representation (*taşawwur-i basîf*) as in the perception of existence and unity, (ii) compound representation (*taşawwur-i*

¹⁸Abbâs Sharîf Dârâbî Shîrâzî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd; Sharḥ-i Qaṣîdih-i Hikmiya Abu al-Qâsim Mir Fındiriskî* (Tehran: Shirkat-i Nisbî Muḥammad Husain Iqbal wa Shurakâ', 1337 AH).

¹⁹A partial translation is given by S. H. Nasr in his article "The School of Isfahan." In *A History of Muslim Philosophy: With Short Accounts of Other Disciplines and the Modern Renaissance in Muslim Lands*, ed. M. M. Sharif (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1983), pp. 923, 24.

murakkab) which is made up of two or more single representations, like "golden mountain" or "orange juice." However the essential question goes back to the origin and the sources of simple representation (*taṣawwur-i basîf*).

Simple Representation and its Origin

There are four theories, which attempt to explain the nature of simple representation as a mode of perception: rational theory, sensory theory, extraction theory and remembrance/ Platonic theory. As it is beyond the limits of this introduction to cover all these theories in detail, I would like to deal only briefly with the rational, sensory and extraction theories and pay a little more attention to Remembrance/Platonic theory, where Mîr Findiriskî's ideas will be clarified.

(i) Rational theory: Many European philosophers, such as Descartes and Kant, basically insist that there are two fundamental sources for man's representations (*taṣawwurât*): feeling (sensation, *'iḥsâs*) and nature (*fiṭrah*). We represent in our mind heat (*ḥarârah*), light (*nûr*), taste (*ta'm*) and sound (*ṣawt*) because we feel them with our sensory organs. We also represent some other concepts such as God, soul, length, and motion, which clearly are not represented through our sensory organs; rather we represent them by our nature. Accordingly the basic sources of man's representations, Descartes and Kant say, are sensation (*'iḥsâs*) and nature (*fiṭrah*). **(ii) Sensory Theory:** In contrast to philosophers of the latter school, John Locke strongly believed that we should consider sensation as the only source of our representations. According to him all other representations (*taṣawwurât*) are made of changes to the representations that come from our sensory organs. **(iii) Abstraction Theory:** Muslim philosophers by contrast divide man's representations into the primary and secondary. Primary representations, they

believe, spring directly from man's feelings. Man then uses his creativity and his innovative spirit to abstract secondary representations from the primary ones. (iv) **Remembrance, Platonic Theory (Anamnesis):**²⁰ The concept known as "Remembrance Theory" is based upon two essential principles: first, the existence of man's eternal soul and the existence of Ideas (*muthul*; incorporeal realities). According to Plato, man's soul can exist independently of his body (in fact, it existed even before the body) in a higher world. Man's soul, which is capable of dwelling freely in an eternal and higher world, is able to come into contact with the incorporeal realities (*muthul*) and understands them. Afterwards, when man's soul is compelled to descend from the incorporeal world and approach his body, he loses all his knowledge. However, when he forms a connection in his mind, through his feelings, to particular meanings, he remembers the higher ideas. In fact, worldly meanings are nothing except reflections and shadows of higher, eternal, Platonic ideas. When man perceives a meaning in this world, he immediately remembers higher, eternal, Platonic ideas. Consequently man's representations (*taṣawwurât*) precede his feelings, which in turn, are nothing more than a memory of knowledge acquired in a past existence.

Mîr Findiriskî's philosophical ode appears to echo these notions. He believes cognition to be a result of a memory of previous ideas and representations. This idea is clearly expressed in Mîr Findiriskî's philosophical ode. He declares at the beginning that the universe's beauty, happiness, and excellence lie in the fact that its lower aspect (*sûrat-i zîrîn*) is exactly the same as its counterpart in the higher world. He clearly explains, in the second line, that the higher form is the origin of man's representations. The word *aşl*

²⁰ E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, pp. 55-60 (Phaedo), and pp. 857-871 (Theaetetus).

(in verse 2) means the base, the origin, the root, the source, while the word *yiktâstî* (in the same line) means “the same,” or “united.” In the third line, however, Mîr Findiriskî, goes further and declares that this theory is of such a nature that it had remained unknown even to such great philosophers as Fârâbî and Ibn Sînâ. He states moreover that the latter two thinkers did not apprehend this theory because they lacked inner or esoteric understanding. In other words, if such brilliant thinkers were unable to understand the theory on the basis of outwards knowledge, how could anyone else hope to?²¹ Yet if they had developed their inner sight, this understanding would have been granted to them, just as it would be to anyone else.

Text (lines 4, 5)

4. جان اگر نه عارضستی زیر این چرخ کبود
این بدنها نیز دایم زنده و برجاستی
5. هر چه باشد عارض اورا جوهری باید نخست
عقل بر این دعوی ما شاهدهی گویاستی

4. Jân 'agar na `âridastî zîr-i 'în charkh-i kabûd,

'în badanhâ nîz dâ'im zindah wa barjâstî.

5. Har ch-i bâshad `ârid 'û râ jowharî bâyard nakhust,

`Aql bar 'în da`wây-i mâ shâhidî gûyâstî.

Translation

4. If soul were not an accident under this azure heaven,

These bodies would be forever alive and upright.

5. But whatever is an accident must first have a substance,

The intellect is our expressive evidence for this claim.

²¹ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd*, p. 55.

In the above verses Mîr Findiriskî offers reasons in support of what he asserts in the first two lines of his ode. In verses one and two, he appears to maintain two philosophically important principles: that there exists a higher rational universe which contains both the souls of men and incorporeal realities, and that upper ideas and representations are the source of man's representations (*taṣawwurât*) in this world. In verses four and five Mîr Findiriskî substantiates this by declaring that if the souls were not accidents within bodies, they would have to be the essences and consequently bodies would also be everlasting. However, men's bodies perish, and are evidently neither eternal nor essential. Men's souls are therefore accidental and approach human bodies as an accident. The source of a man's soul or its substance is the incorporeal, universal intellect (*`aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*). Mîr Findiriskî maintains that men's souls are like forms (*ṣuwar*, pl. of *ṣûrah*) and that the incorporeal, universal intellect is that substance.

Incorporeal, Universal, Rational Forms and Incorporeal, Universal Intellect

To convey more clearly the above process of reasoning, I shall explain his proof in other words. According to S. M. H. Ṭabâṭabâ'î, a contemporary Muslim philosopher,²² incorporeal, universal, rational forms (*ṣuwar-i `aqlî-i kullî-i mujarrad*) are comprehended by incorporeal, universal intellect (*`aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*). The incorporeal, universal intellect (*`aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*) supplies incorporeal, universal, rational forms (*ṣuwar-i `aqlî-i kullî-i mujarrad*) to men's souls. As these forms are knowledge, they are incorporeal. And as they are universals, they are common (*mushtarak*) to all people. Since we know that every material thing, which penetrates in matter, is entirely personal and cannot be shared, it must be acknowledged that rational forms are immaterial and

²² S. M. H. Ṭabâṭabâ'î, *Aghâz-i Falsafah* (Qum: Intishârât-i Ṭabâṭabâ'î, 1990), pp. 257-8.

their agent likewise incorporeal. For a weak material existent cannot create an existence stronger than itself.

Man's own soul could be considered the agent (*fā'il*) of incorporeal, universal, rational forms. This confirmation however proves illogical, since the relation (*nisbah*) of man's soul to incorporeal, universal, rational forms are in potency (*b-i al-quwwah*) not in actuality (*b-i al-fi'l*). A thing in potency cannot transform itself from a state of potency to one of actuality. Consequently the agent of incorporeal, universal, rational forms is an incorporeal substance, which contains all incorporeal, universal, rational forms.

Text (line 6)

6. می توانی گر ز خورشید این صفتها کسب کرد روشن است و بر همه تابان و خود یکتاستی

6. Mîtawânî gar zi khurshîd 'în şifathâ kasb kard,
rowshan 'ast wa bar hamah tâbân wa khud yiktâstî.

Translation

6. If you can obtain these qualities from the sun,
the sun is bright and shines upon all things while keeping its unity.

In this verse Mîr Findiriskî likens the relationship between incorporeal, universal, rational forms, and incorporeal, universal intellect to the sun and its rays. As sun is the agent and cause of rays of light, the incorporeal, universal intellect is the agent and cause of soul. Like the sun which initiates and terminates the rays, the incorporeal, universal intellect also commences and completes the soul. And just as the rays are entirely linked with the sun, and have no independent existence, man's soul is similarly related to incorporeal, universal intellect.

Text (lines 7- 8)

7. جوهر عقلی که بی پایان و جاویدان بود با همه، هم بی همه مجموع و یکتاستی

8. جان عالم گویش گر ربط جان دانی به تن در دل هر ذره، هم پنهان و هم پیداستی

7. Jawhar-i `aqlî ki bî pâyan wa jâwîdân buwad,

Bâ hamah wa ham bî hamah majmû` wa yiktâstî.

8. Jân-i `âlam gûyamash gar rabṭ-i jân dâni bi tan,

Dar dil-i har dharra ham pinhân wa ham paydâstî.

Translation

7. The intelligence substance which is endless and eternal,

with or without all things is a totality and unity.

8. I call it the soul of the universe, if you believe in the body- soul connection,

in the heart of every atom it is both hidden and visible.

One of the most fundamental philosophical problems is the relation of soul and body. Mîr Findiriskî shows in the above verse that like Plato he believes in the duality of soul and body. Plato reasoned that soul and body are two separate substances.²³

Accordingly the soul-body relation is accidental. He likens, as M. Muṭahharî says,²⁴ this relation to that of a bird and its pigeonhole or to that of a rider (*râkib*) and his mount (*markûb*), though we clearly see no substantial connection between a bird and its pigeonhole or between a rider and his mount. This philosophy was rejected by Aristotle and later on by Ibn Sînâ. They considered the soul-body relation to be much stronger than

²³ E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, pp. 246-7 (Gorgias), and pp. 517-8 (Phaedrus).

²⁴ Murtaḍâ Muṭahharî, *Maqâlât-i Falsafî*, vol. 1 (Qum: Intishârât-i Hikmat, 1988), p. 10. See also Plato, *Plato's Phaedo*. Trans. R. S. Bluck. London: Bobbs-Merrill E. P. I., 1985, pp. 85-9.

Plato had envisaged it²⁵ and stated that the soul-body relation is like the relation of form (*şûrah*) and matter (*mâddah*).²⁶ However, in this case soul is with body, not in body. Thus it is not eternal, has no previous knowledge and acquires all its knowledge in this world. This theory was only developed in the following centuries. Later, the philosophers such as Mullâ Şadrâ attempted to establish a closer connection between soul and body.

In contrast to Mîr Findiriskî, who paid close attention to the Platonic doctrine of Ideas, his supposed pupil and contemporary, Mullâ Şadrâ, proclaimed that both soul and body are the result of motion. In fact, Mullâ Şadrâ said matter has the potentiality to improve something immaterial in itself. On the one hand Mullâ Şadrâ disagreed with Plato, saying that the soul does not precede the body or its knowledge. On the other hand he differed with Aristotle, Ibn Sînâ and Mîr Findiriskî over the claim that the relation of soul and body is not like the one between form and matter (*şûrah & mâddah*), but is rather much stronger. Soul is a higher level of body. Soul is a perfect level of body. In other words body, with its four dimensions (length, width, depth and time) will grow a new and fifth dimension as well. The fifth dimension is called the spiritual dimension, one that exists and develops simultaneously with the body.²⁷

The purpose of this Study

As it is evident from the short discussion above, in his *Qaşîdah Hikmîyah* and in his other works Mîr Findiriskî tries to deal with many philosophical issues as the interrelationship of soul, intellect, knowledge and motion. The purpose of the present study is to analyze these issues in detail by focusing on crucial topics like the existence of intellect

²⁵ Terence Irwin and Galin Fine, trans. *Aristotle: Introductory Readings* (Indianapolis/ Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996), p. 90.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 90-100.

²⁷ M. Muţahharî, *Maqâlât*, vol.1, pp. 14-17.

and soul, the soul-intellect relation, the body-soul relation, Platonic Ideas and the theory of knowledge. My primary intention is to describe Mîr Findiriskî's treatment of these problems with their previous and contemporary Islamic formulations, and to delineate the historical Islamic development of the central arguments and theories that find their way into Mîr Findiriskî's discussion. This work aims to examine his treatment of mystical and philosophical problems in the *Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah*, without neglecting his other writings. In this regard I will bring to light three different interpretations that have been made of his *Qaṣīdah*, particularly the case of the theory of knowledge in Mîr Findiriskî's writings.

Research Hypothesis

The primary intention of this thesis, therefore, is to clarify Mîr's mystical and philosophical doctrines developed in his *Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah* and his other works, employing an analytical methodology in order to do so. In this regard I shall evaluate the category (Ishrâqî or Mashshâ'î philosophers) he belongs to. Mîr Findiriskî is both one of the least known and the most original and influential thinkers in the history of Islamic philosophy. A number of recent studies are a proof of the vitality and significance of his thought. Some of the research carried out recently include: (i) H. Corbin's *Anthologie des Philosophes Iraniens*, *History of Islamic Philosophy* and *La Philosophie Iranienne*, (ii) F. Muḡtabâ'î's dissertation "Muntakhabât-i Jug-Basasht or Selections from the Yoga-Vâsiṣṭha Attributed to Mîr Abu'l-Qâsim Findiriskî" and (iii) S. H. Nasr's "The School of Isfahan," in M. M. Sharif's *A History of Muslim Philosophy*. Nonetheless, a detailed analysis of this topic in any language has not been done yet. It will be necessary, of course, to outline Mîr Findiriskî's views within their historical context and according to the background or the different audiences for which he was actually writing.

The General Plan of This Thesis

Since Mîr Findiriskî lived in a revolutionary period in the history of philosophy, which witnessed the emergence of the “school of Isfahan” under Mîr Dâmâd, this thesis will begin by placing him within this context and will describe his intellectual life in some detail. Moreover, a number of problems surrounding the corpus of his writings could be resolved by a complete listing of his works. This has not been done before. I will provide an overview of his doctrines, but a major part of the discussion is devoted to the ideas drawn from his works such as the existence of intellect and soul, the soul-intellect relation, the body-soul relation and the theory of knowledge, motion, and gradation. These topics have not been studied by previous scholars. The thesis aims to present the philosophical and mystical thought of this important thinker for the first time in English. The objective of this thesis is to explore the philosophical and mystical approaches and the arguments as they follow from Mîr Findiriskî’s own presentations or from his best interpreters such as Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtiyânî, Mullâ Muhammad Şâlih-i Khalkhâlî (1175-1095 A.H.), Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî (13th century A.H.) and ‘Abbâs Sharîf Dârâbî (ca. 1255-1300 A.H.). This thesis is composed of five parts presented in ten chapters, a bibliography and accompanying appendices.

Chapter One discusses the “scheme of the thesis and its justification.” It provides general information about Mîr Findiriskî and a glance at some of his philosophical and mystical viewpoints. The purpose of the study, the research hypothesis, and the general plans of the thesis are also described in this first chapter.

Chapter Two describes the “school of Isfahan.” The modes of approach to reality,” and the uniqueness of the school are considered. The major preceding and successive figures like Shaykh Bahâ’î, Mîr Dâmâd and Mullâ Şadrâ are discussed.

The Third Chapter of this thesis examines the biography of Mîr Findiriskî in detail. Since the records of Mîr Findiriskî’s life are often repetitive we will make a careful observation of his personality and a documented outline of Mîr Findiriskî’s biography based on primary as well as secondary sources. We will also discuss Mîr Findiriskî’s genealogy, education, intellectual life, language skills, students, instructive stories along with different aspects of his personality and works. To show Mîr Findiriskî’s thought more explicitly, we will consider his major works individually.

Chapters Four and Five will deal with Mîr Findiriskî’s approach to the problem of Motion (*ḥarakah*). These two chapters highlight the goal of the discussion of motion, the immutable and the changing, the potential and the actual, the concept of generation and corruption (*kawn wa fasâd*), the concept and definition of motion, the critique of the definition of motion, the existence of motion, fundamental factors (*muqawwimât*) of motion, the features of motion, sequentialness of motion (such as beginning, end, time, distance), categories in which motion takes place (spatial motion or motion-in-place, motion-in-position, motion-in-quality, motion-in-quantity, and motion-in-substance), the

thing subject to motion (*mutuḥarrik*), the mover (*muḥarrik*), the insufficiency of Aristotle's proof of the "First Mover" and Mullâ Şadrâ's proof of the "First Mover."

In Chapter Six Mîr Findiriskî's *Risâlah-i Şinâ'îyyah* "vocational treatise" or *Ḥaqâ'iq al-Şanâyi'* (The Truthfulness of the Vocations) or *Şanâyi' al-Ḥaqâ'iq* (The Vocations of Truthfulnesses) and its main philosophical concepts are reviewed. It surveys the physical as well as metaphysical²⁸ vocations in human society from the traditional point of view.

Chapter Seven discusses the problem of gradation. This chapter explains Mîr Findiriskî's theory of gradation and systematic ambiguity (*tashkîk*). In this chapter, I will outline the most general features of this complex problem, identify the philosophical dimensions that are the immediate focus of Mîr Findiriskî's attention and discuss the ways in which that problem appears in Mîr Findiriskî's own response. In this regard we will discuss the concept and definition of *tashkîk*, the modes and the reason of *tashkîk*, the principal of *tashkîk*, the types of *tashkîk*, the meaning of *tashkîk* in existence, the meaning of *tashkîk* in quiddity, *tashkîk* in substance, *tashkîk* in accident, the reason of *tashkîk* in existence, the reason of *tashkîk* in quiddity and the position of Mîr Findiriskî.

Chapter Eight deals with Mîr Findiriskî's mystico/philosophical ode *Qaṣîdah Ḥikmîyah*. This *Qaṣîdah* has received significant scholarly attention during the last three and a half centuries. In this chapter we present the *qaṣîdah* in its Persian text verse by verse. Transliteration, literal translation and a short examination following each verse or group of verses are also provided. Some of the major topics in this chapter are "the

²⁸ Metaphysical means immaterial, incorporeal, insubstantial, spiritual. However the central meaning shared by these adjectives is "lacking material body, form, or substance": immaterial apparitions; an incorporeal spirit; imaginary and insubstantial victories; metaphysical forces; spiritual beings. See *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* copyright © 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Company.

celestial archetypes (Platonic ideas) and their earthy reflections,” “incorporeal, universal, rational forms and incorporeal, universal intellect,” “God’s attributes,” “the soul-body relation,” supplying a short analysis following each verse or group of verses.

Chapter Nine will look at the epistemological problems in Mîr Findiriskî’s views manifest in his own writings. Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the most basic and primary questions about knowledge. This is one of the most crucial lessons in the history of modern philosophy. In order to perceive Mîr Findiriskî’s position more clearly, we must try to understand the conceptual foundation of epistemology. Some of the major titles in this chapters are: “the importance of epistemology,” “the definition of epistemology or the theory of knowledge,” “the possibility of having knowledge,” “Pyrrho’s enigma,” “the answer to Pyrrho’s enigma,” “the tools of knowledge,” “the view of Qur’ân in regard of the theory of knowledge,” “the sources of the theory of knowledge,” “simple representation and its origin,” (rational theory, sensory theory, remembrance Platonic theory, abstraction theory).

Finally Chapter Ten concludes with remarks on Mîr Findiriskî’s philosophical and mystical dimensions.

Chapter 2

The “School of Isfahan”

Introduction

Since the time of Shâh `Abbâs I (1587-1629), the city of Isfahan has been a major center and capital of Islamic arts and sciences. Consequently, scholars, who flourished in this period, though of different orientations, are grouped together under the title of the "School of Isfahan."²⁹ The term "School of Isfahan" was initially suggested by Nasr,³⁰ Corbin,³¹ and Âshtîyânî³² and then taken up by others such as Izutsu (on Mîr Dâmâd). Hamid Dabashi writes:

When England was ruled by Elizabeth I, Spain by Philip II, Russia by Ivan the Terrible, and India by Emperor Akbar, Persia achieved one of its greatest periods of high culture and material civilization under the legendary reign of Shah `Abbâs I (ruled 996/1588-1038/1629), who came to the power when Mîr Dâmâd was forty-five years old and died when he was eighty-six. During his reign the: "School of Işfahân" found its most celebrated patristic foundation; and Persia experienced one of the greatest period of its political and material prosperity.³³

²⁹ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 338.

³⁰ Nasr, "The School of Isfahan" in Sharif (ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy* 1983, p. 904.

³¹ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 338.

³² Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî, *Muntakhabâtî az Âthâr Hukamâ-yi ilâhî-yi Iran: az `asr-i Mîr Dâmâd wa Mîr Findiriskî tâ zamân-i hâfîr* (Tehran and Paris).

³³ Hamid Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the founding of the 'School of Işfahân'" in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, eds., Seyyed Hosein Nasr and Oliver leaman, London: Rutledge, 1996, p. 578.

The Educational Situation in Safavîd Period

A European traveller who happened to visit Isfahan and lived there for some years in Mîr Findiriskî's time relates:

Books are very expensive but everyone even shopkeepers and industrialists buy them...and want to have their children study... and send them to schools when they are only kids; every district has several schools; however, respectful families act differently; parents ask teachers to train their children at home and don't allow their youths to be out of home except for hunting, shooting or outdoor games. These kids would naturally grow up wise, polite and honest and never swear for they have not mixed with villains.³⁴

The victory of the Shi'î had definitely promoted a great generation of scholars and a vast amount of books and material on different topics and subjects. Mullâ Şadrâ, Qâdî Sa'îd Qummî, Mullâ Muḥammad Ṭaqî Majlisî, Mullâ Muḥammad Bâqir Majlisî and others are some of the important ones. Although the philosophers in this period were not granted desired freedom, they could refer to the *ḥadîth* of the Imâms in philosophical context. The universal themes examined by these scholars include the problem of time, the fundamental reality of existence or fundamental reality of quiddity, the reality of the imaginal world (*`âlam al-mithâl, barzakh*) and, also, a new gnosticism.³⁵ According to H. Corbin, this gnostic element in the writings of Mullâ Şadrâ resulted in a revolution in the metaphysics of being, a validation of the active Imagination, a concept of intrasubstantial motion and the twofold dimension of the Muḥammadan Symbol and the Muḥammadan metaphysical Light of Reality (the exoteric aspect of prophecy, and the esoteric aspect of Imâmology).³⁶ Apparently, the Iranian biographical-bibliographical catalogues hardly draw a distinction between Peripatetic (*mashshâ'ûn*) and Illuminationist (*ishrâqîyûn*)

³⁴ Electronic site of Mullâ Şadrâ, "<http://www.mullasadra.org>."

³⁵ Gnosiology is an esoteric spiritual knowledge of truth, which is held by the ancient Gnostics to be essential to salvation.

³⁶ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, 1993, p. 338.

philosophers; however, a pure peripatetic philosopher who is not more or less Ishrâqî is rare among them. Some typical examples would be personalities like Muḥammad Bâqir Astarâbâdî, well known as Mîr Dâmâd (1040/1631-1632), the teacher of several generations of Shî'ite philosophers and the greatest name in the School of Isfahan, Mîr Abû al-Qâsim Findiriskî,³⁷ better known in Iran as Mîr Findiriskî, (ca. 1560-1640A.D./970-1050A.H.) and Şadr al-Dîn al-Shîrâzî, better known as Mullâ Şadrâ (1571/72-1640A.D.).

The metaphysical thought of these prominent Muslim philosophers stems from a solid conceptual construction, which resulted from philosophizing a profound mystical or gnostic intuition of Reality. Being mystics of Islam, through personal experience these great thinkers were able to penetrate into the very depth of Reality and witness the secrets of Being with their own spiritual eyes (*başîrah*). Their sharp analytical abilities enabled them, to analyze their basic metaphysical experience into a well-defined concept. Evidently these concepts were assembled together in the form of a well-organized systematic Islamic philosophy (scholastic philosophy). Though the interest of the Western World to learn Islamic philosophy has centered upon the active influence, which Muslim thinkers exercised upon the historical formation of Christian scholastic philosophy in the Middle Ages, nevertheless they imagined the history of Muslim philosophy to have ended with the death of Averroes. What really ended was the living influence of Muslim philosophy upon the formative process of Western philosophy. With the death of Averroes, Muslim philosophy concluded for the West, but it did not cease to be alive for the East. Latest research on the intellectual activity of the Şafavîd dynasty proves that philosophical thinking in Islam did not collapse after the Mongol

³⁷ M. M. A. Mudarris, *Rayḥânât al-Adab*, p. 357.

aggression.³⁸ T. Izutsu states: "In fact, the truth of the matter is such that we can go to the extent of asserting, and that without exaggeration, that a kind of philosophy which deserves to be regarded a typically and characteristically Islamic developed only after the death of Averoes, rather than before. This typically Islamic philosophy arose and matured in the periods subsequent to the Mongol invasion, until in the Şafawî period in Persia it reached the apex of vigorous creativity. This peculiar type of Islamic philosophy developed in Persia among the Shi'ah, and came to be known as *Hikmah* (wisdom), which we may, following the suggestion advanced by Professor Henry Corbin, as Theosophia or theosophy."³⁹

The Islamic tradition of theosophy included a long chain of significant thinkers and numerous works of great value. The chain goes back beyond the Şafavîd period to Ibn Sînâ; and it can still be traced down without interference even to the present century; particularly significant personalities included Mîr Dâmâd, Mîr Findiriskî and Mullâ Şadrâ. Mullâ Şadrâ revived, assimilated and developed all the important philosophical, theological and mystical ideas developed by his predecessors; he elaborated them into a great system of theosophy. Unlike him, Mîr Findiriskî developed Islamic philosophy based mostly on the mystical or gnostic experience of ultimate Reality. Nasr states:

The predominantly Shi'ah culture of Persia prepared the background for the flourishing of the doctrines of Ishrâqî gnosis (illuministic wisdom), philosophy, and the sciences. The effort of the chain of sages after khwâjah Naşîr al-Dîn ʿTusî, who had kept the study of these subjects alive, suddenly found the necessary environment for the development of this form of wisdom. We have connected this wisdom symbolically with the school of Isfahan, which spread throughout Şafavîd Persia as well as in Iraq, Syria, and India with which the Persians had very close contacts.⁴⁰

³⁸ T. Izutsu in his introduction to *Sharh-i Ghurar al-Fara'id*, pp. 2-3.

³⁹ T. Izutsu in his introduction to *Sharh-i Ghurar al-Fara'id*, p. 3.

⁴⁰ Nasr, "The School of Isfahan" in Sharif (ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 906.

The centers of these theosophical, intellectual and mystical activities were not limited to the Şafavîd capital Işfahân, but also included other cities like Tabrîz, Shîrâz, Kâshân and Qazwîn. Noteworthy is the fact that some of the most significant figures like Shaykh Bahâ' al-Dîn Âmilî, and Sayyid Ni'matullah Jazâ'irî, who played a fundamental role in the organization of Shî'ism in Persia, were 'Arabs from Âmil near Damascus and Bahrain. Both these centers had been safeguarding the Shî'ah tradition for centuries.⁴¹

Philosophy and Philosophers Under the Şafavîds

Though Şafavîd philosophers desperately attempted to distinguish themselves from the popular Şûfis by refusing to practice their ideas and even subjected their gnostic/philosophy to Shî'î doctrinal principles, they were still resented by the *fuqahâ'* (pl. of *faqîh*, jurist) and traditionalists (*akhbârîyûn*, pl. of *akhbârî*, traditionalist). Mullâ Muḥammad Ṭâhir Qummî (d. 1100/1688) wrote two discourses against philosophers and mystics. The first one was *al-Fawâ'id al-Dînîyyah fî al-Radd 'alal-Ḥukamâ' wal-Şûfiyyah*. The title itself speaks clearly about the content of the book. The author of this book identified the particular literalistic version of the faith as religion (*al-Dîn*) while the alternative readings are condemned as deviations of mystics and philosophers. All jurists were not anti-mystical or anti-philosophical. The great Şafavîd jurist and traditionalist figure Mullâ Shaykh Muḥammad Taqî (the first) Majlisî (d. 1070/1659) even looked sympathetically upon gnosticism and wrote a treatise against Mullâ Muḥammad Ṭâhir Qummî's anti-mystical opinions. Both, this Majlisî and his son Mullâ Muḥammad Bâqir (the second) Majlisî (d.1111/1699), emphasize the differences between the "traditional" Sufism of the preceding generation and what they witnessed among modern-day Şûfis.

⁴¹ Ibid.

However the Majlisî's acceptance of traditional Sufism does not include a philosophic aspect since both the Majlisîs do not consider man's intellect to be adequate for grasping the nature of the prophetic message. The message should be accepted as a Divine approval.⁴²

The Uniqueness of the "School of Isfahan"

The glorious development of the School of Isfahan and its distinct discipline, particularly its *Hikmah* School,⁴³ as a separate philosophical and mystical orientation lay in the exposition of the celebrated Shi'i intellectual disposition. Figures such as Mîr Dâmâd, Mîr Findiriskî, Mullâ Şadrâ and the two Majlisîs (Muḥammad Taqî and Muḥammad Bâqir) inspired the generation of *Hukamâ'* (philosophers), '*Urafâ'*' (mystics), *Muḥaddithûn* (traditionalists), *Mutakallimûn* (theologians), *Usûliyyûn* (legal theorists) and *Fuqahâ* (jurists). A new kind of intellectual confidence was created that remained evident in Islamic intellectual history for almost next four centuries. The school of Isfahan is an institution, which assembles four conflicting aspects of Islamic intellectual history – the philosophical, the theological, the mystical and the Shî'î doctrines. Regardless of the degree of success or failure, the chief advocates of the "school of Isfahan" from Mîr Dâmâd to Mullâ Şadrâ all synthesized a close harmony between the intellectual configuration of reality and its mystical comprehension or between these two modes coming to terms with a significant truth and the doctrinal endorsement of the Shî'î faith.

⁴² H. Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the founding of the 'School of Isfahân,'" pp. 631-2. See also Akbar Hâdî-yi Husain Âbâdî, *Sharḥ-i ḥâl-i Mîr Dâmâd wa Mîr Findiriskî bi-Inḍimâm-i Dîwân-i Mîr Dâmâd wa Qaṣidah-i Mîr Findiriskî* (Isfahân: Maytham-i Tammâr, 1363 HS), pp. 15-17.

⁴³ *Hikmah* as a form of Shî'î wisdom can neither be identified with philosophy as currently understood in the West, nor with theosophy, which has become identified with pseudo-spiritualist movements, nor with theology. For the most part *Hikmah*, both in Persian and Arabic means wisdom in addition to the particular sense given to it as a divine science. See Nasr "The School of Isfahan" in Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 907.

What was later to flourish as *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta'aliyah* (the transcendental philosophy) was actually the theoretical culmination of this synthesis. In other words, the logicians belonging to the "School of Isfahan" could conceive and assemble the whole universal inventory of Islamic intellectual history. Mîr Findirskî is perhaps the most eminent figure of this synthetic spirit rising simultaneously with Mîr Dâmâd. Mîr Findirskî traveled frequently to India. His major achievements include a significant commentary on *Yoga Vaiseska*, an encyclopedic collection of all "rational" and "transmitted sciences" and many other philosophical treaties in which he challenges Platonic ideas. Many of his philosophical notions are echoed in his celebrated, philosophical ode (*Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah*).⁴⁴ The most controversial points were not only the philosophical traditions of the peripatetic and illuminationist philosophy but also the gnosis of Ibn 'Arabî and the Shî'î doctrinal position. Mîr Dâmâd constructs a Peripatetic philosophy with practical mysticism synonymous to the illuminationists. He was able to balance the delicate interferences of philosophical and mystical doctrines and juridical principles of the faith. Mullâ Şadrâ, the greatest figure and the most celebrated representative of "the School of Isfahan," benefited from Mîr Dâmâd, Mîr Findiriskî and Shaykh Bahâ'î. He gave the most synthetic discourse of "the School of Isfahan" in its most successful expression. Besides Mullâ Şadrâ, the generation of Mîr Dâmâd, Mîr Findiriskî and Shaykh Bahâ'î educated a number of other eminent philosophers, such as Mullâ Rajab 'Ali Tabrîzî (d. 1080/1669) a student of Mîr Findiriskî and the author of *Kilîd-i Bihisht* (the Key of the Heaven).

⁴⁴ H. Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the founding of the 'School of Isfahân,'" pp. 626-7.

The Preceding Figures and the Anticipating Field of "the School of Isfahan"

Though Western intellectuals consider Ibn Rushd as the conclusive point of Muslim philosophy, he was succeeded by various philosophers who provided the main sources of the so-called the "School of Isfahan." Unfortunately those who initiated the intellectual revival of the school of Isfahan, the ones who flourished between Ibn Rushd and the "School of Isfahan," are not well known outside Persia. They consist of a series of philosophers, theologians, jurists, legal theorists and scientists such as (i) Khâjah Naşîr al-Dîn Ẓûsî, scientist, philosopher and theologian, (ii) Quṭb al-Dîn Râzî, (iii) Mîr Sayyid Sharîf Jurjânî, (iv) Jalâl al-Dîn Dawwânî, (v) Ibn Turkah Işfahânî who thoroughly restructured Muslim Intellectual life through a gnostic interpretation of the writing of Ibn Sînâ and Suhrawardî and who continued the effort made by al-Fârâbî, which was reinstated by Ibn Sînâ in his Qur'ânic interpretation, and elaborated by Suhrawardî, to associate faith (îmân) with philosophy.⁴⁵ Among the earlier generation of mystics and philosophers preceding the "School of Isfahan" we may also list Qâḍî Maybudî (d. 910/1504), a student of Mullâ Jalâl Dawwânî, who linked in his philosophical writings a peripatetic course with a mystical disposition best represented in his poetry. Ghayâth al-Dîn Manşûr Dashtakî Shîrâzî (866/1463-948/1541) is another distinguished figure of this earlier generation, anticipating the "School of Isfahan". In his *Mir'ât al-Ḥaqâ'iq* he tries to synthesize the peripatetic and illuminationist school of philosophy. Similarly in his critical commentaries on Mullâ Jalâl Dawwânî's exegesis on Suhrawardî's *Hayâkil al-nûr*,

⁴⁵ Nasr "The School of Isfahan" in Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 907.

he began a close discourse between the peripatetic and illuminationist philosophy of both Suhrawardî and Dawwânî.⁴⁶

Major Figures of the "School of Isfahan"

It is difficult even to list the names and works of the important authors of the Şafavîd period. Apparently in every field of Islamic sciences many outstanding figures appeared. There were many scholars who were related to theology, jurisprudence, legal theory, philosophy, theology, mysticism and even physical sciences. Therefore only a few names can be mentioned like (i) Zain al-Dîn ibn 'Alî ibn Ahmad Jabâ'î (911/1505-966/1558), well known as the second martyr (*shahîd-i thâni*), (ii) 'Alî ibn 'Abd al-'Alî 'Âmilî known as Muḥaqqiq-i Karakî (d. 945/1538), the author of *al-Najmîyyah* on theology, (iii & iv) the two Majlisî; Muḥammad Taqî (1003/1594-1070/1659), the author of *Rauḍat al-Muttaqîn* and Muḥammad Bâqir (1037/1628-1110/1699) the greatest theologian and traditionalist of the Şafavîd period. For the *Hukamâ'* who cultivated this particular form of wisdom which they called *Hikmat*, they include (i) Mîr Dâmâd, (ii) Shaykh Bahâ' al-Dîn 'Âmilî, (iii) Mîr Findiriskî, (iv) Şadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî, (v) Sayyid Ahmad 'Alawî, Mîr Dâmâd's son-in-law and the commentator of ibn Sînâ's *Shifâ'*, (vi) Mullâ Muḥammad Bâqir Sabzawârî (d. 1090/1669), the commentator of the *Ishârât* and the metaphysics of the *Shifâ'*, (vii) Rajab 'Alî Tabrîzî (d. 1080/1670), the author of *Risâlah-i Ithbât-i Wujûd*, (viii) 'Abd al-Razzâq Lâhijî (d. 1071/1661), a student of Mullâ Şadrâ and the author of the *Guhar Murâd*, and (ix) a gnostic and great theologian Qâḍî Sa'îd Qumî (1049/1640-1103?/1692), the author of the *'Arba'înât* and *Kilîd-i Bihisht*.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ H. Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the founding of the 'School of Işfahân,'" p. 626.

⁴⁷ For more information see Nasr "The School of Isfahan" in Sharif (ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 908-31.

The Influence of the "School of Isfahan"

One of the more interesting questions involves the extent of the influence of the School of Isfahan, including figures such as Mîr Dâmâd and Mîr Findiriskî, exercised on India. According to Nasr⁴⁸ the establishment of Islamic philosophy in the Indo-Pakistani sub-continent dates from the Şafavîd period. During this period many Iranian scholars, philosophers and mystics migrated or traveled to India, e.g., Qâdî Nûr-Allâh Shûstârî, author of *Majâlis al-Mu'minîn* and *Iḥqâq al-Ḥaqq*, Muḥammad Dihdâr Shîrâzî, author of *Ishrâq al-Nayyirayn*, Bahâ' al-Dîn Işfahânî, known as Fâḍil-i Hindî, who summarized the metaphysics of the *Shifâ'*, and Mîr Findiriskî. In addition, the teachings of Mîr Dâmâd and Mullâ Şadrâ were spread throughout India. The *Sharḥ al-Ḥidâyah* of Mullâ Şadrâ became in fact one of the most popular works in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. The extant commentaries upon the works of Şafavîd masters bear witness to the remarkable spread of the teachings of the "School of Isfahan" in this region.⁴⁹

A brief review of the intellectual life, (more precisely the basic thought, field and the branch in which these figures flourished) of three major figures of this period helps show Mîr Findiriskî's philosophical and mystical position.

Shaykh Bahâ'î

Shaykh Bahâ' al-Dîn Âmilî (b.966/1559, d. 1030/1622), a close friend and associate of Mîr Dâmâd was not merely a brilliant theologian, he was also a jurist, poet, gnostic, architect, mathematician, astronomer and philosopher scholar of the Şafavîd period. His genius lay precisely in the fact that while he was a master of each science he substantiated the insignificance of all sciences compared to divine gnosis. He strongly

⁴⁸ Nasr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 696.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

believed that man should not concern himself simply with formal science. He emphasized the need to attempt to reach the divine gnosis hidden in divine revelation. Though he wrote many books and articles on both natural sciences (*tabî'îyât*) as well as divine and theoretical sciences (*ilâhîyât*), his writings in philosophy are not technical like the works of Mîr Dâmâd, Mullâ Şadrâ and Mullâ Muhsin Faiḍ-i Kâshânî. His writings present a balance between the exotic and the esoteric, the metaphysical and the cosmological dimensions in which one might find the correlation between the various aspects of a tradition and the principal influence of gnosis and modern aspects.⁵⁰ One of the greatest pupils of Shaykh Baha'î is Mullâ Şadrâ. However, his studies were almost exclusively in the religious sciences. Mullâ Şadrâ also received his authorization for quoting tradition from Shaykh Bahâ'î. Such authorizations would often be mentioned implicitly or explicitly in postscripts or appendices and were considered as a confirmation of the attributed person's qualifications to quote traditions, thus preventing unreliable or unsuitable persons from entering this domain.

The Şafavîd period is often considered as the incisive point of Islamic jurisprudence.⁵¹ This era witnessed a number of greatest jurists including Shaykh 'Ali Karakî known as "the Second Researcher" (*muḥaqqiq-i thâni*). Karakî was a contemporary of Shâh Ismâ'il Şafavî. Shaykh Bahâ'î owes much of his knowledge of jurisprudence to his father, Shaykh Ḥussein 'Âmilî. Shaykh Ḥusayn Âmilî was famous

⁵⁰ Nasr "The School of Isfahan" in Sharif (ed.), *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, pp. 909-914.

⁵¹ Jurisprudence (*Fiqh* in Arabic) literally means, "to understand." It is associated with the knowledge of religious rules and a name given to Islamic rights. These rights have roots in the Quran, traditions and other reliable sources. It is a Muslim lifestyle, which speaks of people's obligations to each other as well as their social relations and their connection to God. A true Muslim who acquires a logical belief in God and the fundamentals of religion, is asked to learn his rights and duties concerning his links with God and people. Jurisprudence and Islamic rights constitute one of the most sophisticated and practical human sciences that distinguish Islam from other legal schools around the world.

student of the senior Lebanese jurist Zayn al-Dîn `Amilî who was given the encomium of "The Second Martyr" (*shahîd-i thâni*) after being killed by an Ottoman Sultan. The Second Martyr was a student of Shaykh `Ali Karakî who had learned jurisprudence from the First Martyr. The latter had been a firm follower of `Allâmah Ibn alMuṭahhar Ḥillî, known as the First Researcher (*muḥaqqiq-i awwal*). This group is by far the most prominent chain of jurists in Islamic history.

Mîr Dâmâd

Mîr Burhân al-Dîn Moḥammad Bâqir, well known as Mîr Dâmâd (d.1041/1631 under the reign of Shâh Ṣafî 1038/1629-1052/1642),⁵² was a leading authority on theology (*kalâm*), theosophy (*Hikmah*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and natural sciences (*`ulûm-i ṭabî`î*).⁵³ Mîr Dâmâd and his pupil, Mullâ Ṣadrâ should be considered the greatest *Ḥakîms* of the Ṣafavîd period. The philosophical discipline of Mîr Dâmâd is manifested in his revitalization of Ibn Sînâ's philosophy and bringing *ishrâqî* wisdom within the perspective of Shî`î wisdom. He prepared the ground for the immense work of Mullâ Ṣadrâ. Mîr Dâmâd is one of the most eminent scientists of the Ṣafavîd period and his scholarly endeavors make him worthy of being compared with personalities like Aristotle and Ibn Sînâ. He is well known as the third teacher (*mu`allim-i thâlith*) (after Aristotle and Fârâbî, who have been known as the First and the Second Masters, respectively). Mîr Dâmâd should be considered the emblem of Yemeni wisdom (*falsafah-i Yamanî*), the

⁵² A. Hâdî, *Sharh Ḥâl Mîr Dâmâd wa Mîr Findiriskî*, pp. 32-33.

⁵³ He closely observed the life of bees. See Naşr "The School of Işfahân" in Sharif (ed.) *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, p. 914.

wisdom of the prophets; which is the wisdom revealed by Allâh to man through the prophets, unlike the peripatetic philosophy of the Occident and Greeks.⁵⁴

Being a logician, jurist, mystic and poet, Mîr Dâmâd, the founder of the philosophical and theosophical of the "School of Isfahan," was a great religious scholar. While he taught the Peripatetic doctrines of Ibn Sînâ, he gave them an Illuminationist color and expounded a rigorously logical philosophy. He also wrote a treatise on a mystical vision he had received in Qum. Mîr Dâmâd harmonized Avicennan cosmology with Shi'ite Imâmology and made the "fourteen divine and infallible persons" (*chahârdah ma'sûm*) of Shi'ism the ontological principles of cosmic existence.

His writings dealt mostly with the question of time and creation, in which he expounded the novel view of *hudûth-i-dahrî* (eternal creation). His masterpieces include the *Qabasât* (Firebrands) in Arabic and *Jadhavât* (Burning Billets), in Persian. His father, Shams-al-Dîn Sayyid Muḥammad Astarâbâdî, was a famous jurist who married the daughter of Shaykh `Ali Karakî (the "Second Researcher") and for this he was referred to by people as Dâmâd ("groom" in Fârsî). A contemporary of Mîr Dâmâd, Sayyid `Ali Ḥusaynî, who saw Mîr Dâmâd as a youth (in the year 988 H.Sh.) on his way back from the pilgrimage described him in his book, *Khulâṣat-al-Shu`arâ* as a young scholar so qualified that he wrote articles and commentaries on advanced subjects of wisdom and mathematics. Handling complex philosophical books such as Avicenna's *Ishârât* and *Shifâ'*, he wrote many commentaries and books. While taking lessons from his foremost teacher, Fakhr al-Dîn Sammâkî, who was the most distinguished philosopher in Qazwîn, Mîr Dâmâd taught philosophy himself. He soon surprised his contemporaries by his

⁵⁴ Yaman, where Moses heard the message of Allâh, is considered as the symbol of the oriental valley and the source of divine illumination, in contrast to the Occident the symbol of darkness and the source of rationalism and peripatetic philosophy. See Naṣr "The School of Isfahan," p. 915.

versatility in wisdom, rational sciences and solving any kind of philosophical bewilderment thus easily outdistancing other philosophers and jurists. Although Mîr Dâmâd had a hand in nearly all the sciences of the time ranging from literature to mathematics, astronomy and medicine, he is best known for his mastery of philosophy. Despite the fact that Shaykh Bahâ'î was older, Mîr Dâmâd had established a close friendship with him. In fact, the two had much in common. They were highly respected at the royal court and were considered unrivalled teachers with their unique styles. Interestingly, they both accompanied Shâh `Abbâs to the new capital and, therefore, must have been quite familiar with each other. However, their friendship should not be solely attributed to their jobs. A spiritual kind of relationship seemed to have connected the two alter egos together. This connection might be traced back to the two philosophers' educational backgrounds. Mîr Dâmâd had been the student of Shaykh Bahâ'î's father and his own grandfather, the Second Researcher, was the teacher of Shaykh Bahâ'î's father.

The most significant philosophical thought of Mîr Dâmâd, which distinguished him from the other Hâkîms of the period, is characterized in his notion of eternal creation, *ḥudûth-i dahrî*. This theory (the theory of time) should be considered the central theme in Mîr Dâmâd's writings. The question "whether the world is created (*ḥâdith*) or eternal (*qadîm*)" is one of the most controversial, theological and philosophical problems in the thought and writings of both Muslim as well as Christian scholars. Mîr Dâmâd in looking for an answer to this question, divides reality into three types: *zamân* (time),⁵⁵ *dahr* (time, world, fortune)⁵⁶ and *sarmad*⁵⁷ (perpetual, eternal). The latter two are types

⁵⁵ The relation between one change and another is called by Mîr Dâmâd "time (*zamân*)."

⁵⁶ The relation between the immutable and the changing is called by Mîr Dâmâd "*dahr*."

⁵⁷ The divine essence (*dhât*) is above all differences and qualities; yet it is also the source of the divine names and attributes which are both with the essence and yet distinct from it. This immutable

of eternity. This division is not just logical or theological; rather it is an ontological division in which the external entities are divided. According to Mîr Dâmâd since this world existed through the intermediate world of the archetype, its creation is *dahrî* not *zamânî*. It means that the world was not created in a time, which was brought into being before the world existed but with respect to a *dahr* that stands above the world. Accordingly the creation of the world is *hudûth-i dahrî*, (*ibdâ'*) and not *hudûth-i zamânî*, (*wad'*). It means that though time has a reality in its own plan of being, in the world of *dahr* time does not exist.⁵⁸

To conclude, we may identify Mîr Dâmâd as a gnostic in the sense that the intellectual activity of the mind is contributory toward the experience of spiritual visions while the visionary experience stimulates the function of rational thinking initiating new concepts and ideas.⁵⁹ In this regard Mîr Dâmâd tried to synthesize the Peripatetic and the Illuminative (Neoplatonic-Suhrawardîan) philosophical traditions together with the doctrinal principles of the Shî'î faith.

Mullâ Şadrâ

Şadr al-Dîn Muḥammad al-Shîrâzî (d.1050/1640), better known as Mullâ Şadrâ, was one of the most profoundly original and influential thinkers in the history of Islamic philosophy.⁶⁰ Şadr al-Dîn al-Shîrâzî is the greatest philosopher-theosopher of the Şafavîd period. He produced more than forty-five titles. His major work is *Asfâr* (i.e., *al-Asfâr al-*

relation between the essence and the attributees, which cannot be changed from either side, the attributes which are a necessary determination (*ta'ayyun*) of the essence to Itself by Itself, Mîr Dâmâd calls *sarmad*. See, Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad or Mîr Dâmâd, *al-Qabasât*, ed. Mahdî Muḥaqiq (Tehran: Mu'asasah-i Muṭâlî'ât-i Islâmî, Shu'ba-hi Tehran, 2536), pp. 15-17.

⁵⁸ Naşr "The school of Isfahan," in Sharîf, pp. 916-17.

⁵⁹ H. Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the founding of the 'School of Isfahân,'" p. 605 (quoted from Izutso in Mîr Dâmâd 1977: p. 3, the English introduction).

⁶⁰ Fazlur Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Şadrâ*, (*Şadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî*) (New York: State University of New York Press, 1975).

'*Aqliyah al-Arba'ah*, Four Spiritual Journeys), an exhaustive system of mystical philosophy comparable in both size and moment to Ibn Sînâ's *Shifâ* and *al-Mabd' wa-al-Ma'âd*. Mullâ Şadrâ is often considered as the "head of theosophers" (Şadr al-Muta'allihîn).⁶¹ Henry Corbin describes him in this way:

He succeeded in creating a powerful personal synthesis of the different currents of which we have been speaking. Down to our own time his thought has left a personal stamp on all Iranian philosophy or, more broadly speaking, on Shiite consciousness at the level of its philosophical expression. He left a monumental body of work of more than forty-five titles, several of which are folios. The commentary that he wrote in the margins of Avicenna's *Shifâ* heralds its reformation, while his commentary on al-Suhrawardî's Oriental Theosophy provides the *ishrâq* with a well-trying basis. His masterpiece, *The Four Journeys of the Spirit (al-Asfâr al-Arba'ah)*, a thousand folio pages in length) is a *Summa* which ever since it was written has nourished most of the thinkers of Iran. We must, however, mention his great commentary, unfortunately never completed, on the 'Sources (*uṣūl*) of al-Kulaynî's *Kâfî*, one of the fundamental books of Shi'ism.⁶²

Asfâr al-Arba'ah, the most important work of Mullâ Şadrâ, stands midway between the peripatetic encyclopedia of Ibn Sînâ and the compendium of esoteric sciences of Ibn 'Arabî. Although the word *Asfâr* means journeys, it is not the account of travels in the common sense of the word but rather reflects the four initial stages or journeys of actualization (*sulûk*):

- (i) The journey of the creature or creation (*khalq*) towards the Creator or the Truth (*ḥaqq*),
- (ii) The journey in the Truth with the Truth,
- (iii) The journey from the Truth to creation with the Truth,
- (iv) And the journey with the Truth in the creation.

⁶¹ Hâj Mullâ Hâdî Sabzawârî, *The Metaphysics of Sabzavârî*, Trans. Mehdi Mohaghegh and Toshihiko Izutsu (New Yourk: Caravan Books, 1977), p. 223.

⁶² H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 342.

Consequently this work is an account of the stages of the journey of the Gnostic, systematized in a logical dress.⁶³

We may summarize the characteristics of Mullâ Sadrâ's philosophy as:

A) Uniting and synthesizing religion and the intellectual sciences: Sadrâ's works and writings are an amalgamation and formulation of religious questions with philosophical approaches.

The importance of Mullâ Sadrâ lies not only in rekindling and reviving the intellectual sciences fully for the first time in the Muslim world after the Mongol invasion, but also for uniting and harmonizing revelation, gnosis, and philosophy together.⁶⁴

B) New System of Philosophy: There is no doubt that nearly the whole of the intellectual life of Persia during the past three centuries and a half has centered around Mullâ Sadrâ. Mullâ Sadrâ was able to coordinate his doctrinal formulation with the teaching of Islam in such a way as to master all the major problems, which the peripatetic philosophers encountered while teaching the Qur'ân.⁶⁵ Concerning this, Mullâ Sadrâ must absolutely be considered one of the most significant figures in the intellectual life of Shî'ah Islam. He contributed by putting the Gnostic doctrines of Ibn 'Arabî in a logical dress. Thus, he succeeded in connecting the wisdom of the ancient Greek and Muslim sages and philosophers, as interpreted esoterically, with the inner meaning of the Qur'ân. Evidently he concluded the final steps of the endeavors made by several generations of

⁶³ S. H. Naşr, "Şadr al-Dîn Şîrazî (Mullâ Şadrâ)", *History of Muslim Philosophy With Short Accounts of Other Disciplines And The Modern Renaissance in Muslim Lands*, ed. M. M. Sharîf, (Karachi: Royal Bank Company, 1983), p. 937. See also Mortađâ Muţahharî, *Maqâlât-i Falsafî* (Tehran: Intishârât-i Hikmat, 1990), vol. 3, p. 24.

⁶⁴ S. H. Naşr, "Şadr al-Dîn Şîrazî (Mullâ Şadrâ)", *History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. M. M. Sharîf, (Karachi: Royal Bank Company, 1983), p. 958.

⁶⁵ Naşr, "Şadr al-Dîn Şîrazî," p. 958-60. See also M. Muţahharî, *Maqâlât-i Falsafî*, pp. 73-5. And *Âshnâi ba 'Ulûm-i Islâmî; Mantîq wa Falsafah* (Tehran: Intishârât-i Sadrâ, 1989), pp. 175-187. Sayyed Muḥammad Ḥusain Ḥusaynî Tehrânî, *Mehr-i Tâbân; Yâdnâmeh-i 'Allâmah Sayyed Muḥammad Ḥusayn-i Tabâtibâi-i Tabrizî* (Tehran: Intishârât-i Baqir al-'Ulûm, n.d.), p. 27.

Muslim intellectuals. He may be considered the merging point of diverse ideas presented in the previous centuries and the modern notion of his contemporary age.⁶⁶

C) Mullâ Şadrâ's Inventive Genius: Though Mullâ Şadrâ's doctrines of the Peripatetic and Illuminationistic schools and the ideas of Ibn 'Arabi and his followers form the common background for the metaphysics of Mullâ Şadrâ, there are more than twenty new topics in which Mullâ Şadrâ has deviated from previous philosophical perspectives and which form the principles of his whole intellectual vision.⁶⁷ Following Naşr only the crucial ones are listed:

- (i) Being and its polarization,
- (ii) Substantial motion or the becoming and change of the substance of the world,
- (iii) Knowledge and the relation between the knower and the known,
- (iv) The soul, its faculties, generation, and final resurrection.⁶⁸
- (v) Principality of existence,
- (vi) Analogical gradation of existence,
- (vii) Investigation (research) about the need of every effect to have a cause; existential poverty,
- (viii) Investigation about the real relationship between cause and effect and that effect is a mode, manifestation of the agent cause,
- (ix) Unity of existence,
- (x) Investigation into knowledge of Necessary Existence.⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Naşr, "Şadr al-Dîn Şîrazî," p. 958.

⁶⁷ M. Muţahharî, *Maqâlât-i Falsafî*, pp. 80-2. See also *Yâdnâmah-i Mullâ Şadrâ*, ed. Dânishkadeh-i M'aqûl wa Manqûl-i Tehran (Tehran: Dânishkadeh-i M'aqûl wa Manqûl-i Tehran 1961), p. 27-50.

⁶⁸ Naşr, "Şadr al-Dîn Şîrazî," p.942.

These brief references are an attestation to the rich legacy of Mullâ Şadrâ's philosophical system.

⁶⁹ M. Muṭahharî, *Maqâlât-i Falsafî*. p. 81.

Chapter 3

Biography of Mîr Findiriskî

Introduction

The Şafavid dynasty, founded by Shâh Ismâ'il in the summer of 906/1501⁷⁰, presided over one of the most fertile periods in the intellectual history of Twelver Shî'î thought in Iran. Yet although it represented a turning point in the history of Shî'î thought and has therefore been much studied, less consideration has been given to the scientific and philosophical vigor of this period. Alongside the other major juridical, traditional, philosophical, and mystical accomplishments of the Şafavîd era, the philosophical and mystical contributions of Mîr Findiriskî are especially noteworthy. This work aims to show Mîr Findiriskî's achievements in these fields.

Not much has been written of Mîr Findiriskî's life, and what has been is often repetitive and of little use. Although presenting an outline of his life is demanding, given the paucity of primary sources, nevertheless a careful investigation and examination of his personality is a necessary first step in the process of studying his philosophical and mystical thought. The following sections present a documented outline of Mîr Findiriskî's biography based on primary as well as secondary sources, along with a consideration of different aspects of his personality.

⁷⁰ H. R. Roemer, "The Şafavîd Period," in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, volume 6, *The Timurid and Safavîd periods*, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 189.

3.1. His Name and Genealogy

Sayyid Mîr Abû al-Qâsim ibn Mîrzâ Bayk ibn Amîr Şadr al-Dîn-i (or Mîr Dîyâ' al-Dîn) Mûsawî-i Hûsaynî-i Astarâbâdî-i Findiriskî,⁷¹ better known in Iran as Mîr Findiriskî, who came to be known as one of the foremost Iranian Shî'î philosophers, mystics, theologians, mathematicians, alchemists, geometricians and poets of Şafavîd Persia, was born in 970/1563 in Findirisk⁷², a village near Astarâbâd.⁷³ His grandfathers had been well-respected figures in the latter city. One of them, Mîr Şadr al-Dîn (or Mîr Dîyâ' al-Dîn), owned much land in Findirisk. When Shâh 'Abbâs I came to power, he retained Mîr Şadr al-Dîn (or Mîr Dîyâ' al-Dîn), as his servant. Mîr Findiriskî's father,

⁷¹ M. M. A. Mudarris, *Rayḥanat al-Adab*, p. 357. See also Faṭḥallāh Muḡtabā'î, "Abu al-Qâsim Findiriskî," in *Dâ'irat al-M'ârif-i Buzurg-i Islâmî*, vol. 6 (Tehran, 1994), p. 169. It is however worth noting that Iskandar Beg Munshî introduces the grandfather of Mîr Findiriskî as Mîr Dîyâ al-Dîn and not Mîr Şadr al-Dîn. He also explains why Mîr Findiriskî's grandfathers were so respected at Shâh 'Abbâs court. See Iskandar Beg Monshî, *History of Shâh 'Abbâs the Great (Târikh-i 'Âlamârâ-yi 'Abbâsî)*, vol. 1, trans., Roger M. Savory, (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1987), p. 244. "Another high-ranking Sayyid of Astarâbâd was Mîr Dîyâ al-Dîn Findiriskî, a man of great influence in Findirisk who owned lucrative estates in the area. At the time of the troubles in Gurgân he remained steadfast in his allegiance to the crown and did not join the leaders of the black-robed rebels: He remained quietly at Findirisk and went to Astarâbâd, the center of the revolt, as little as possible. When Shâh 'Abbâs I led his expedition to Khorasan, Mîr Dîyâ al-Dîn presented himself at court. After his death his son, Mîrzâ Beg, continued to serve the Shâh loyally, and much of the time was in attendance on the Shâh. He was honored by a place at royal assemblies, and was distinguished above his peers by the Shâh's benefices and grants." See also *ibid.*, vol., 2, p. 708 & 767.

⁷² F. Muḡtabā'î, "Findiriskî," (1994), p. 169.

⁷³ Astarâbâd is a city near Gorgân in province Mâzandarân, in the northeast of Iran. Findirisk lies about 43 miles from Astarâbâd. This territory has played an important role throughout history particularly in the Şafavîd period. Shâh 'Abbâs's road which passes through all the length of this area between Gaz Port and Astarâbâd is still in use. A center for science and literature, Astarâbâd, produced many Shî'î scholars, chief among them Mîr Dâmâd and Mîr Findiriskî (see Akbar Hâdî-yi Hûsain Âbâdî, *Sharḥ-i ḥâl-i Mîr Dâmâd wa Mîr Findiriskî bi-Inḡimâm-i Dîwân-i Mîr Dâmâd wa Qaṣdah-i Mîr Findiriskî* (Isfahân: Maytham-i Tammâr, 1363 HS), pp. 12-13 and Afandî, "*Rîyâḡ al-'Ulamâ'*," p. 501. In addition to Mîr Dâmâd and Mîr Findiriskî Astarâbâd, which is called even nowadays Dâr al-Mu'minî-n (the house of believers), was home to many other scholars such as Mîr Fakhr al-Dîn Sammâk Astarâbâdî, Mîr Muhammad Mu'min-i Astarâbâdî, Mîr Kamâl al-Dîn Muhammad Astarâbâdî, Mîr Kalân Astarâbâdî and Mîr Muḡammad Ashraf Astarâbâdî. For more details see Iskandar Beg Turkamân, *Târikh-i 'Âlam Ârâ-yi 'Abbâsî*, vol. 1. (Isfahân: Châpkhânâh-i Mûsavî, 1956), pp. 143-158, and A. Hâdî, "*Sharḥ-i ḥâl*," pp. 81-2. Encyclopædia Britannica describes Gorgan (Gurgan) a city in Iran formerly known as Astarâbâd, as follows. "It is situated along a small tributary of the Qareh River, 23 miles (37 km) from the Caspian Sea. The town, in existence since Achaemenian times, long suffered from inroads of the Turkmen tribes who occupied the plain north of the Qareh River and was subjected to incessant Qajar-Turkmen tribal conflicts in the 19th century. It was renamed Gorgan in the 1930s after being devastated by an earthquake. Articles of trade include cereals, soap, and carpets. In modern times the plain around Gorgan has become a flourishing granary. Pop. (1986) 139,430; (1991) 162,468." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Inc. 1999.

Mîrzâ Baik, also served under Shâh `Abbâs and was apparently well respected at court.⁷⁴ Iskandar Beg Munshî confirms that⁷⁵ Mîr Dîyâ al-Dîn (or Mîr Şadr al-Dîn) Findiriskî, the grandfather of Mîr Findiriskî was a man of great influence in Findirisk and owned profitable estates in the area.

3.2. Education

Mîr Findiriskî most probably studied introductory religious sciences locally (in Astarâbâd and Findirisk) before going to Isfahan to pursue more advanced subjects. There he took courses with `Allâmah⁷⁶ Chilbî Bayk-i Tabrîzî (d. 1041 AH), one of the students of Afdal al-Dîn Muḥammad Turkah Işfahânî.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, perhaps the most formative period of his spiritual experiences was the time he spent in India, following in the steps of many other learned scholars of Isfahan. We will look more carefully at this experience in the next section.

Another important aspect of his education was his Şûfî training, even though there is some uncertainty as to his mystical affiliations. Ma`şûm `Alî Shâh in *Ṭarâ`iq al-Ḥaqâ`iq* expresses uncertainty as to whether Mîr Findiriskî belonged either to the Nûrbakhshîyyah or the Ni`matallâhîyyah.⁷⁸ However, since none of the *tadhkirahs* at our disposal refers to any of his teachers in this field, and since he himself fails to mention any names or orders, it is difficult to assign Mîr Findiriskî to any particular mystical school. Although Mîr Findiriskî refers in his *Risâlah-i Ḥarakat* to someone he calls his

⁷⁴ A. Afandî-i Işfahânî, *Riyâḡ al-`Ulamâ*, p. 499.

⁷⁵ Iskandar, "History of Shâh `Abbâs," vol. 1, trans., R. Savory, p. 244.

⁷⁶ A title given to a Muslim scholar by his students, meaning the "one who knows a great deal."

⁷⁷ F. Muḡtabâ`î, "Findiriskî," p. 169. For another short biography see Iskandar, "Târikh-i `Âlamârâ-yi `Abbâsî," vol. 1, p. 155.

⁷⁸ M. Ma`şûm-`Alî Shâh, *Ṭarâ`iq*, vol. 1, p. 183.

shaykh (teacher) and *mawlâ* (master),⁷⁹ he doesn't bother to mention the name of this individual. Moreover, S. J. Âshtiyânî, in his note to the same passage in of *Risâlah-i Harakat*, emphasizes⁸⁰ that in spite of his best efforts, he was unable to discover the identity of this teacher.

3.3.1. Travel to India

Most biographies of Mîr Findiriskî⁸¹ say that he went to India frequently for spiritual enlightenment and underwent mortification⁸² to purify his soul, but none of them says whether he went to India for this purpose, when these visits took place or how long they lasted. What they do tell us is that Mîr Findiriskî did not go to India to attain celebrity or fortune, as a number of his contemporaries did. He was a great Gnostic and a well-known teacher of philosophy in Iran and was respected at both the Şafavîd and Mughal courts. Wâlih Dâghistânî (18th century), who wrote biographies of Persian scholars, writers and poets, in his *Riyâḍ al-Shu'arâ'* calls Mîr Findiriskî the "Aristotle of the age in philosophy (*ḥikmat*) and the Abû Yazîd (al-Bistâmî) of his time in mysticism (*taṣawwuf*)." He adds that in India he used to live incognito and supported himself by taking up very menial occupations. Moreover, Dâghistânî adds that Mîr Findiriskî had an

⁷⁹ See J. Âshtiyânî et H. Corbin, *Anthologie*, p. 81.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Afandî, "*Riyâḍ al-'Ulamâ'*," pp. 499-502; Riḍâ Qulî Khân-i Hidâyat, *Tadhkirah-i Riyâḍ al-'Ârifîn* (N. p. :Kitâbfurûshî-yi Maḥmûd, 1344/ 1965), p. 267-269; Mudarris, "*Rayḥanat al-Adab*" vol. 4, pp. 357-360; Mîrzâ Muḥammad Ṭâhir Naṣr Âbâdî Işfahânî (d. about end 11th lunar century), *Tazkirah-i Naṣr Âbâdî*, ed. Waḥîd-i Daşjirdî (Tehran: Châpkhânah-i Armaghân, 1317 HS), pp. 153-4; Muḥammad Ma'sûm 'Alî Shâh, *Ṭarâ'iq al-Ḥaqâ'iq*, vol. 3 (Tehran: Kitâbfurûshî-yi Bârânî, 1345 HS), pp. 158-159; Âftâbrây-i Lakhanavî, *Tadhkirah-i Riyâḍ al-'Ârifîn*, ed. Sayyid Ḥisâm al-Dîn Râshidî (Islâmâbâd: Markaz-i Taḥqîqât-i Fârsî-yi Iran wa Hind, 1977), p. 26.

⁸² Mortification means discipline of the body and the appetites by self-denial or self-inflicted privation.

interview with the ruler of India, but does not tell us when this interview took place, who this ruler was and what it was that they discussed.⁸³

India at the time of Mîr Findiriskî was home to many different religions which co-existed, for the most part, in harmony. Akbar Shâh's peaceful policies had drawn many people to the subcontinent, attracted by the economic prosperity and social security that accompanied this trend. The latter's court was particularly inviting to scholars. On his first trip Mîr Findiriskî was accompanied by Awḥadî-i Bilyânî, the author of *Tadhkirah-i 'Arafât al-Āshiqîn*. Awḥadî writes that on their arrival Mîr Findiriskî went to visit Mîrzâ Ja'far Āṣif Khân (an Iranian poet who served as one of Akbar's ministers); this anecdote suggests how well respected he was at the Indian court. According to Mujtabâ'î,⁸⁴ during the time that Awḥadî was writing the *Tadhkirah-i 'Arafât al-Āshiqîn* (namely between the years 1021-1024 A.H.), Mîr Findiriskî visited India repeatedly. He often traveled there as well in later years, such as in 1037 A.H. and again in 1046 A.H.; on the latter occasion and at the recommendation of ÂyatuAllâh Abul al-Ḥasan-i Isfahânî he met the Indian emperor (Shâh Jahân, 1628-1658 A.D.).⁸⁵ This shows that Mîr Findiriskî was heavily involved in research and educational activity at a high level in both Persia and India, which we know consisted for the most part in helping to translate Sanskrit mystical and philosophical texts into Persian. His high standing at the Iranian court may be seen in Naṣrâbâdî's report that⁸⁶ once when Mîr returned to Iran from India, the ruler Shâh Ṣafî (1037/1616-1051/1630) himself went to visit him.

⁸³ Quoted by Faṭḥullâh Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab-i Jug-basasht* or *Selections from the Yoga-Vâsiṣṭha* attributed to Mîr Abu al-Qâsim Findiriskî (Ph.D Dissertation, Harvard University, 1976), p.xxi.

⁸⁴ F. Mujtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170.

⁸⁵ Rieu, Ch., *Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, II/815 (Oxford, 1881) (Quoted by F. Mujtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170).

⁸⁶ F. Mujtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170.

3.3.2. India's Influence on Mîr Findiriskî's Thought

According to some of his contemporaries, Mîr Findiriskî was believed to have been influenced by Hinduism and Zoroastrianism (as taught by the Kaivânîs⁸⁷). Nevertheless, although the school of Isfahan in general, and Mîr Dâmâd and Mîr Findiriskî in particular, had great influence in India, this influence does not appear to have been reciprocal, to judge simply by the works we have at our disposal.⁸⁸ Even though it is not impossible that Mîr Findiriskî, through his contacts with Indian scholars in India, became intrigued by Hinduism, nevertheless neither in his works nor in the works of Indian scholars do we see any trace of this influence. In other words, there is no trace of Hindu influence in his writings, just as, on the other hand, Indian scholars' works fail to mention him as one who was influenced by Hinduism. This, in the opinion of Mujtabâ'î,⁸⁹ shows that Mîr Findiriskî's mystical thought was genuinely Islamic.

Against this, however, is the evidence given by the author of *The Dabistân* who charged both Shaykh-i Bahâ'î and Mîr Findiriskî with having been acquainted with and becoming followers of Kaivân and, what is more, that Mîr Findiriskî had become a sun-worshipper and hypersensitive about the killing of animals⁹⁰ so that when someone asked Mîr Findiriskî why he didn't go on *Hajj* (pilgrimage), he is said to have declared "on *Hajj* I would have to kill an animal and I don't want to kill one." This however may

⁸⁷ Âdhar Kaivân was the leader of a renegade Zoroastrian sect, who left Shîrâz in the late 16th century or early 17th century and settled in Patna. For Âdhar Kaivân's life and ideas see *Dabistân-i Madhâhib*, Cawnpore, 1904, pp. 2-57. See also note 29 in F. Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p.xxiv.

⁸⁸ See M. Ma'sûm 'Alî Shâh, *Ṭarâ'iq*, vol. 2, p. 253.

⁸⁹ F. Mujtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170.

⁹⁰ R. Hidâyat, *Tadhkirah*, (1344/ 1965), p. 268; see also Edward G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1953), p. 258; and *The Dabistân or School of Manners*, trans. David Shea and Anthony Troyer, vol. I (Paris: Asiatic Societies of Great Britain and Ireland, 1843), pp. 140-1; 'Alî Akbar-i Shihâbî, in his introduction to the *Risâlah-i Ṣanâ'îyyah*, maintains that Mîr Findiriskî was influenced by Hinduism during his stays there; Mîr Findiriskî, *Risâlah Ṣanâ'îyyah*, (Mshhad: Intishârât-i Farhang-i Khurâsân, 1317 HS), introduction.

simply be an indication that he had acquired a revulsion against the killing of animals, and need not be an indication that he had been influenced by Kaivânî Zoroastrianism or Hinduism.⁹¹ According to F. Mujtabâ'î, Mîr Findiriskî's "associations with the Âdhar-kaivânîs must not have been very deep; for there is no evidence in his work to his affiliation with this group, and none of the numerous writings of this sect has been attributed to him."⁹²

However, based on his marginal notes on the Persian translation of *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*, on his great respect for the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* expressed in the preface to the *Muntakhab-i Jug-basasht* and on some of his comments about the beliefs of the Hindus, it had been concluded that during his stay in India he did try to familiarize himself with Hindu religious, mystical and philosophical views.⁹³ We can also say that it seems possible that Mîr Findiriskî discovered certain affinities between Islamic and Hindu mysticism. This would also explain his interest in traveling so often to India.

3.4.1. Mîr Findiriskî's Intellectual Life

Mîr Findiriskî is considered by many scholars, including Afandî-i Isfahanî, as one of the greatest thinkers of his time. More than one biographer relates the story of how Mîr Findiriskî was once presented with a geometrical problem, originally raised by Shaykh-i Ṭûsî. Immediately Mîr Findiriskî suggested a proof and asked his students whether Shaykh-i Ṭûsî had arrived at the same answer. The students had to admit that he had not. Mîr Findiriskî then demonstrated another solution and asked the audience whether this had been cited by Shaykh-i Ṭûsî. Again the students replied in the negative. Once more, Mîr Findiriskî offered another answer and asked whether this had been referred to by

⁹¹ M. Ma'sûm 'Alî Shâh, *Tarâ'iq*, vol. 2, p. 253.

⁹² F. Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p.xxiv. See also F. Mujtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170.

⁹³ Ibid.

Shaykh-i Ṭūsī. Once more the students said no.⁹⁴ This story, despite its simplicity, shows how skilled Mīr Findiriskī was in the pure sciences of his time, or at least that his skill evoked comparisons with such famous mathematicians as al-Shaykh-i Ṭūsī.

In his period he was regarded, along with Mīr Dāmād and Shaykh-i Bahā'ī, as one of the great philosophers and mystics of Isfahan, and was enormously respected for this in religious circles as well as at court. Indeed, he was unusually well versed in a number of difficult disciplines and in languages such as Sanskrit and Pahlavi. Nevertheless, as Afandī says,⁹⁵ rather surprisingly, he was considered somewhat weak in the divine sciences and even in Arabic. Of Mīr Findiriskī's reputation for knowledge Naṣr asserts⁹⁶ that "Mīr Findiriskī was one of the most famous of the philosophers and scientists of the Safavīd period, respected by Shāh 'Abbās and the Mughal court in India." According to the same author "He was a ṣūfī, an alchemist, a profound student of Hinduism, a gifted poet and one who was believed by his contemporaries to possess supernatural powers."⁹⁷ Yet, though he achieved a high level of both knowledge and spirituality, he was extraordinarily careless as to his appearance and wore coarse wool garments. He also avoided the society of rich and respectable people and associated with the poor and talented. He tried hard to purify his soul and improve himself daily.⁹⁸

Mīr Findiriskī lived in Isfahan for a considerable portion of his life, where he taught peripatetic philosophy (concentrating on texts such as Ibn Sīnā's *al-Shifā'* and *al-*

⁹⁴ Afandī, *Riyāḡ al-'Ulamā'*, p. 501; Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, vol. 4, p. 357-8; see also Muḥammad Husayn Akbarī Sāvi, *Tuḥfat al-Murād*; *Sharḥ-i Qaṣidah-i Mīr Findiriskī bi-Damīmah Sharḥ-i Khalkhālī va Gīlānī*, Muqaddamah: Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshṭiyānī (Tehran: Intishārāt al-Zahrā, 1372, HS), p. 4.

⁹⁵ Afandī, *Riyāḡ al-'Ulamā'*, p. 499; Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, vol. 4, p. 357; R. Hidāyat, *Tadhkirah*, (1344/ 1965), p. 267.

⁹⁶ Naṣr, "Findiriskī" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., Supplement, p. 308.

⁹⁷ Naṣr, "Findiriskī," p. 308.

⁹⁸ Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, p. 358; see also Akbarī Sāvi, *Tuḥfat al-Murād*, p. 5.

Najât), mathematics and medicine, in addition to traveling frequently to India.⁹⁹ Known for his spiritual and esoteric knowledge, he came to be credited with fabulous supernatural powers, such as being able to be in two places at one time and to travel great distances instantaneously.¹⁰⁰ H. Corbin has written of Mîr Findiriskî that he “was a powerful personality who remains shrouded in a certain mystery.”¹⁰¹

3.4.2. Language Skills

Mîr Findiriskî's marginal notes to the Persian translation of *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* suggest that he had acquired a substantial knowledge of Sanskrit, which he must have learned from native teachers. His notes on some words however, where he writes: “As I know it through studying this language,” may indicate that he was an autodidact in the language. Elsewhere, he sheds light on the process of translation as well as the problems involved in learning Sanskrit, which can lead to inexactitude:

The translations of these works contain numerous mistakes; because the Sanskrit works were first rendered in common Hindi for the translators, and then they translated them into Persian from Hindi. Their theological ideas themselves are more difficult than that. The Brâhmîns of our time know neither Sanskrit nor Hindu theology well enough; and the translators who have quoted them have been even worse. Sanskrit, in comparison with any other language, abounds in synonyms and derivatives, and particular words for various aspects and qualities of things are many. For instance, a girl before puberty is called by a name, on puberty she is designated by another word; she is referred to by yet another word after marriage, and when she gets pregnant an entirely different word is used for her. Each of these names has also a symbolic meaning attached to it.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ R. Hidâyat, *Tadhkirah*, p. 267; see also Mudarris, *Rayḥânât al-Adab*, p. 358; Naṣr, “Spiritual Movements, Philosophy and Theology in the Ṣafavîd Period,” in *The Cambridge History of Iran*, volume 6, *The Timurid and Ṣafavîd periods*, ed. Peter Jackson and Laurence Lockhart (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 674.

¹⁰⁰ Naṣr, “Spiritual Movements,” pp. 675-6.

¹⁰¹ Henry Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, Trans. Laidiain Sherard, London: Islamic Publication, 1993, p. 340.

¹⁰² (quoted in) F. Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xxv.

The above quotation from Mîr Findiriskî indicates that he was fully aware of the issues and was well skilled in what he was commenting on. This also shows that Mîr Findiriskî had a critical eye, which he applied to the study of Hinduism. H. Corbin states in this regard that Mîr Findiriskî “was involved in the project of translating Sanskrit texts into Persian, in which the prince Dârâ Shikûh¹⁰³ played a major role.”¹⁰⁴ It is however important to mention that Mîr Findiriskî was also living in a period when there was widespread opposition to Sufism. Accordingly, as soon as it was understood that someone was engaging in Şûfî practices he would be condemned. In this situation a man had to be strong both spiritually and intellectually if he wished to be involved in this pursuit. Mîr Findiriskî was such a person.¹⁰⁵

Mîr Findiriskî must have read Bîrûnî's works, for according to F. Muḡtabâ'î, in his marginal observations on the Persian translation of *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* he makes references to Bîrûnî's *Pâtanjala*.¹⁰⁶ He also must have read and retained much of Iskandar Ifrîdîsî's book on intellect (*`aql*), Aristotle's works on the soul (*Kitâb al-Nafs*), and on reason (*al-Burhân*), Ptolemy's work on music, Galen's work on natural powers (*quwâ-yi ṭabî'î*), and others entitled *Ustuquṣṣât*, on *Mizâj*, on *Manâfi` al-A`dâ'*, as well as works by Plato, Themistius, Ibn Sînâ, Fârâbî, Nâṣir Khusraw, and other philosophers and gnostics, for in his works he frequently makes references to them.¹⁰⁷

3.4.3. Some Reasons for Mîr Findiriskî's Obscurity

¹⁰³ Dârâ Shukûh was the eldest son of the Mughal emperor Shâhjahân. He played an important role in the history of the Indo-Pak subcontinent. Besides being a prince, he was a Sufi master in the Qâdirîyah silsilah, and an important scholar who made significant contributions to the study of Sufism and Hinduism. For more details see Perwiz Ḥayât, “The Concept of Wilâyah in the Early works of Dârâ Shukûh (1024/1615-1069/1659)” (M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1987), chapters One and Two, *passim*.

¹⁰⁴ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 341.

¹⁰⁵ A. Hâdî, *Sharḥ-i ḥâl*, p. 58.

¹⁰⁶ F. Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xxiv.

¹⁰⁷ See Mîr Findiriskî's *Risâlah Şinâ'îyyah*, ed., `Alî Akbar Shihâbî (Mashhad: Intishârât-i Farhang-i Khurâsân, 1317 HS), pp. 38, 41-47, 53, 68.

Though his accomplishments are highly rated by Ridâ Qulî Khân-i Hidâyat, Mîrzâ Muhammad ‘Alî Mudarris, ‘Abdullâh Afandî-i Isfahânî and many others, the meager details we have concerning his life may be attributed to the fact that scholars have been unable to classify him. For instance, was he more a philosopher than a mystic, or more a mystic than a poet? Because he did not fall neatly into one of these three classes, he seems to have been excluded from the standard biographical dictionaries for each discipline.¹⁰⁸ A contemporary and an intimate friend of both Mîr Dâmâd and Shaykh-i Bahâ’î, Mîr Findiriskî is less studied and remains to this day the most under-appreciated thinker of the Şafavîd period. Surprisingly, Iskandar Beg Munshî, who devotes a whole chapter to the Sayyids¹⁰⁹ of the Şafavîd period says nothing about Mîr Findiriskî. We may say that, since part of Mîr Findiriskî’s life was spent in India, and since while in Iran he chose to lead a life of simplicity and solitude, writers and historians knew so little about him, that they didn’t bother to include him in their works.¹¹⁰

3.5. Students

Among Mîr Findiriskî’s notable students, we may cite: Sarmad Kâshânî, the poet-saint who was Dârâ Shikûh’s teacher and spiritual guide;¹¹¹ Aqâ Ḥusayn-i Khwânsârî (b. 1076/1607-1608, d.1098/1686-87), the author of *Mashâriq al-Nufûs* a work on jurisprudence, who also wrote glosses upon the *Shifâ’* and *Ishârât*, on Naşîr al-Dîn Ṭûsî’s *Tajrid*, and on ‘Alî al-Qûshjî’s treatise on astronomy, as well as and a commentary on the

¹⁰⁸ E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. 4, p. 258.

¹⁰⁹ Learned scholars and clerics descended from the Holy Prophet.

¹¹⁰ A. A. Shihâbî’s introduction to Mîr Findiriskî’s *Risâlah Şînâ’îyyah*.

¹¹¹ F. Muġtabâ’î, *Muntakhab*, p. xx. R. Hidâyat, in his *Rîyâḍ*, p. 131, quoted *Dabistân* that Sarmad-i Kâshî studied philosophy with Iranian philosophers such as Mîr Findiriskî and Mullâ Şadrâ. In deed he declares that Sarmad was student of Mîr Findiriskî.

lessons of al-Shahîd al-Awwal;¹¹² Mullâ Muḥammad Bâqir Sabzawârî (d. 1098 or 1099/1686-7), author of several important works on jurisprudence such as the *Kifâyah* and glosses upon the *Ishârât wa'l-Tanbîhât* and *Shifâ'* of Ibn Sînâ; Mullâ Rafî' Gîlânî (d. 1082/1671-2), the commentator on the *Uṣûl al-Kâfî*;¹¹³ and Mullâ Şâdiq-i Ardîstânî,¹¹⁴ Shaykh Rajab'Alî-i Tabrîzî (1080/1669-70), the author of many works including *Kilîd-i Bihisht* (Key to Paradise) on eschatology. Furthermore, according to S. H. Naşr, Shaykh Rajab'Alî-i Tabrîzî was opposed to Mullâ Şadrâ on the subject of trans-substantial motion (*ḥarakat-i jawhariyah*) and the union of the knower and known (*ittiḥâd-i 'âqil wa ma'qûl*). He also opposed the majority of Muslim philosophers, in that he considered being (*wujûd*) to be shared only nominally by existing things without its necessarily corresponding to an objective reality. Shaykh Rajab'Alî-i Tabrîzî's reputation as a peripatetic philosopher and teacher of the works of Ibn Sînâ brought him many other students as well, including Qâḍî Sa'îd-i Qummî (d. 1103), Muḥammad Rafî' Pîrzâdah,

¹¹² Husayn Khwânsârî in his turn had many students, Sayyid Jamâl al-Dîn Khwânsârî (d. 1121/1709 or 1125/1713), and Sayyid Raḍî Khwânsârî, his two sons, Mullâ Masîḥâ Pasâ'î Shîrâzî (d. 1130/1717-1718 or 1115/1703-1074), who is known, H. Corbin says, basically for two works, one a treatise on *Necessary Being*, and one a paraphrase in Persian of al-Shaykh al-Mufîd's *Irshâd*; Muḥammad Bâqir Sabzavârî, called Muḥaqqiq Sabzavârî (d. 1098/1686-1687), who wrote on Ibn Sînâ's *Shifâ'* and *Ishârât*, on Shaykh al-Mufîd's *Irshâd*, and an important work which he consecrated to Shâh Sulaymân, *The Garden of Lights* (*Anwâr al-Jannah*); Mîrzâ Rafî'a Nâ'imî (d. 1080/1669-1670 or 1082/1671-1672) who wrote several treatises: one on Kulaynî's *Kâfî* (*al-Shajarat al-Ilâhiyah dar Uṣûl Kâfî*), another on Mufîd's *Irshâd*, a third on the "Psalter" of the Forth Imâm, and a forth on Naşîr al-Dîn Tûsî's commentary on the *Irshârât*. See H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 341-2.

¹¹³ Naşr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676; see also Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtiyânî et Henry Corbin, *Anthologie Des Philosophies Iranians* (Tehran-Paris, 1971), p. 62.

¹¹⁴ F. Muḥtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170; see also Riḍâ Qulî Khân-i Hidâyat, *Târîkh-i Rawḍat al-Şafâ-yi Nâsirî*, vol. 8 (Qum: Châp-i Hikmat, 1339 HS), p. 586. In this volume, Riḍâ Qulî Khân-i Hidâyat, considered Mullâ Şâdiq-i Ardîstânî to be Mîr Findiriskî's particular student. He adds that in Shâh Sulţân Ḥusain-i Şafavî's period he (Mullâ Şâdiq-i Ardîstânî) was accused of being a Şûfî and expelled from Işfahân, consequently the children of this majestic, great philosopher died of exposure.

Muḥammad Ḥasan-i Qummî, Mîr Qawâm al-Dîn Ḥakîm, Mullâ 'Abbâs-i Mulawî, Mowlâ Muhammad-i Tunikâbunî (d.1088), and Mîr Qawâm al-Dîn Râzî.¹¹⁵

Many believe that Mullâ Şadrâ,¹¹⁶ studied under Mîr Findiriskî and took from the latter particular aspects of his doctrines such as "trans-substantial motion" and belief in an "imaginal world." Others are not convinced that he was ever his student. However, it seems impossible to deny the story altogether, because there may have been some contacts of an oral nature. However, Şadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî fails entirely to mention Mîr Findiriskî among his teachers, even though in his introduction to *Uşûl-i Kâfî* he refers with great respect to his two other teachers, namely Mîr Dâmâd and Shaikh-i Bahâ'î. Others would deny any connection due to the fact that Mîr Findiriskî was a faithful follower of Ibn Sînâ and denied trans-substantial motion in his doctrine, an orientation that all of his students shared except for Mullâ Şadrâ (if we do accept that Mullâ Şadrâ studied with Mîr Findiriskî). Yet his *Qaṣîdah* proves an exception to this rule. In the latter work, Mîr Findiriskî maintains the reality of the archetypal world and Platonic ideas.¹¹⁷ According to S. Ḥ. Naşr "yet he was far from being merely a rationalistically-oriented philosopher; he was also a şûfî, an alchemist, a profound student of Hinduism, a gifted poet and one who was believed by his contemporaries to possess supernatural powers."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ See introduction of Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âşhtîyânî on Mullâ Şadrâ's *Shawâhid al-Rûbûbiyah* (Mashhad: Châpkhânâh Dânishgâh-i Mashhad, 1967), pp. 91-1; see also Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308; Nasr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 677.

¹¹⁶ F. Muţtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xx; Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308; Nasr in this article expresses doubt regarding this tradition. He regards it as having been possible, rather than certain. H. Corbin also casts doubt on the tradition that Mullâ Şadrâ was Mîr Findiriskî's student, H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 341; see also Âşhtîyânî, *Anthologie*, tome I, p. 31 (Introduction) et tome II, p. 139.

¹¹⁷ See below, chapter..., for further discussion of this topic.

¹¹⁸ Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

Although we know nothing about whether Mîr Findiriskî had any sons or daughters, the *tadhkiras* refer to a nephew, namely Mîrzâ Abû Ṭâlib ibn al-Mîrzâ Beg ibn Abu al-Qâsim Mîr Findiriskî; thus we may conclude that Mîr Findiriskî had some descendants. This nephew was in fact a famous scholar in his time and the best student of 'Allamah Muḥammad Bâqir-i Majlisî. A contemporary of Mîrzâ 'Abdallâh Afandî Isfahânî, he wrote many works, among them: *Tarjumah Fârsî-yi Sharḥ-i Lum'ah Shahîd*, *Hâshîyah Tafsîr Bayḍâvî*, *al-Muntahâ*, and *Ghazawât Haydarî*.¹¹⁹

3.6. Stories

Many stories are narrated in *tadhkiras* about Mîr Findiriskî. These stories remark on his attitudes and throw considerable light on his personal character. Highly honored by the Şafavîd and Mughal rulers of his time,¹²⁰ Mîr Findiriskî remained nevertheless detached, even in his outward activities, from the material world. Having achieved a state of pure contemplation and illumination, he formed a bond with the common people and wore only plain and simple clothes. Different stories of this aspect of his life have been told in most biographies.¹²¹

It is narrated that Mîr Findiriskî and his contemporary Shaykh Bahâ'î were once sitting in the royal hall of Shâh 'Abbâs, engaged in a philosophical discussion. Suddenly a lion that had escaped from the imperial zoo entered the hall. This caused Shaykh Bahâ'î to recoil (taking his 'aba and covering part of his face with it) and to show fear on his

¹¹⁹ See Afandî, *Riyâḡ al-'Ulamâ*, p. 500; see also Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, p. 360; A. Hâdî, *Sharḥ-i ḥâl*, p. 84.

¹²⁰ Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, p. 358.

¹²¹ Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, pp. 356-60; Hidâyat. *Tadhkirih*, p. 267-9; Naşr, "The School of Isfahân," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. M. M. Sharif, vol. 2 (Karâchî: Royal Book Company, 1983), pp. 922-26.

countenance. Mîr Findiriskî on the other hand showed apparent indifference to the lion's presence. The two were later asked to provide an explanation for their immediate reactions. Shaykh Bahâ'î is reported to have said that by the power of reason he knew that unless the lion was hungry, it would not attack him, and yet involuntarily he was moved to protect himself. Mîr Findiriskî on the other hand said that he mastered his terror of the animal by the power of his inner spiritual strength and self-control¹²². The story in its lucidity and simplicity indicates the doctrinal, philosophical and mystical issues current at the time of Mîr Findiriskî. It presents two possible modes of facing objectivities: rational engagement with realities, or a mystical approach to realities as represented by Mîr Findiriskî.¹²³ This story about Mîr Findiriskî is so famous that it has been painted on a curtain and placed in Mîr Findiriskî's tomb in Takht-i Fûlâd. Engravers and calligraphers have reproduced this remarkable scene on platters.¹²⁴

Another story is told, in all of his *tadhkiras*, of how one day Shâh 'Abbâs tried to scold him indirectly for mixing with dervishes and common people, saying "I hear some of the important scholars and sages have been attending cock-fights in the bazar." Mîr Findiriskî, knowing that the Shâh meant him, replied, "You have been misled; I was always present there but I saw none of the '*ulama*' there," thus presenting himself as one of the common people and not as an '*âlim* (scholar). The Shâh felt ashamed and said nothing but he then understood the high spiritual position of Mîr Findiriskî.¹²⁵

¹²² Faḡlullāh Lâ'iq's introduction to his edition of 'Abbâs-i Sharîf Dârâbî's *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, (Tehran: Shirkat Nisbî, 1337 HS); see also A. Hadi, *Sharḥ-i ḥâl*, p. 30.

¹²³ F. Lâ'iq's introduction to *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*; see also A. Hâdî, *Sharḥ-i Ḥâl*, p. 30. He perseveres the same story with a little difference.

¹²⁴ F. Muḡtabai, "Findiriskî," p. 171.

¹²⁵ R. Hidâyat, *Tadhkirih*, p. 267-8; Mudarris, *Rayḡanat al-Adab*, p. 358. F. Lâ'iq's introduction, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*; E. G. Brown, *A Literary History of Persia*, p.258; A. Hâdî, *Sharḥ-i Ḥâl*, p. 58; F. Muḡtabai, "Findiriskî," p.171.

3.7.1. Death

Mîr Findiriskî died during the reign of Shâh Şafi-i Şafavî, in 1050/1640-1,¹²⁶ at the age of eighty. His tomb is in the Takht-i Fûlâd cemetery in Isfahan, Iran, where many devotees throughout the year visit his shrine.¹²⁷ Since he was an alchemist and was said to possess supernatural powers, he was buried in an iron coffin to prevent his body from being stolen. Moreover his shrine is still guarded throughout the year to prevent theft. I myself visited his grave recently, in the summer of 1999, and spoke with the grave-keeper, who acknowledges that even today Mîr Findiriskî remains a vivid and respected figure in the later history of Islamic spirituality and philosophy in Iran, and endures in the consciousness of the common people as one of the greatest sages of the Şafavîd period. Some sense of this reputation may be conveyed in the following story.

Ma'sûm 'Alî Shâh, in his *Tarâ'iq al-Haqâ'iq* quotes from *Uşûl al-Fuşûl*¹²⁸ that Mîr Findiriskî had said that on his way to India, he met a great mystical scholar on a beach. He said to me: "It seems that you are a Muslim." "I am a Muslim," I replied. He asked me to recite some verses of Qur'ân. After reading a few verses of the Qur'ân, he stopped me and began to recite Qur'ân by heart. When he was reciting the verse of Qur'ân 11/44 "...O earth swallow down thy water..." I saw that the sea's water disappeared and the sea became completely dry and all fish appeared on the earth. I was astonished and wondering. Then he continued the same verse of the Qur'ân reciting: "...

There are other stories about the spiritual character of Mîr Findiriskî, all indicating his high spiritual and scientific knowledge and that how much he was respected by rulers both in Iran and India. See 'Alî Akbar-i Shihâb's introduction to the *Risâlah Şinâ'îyyah*, and Mullâ Aḥmad-i Narâqî (Mowlâ Aḥmad ibn Mahdî ibn Abî Dhar-i Ghaffârî 1185/1245), *Kitâb al-Khazâ'in*, eds. Ḥasan Ḥasanzâdah-i Âmulî & Alî Akbar-i Ghaffârî, Tehran: Kitâbfurûshî-yi 'Ilmîyah Islâmîyah Tîhrân, n.d., pp. 22 & 134.

¹²⁶ It should be noted that at the end of his *Risâlah Şinâ'îyyah*, preserved in *Kitâbkhânah-i Âstân-i Quds*, the date of his death is dated as 1049 A.H. See F. Muḥtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," (1994), p. 170.

¹²⁷ Mudarris, *Rayḥanat al-Adab*, p. 359; see also Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308; Afandî, *Riyâḡ al-'Ulamâ'*, p. 501; also see E. G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia*, vol. 4, p. 17.

¹²⁸ "*Uşûl al-Fuşûl*" is one of the books that attributed to Mîr Findiriskî and yet it is not found.

O sky! Withhold (thy rain) and the water abated...". Again surprisingly I saw that the sea returned to its normal state. I realized that he was a great spiritual master and of great intellectual and subjective power. I decided to remain with him. I went and stayed at his house for seven years, benefiting from his companionship, hoping to learn from his mystical experiences and his powerful subjective ideas. After seven years it occurred to me one day to think that if I had based myself somewhere else during these last seven years, by now, my body would have become alchemical.¹²⁹ Suddenly the sage, who had understood through his supernatural powers what had passed through my heart, called to me from his room and asked me: "was this your will and wish?"; and continued immediately that your body from now became alchemical. Thenceforth, whatever I would touch, wear, or even eat or drink would turn to gold. I became helpless and distressed so that I implored him for help. At once he, the saint, again through his supernatural esoteric knowledge, understood what had passed in my heart, called me again and said, "you will return to your normal state now." At once, I was once again my normal self.¹³⁰

This story in itself shows clearly why Mîr Findiriskî's body was treated as it was after death, and is a good example of the sort of folk beliefs that surrounded highly spiritual figures like Mîr Findiriskî.

3.7.2. Mîr Findiriskî's Testament (waṣīyyat)

Mîr Findiriskî willed his library to the court of Shâh 'Abbâs and so immediately after his death his entire collections of books were moved to Shâh Ṣaffî's court.¹³¹ We

¹²⁹ [i.e., I would have been able to create gold at touch].

¹³⁰ M. Ma'sûm-'Alî Shâh, *Ṭarâ'iq*, vol., 3, p. 158; see also F. La'iq, introduction to *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*.

know nothing about what happened to these books. A few of Mîr Findiriskî's own works have survived, as we shall see in a chapter devoted to his writings.

3.7.3. The Cult of Mîr Findiriskî

Until recently there was hung in his tomb a large painted curtain, on one side of which Mîr Findiriskî's face was drawn, and on the other Shaykh-i Bahâ'î's face.¹³² Since this painting was one of the oldest and most beautiful paintings of the Şafavîd period, it has been taken recently to a museum in Tehran.

Mîr Findiriskî's grave, which is located in a great, open space, is shaped like a rectangle, dwarfing the other graves nearby. On its western side, there is a marble plaque on which is engraved in beautiful writing some statements declaring his spiritual and mystical greatness and his date of death, which was 1050/1640-1. Although Mîr Findiriskî was not a prolific author, nevertheless, the titles and expression written on his grave indicate that in his lifetime, he was well respected and appreciated by both the elite and the common people for his achievement in philosophy, sciences, gnosis and divine knowledge.¹³³ The attributes written on his grave and the proverbial respect shown him by all people are of the greatest interest in understanding his personality. Mîr Findiriskî's reputation furthermore did not evaporate even after his death, because when he died he was not buried in a regular grave, but in one which is encircled both within and without by a metal casing. This grave has since been visited, throughout the years by many devotees, particularly on Thursday nights.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Mudarris, *Rayḥānat al-Adab*, p. 359; see also A. Sâvî's introduction to *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*; p. 6; see also Afandî, *Riyâḍ al-'Ulamâ*, p. 501.

¹³² Mudarris, *Rayḥānat al-Adab*, p. 359. See also A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*; (1372, solar), p. 6.

¹³³ F. Muḡtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170.

¹³⁴ A. Hâdî, *Sharḥ-i ḥâl*, p. 84; see also Naşr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676; and Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

3.7.4. His mausoleum, where he was worshiping God

On the western side of Mîr Findiriskî's tomb, above his grave, there is a room where Mîr Findiriskî used to worship God. This room for a long time, (perhaps even since the time of Shâh 'Abbâs the Great) has been a secluded place for worshiping God and a secure place of retirement to engage in gnosis for believers and mystics. On the upper parts of the walls of this room, a famous ghazal of Ḥâfîz has been written in the calligraphy of Mîr 'Imâd (the most famous calligrapher of the Şafavîd period). This particular calligraphy, in the room reserved for Mîr Findiriskî's devotions, was, during last three and half centuries, a beautiful model for many Iranian calligraphists.¹³⁵ The text of this Ghazal, translated by Wilberforce Clarke, is as follows:

- 1) The garden of the lofty Paradise is the retreat of Dervishes¹³⁶
Grandeur's source is the service of Dervishes.
- 2) The treasure of retirement that has the spells of wonders,
Their revealing is in the mercy-glance of Dervishes.
- 3) The place of paradise, for the door guarding of which, Ridvân went,
Is only a spectacle of the sword of pleasure of Dervishes.
- 4) By whose ray, the black heart becomes gold,
Is an alchemy that is (hidden) in association with Dervishes.
- 5) Before whom the Sun lays his crown of glory'
Is a glory that is in the modesty of Dervishes.
- 6) That great fortune, whereof is no grief through the torment of decay,

¹³⁵ Sayyid Muşliḥ al-Dîn-i Mahdavi, *Sayrî dar Târikh-i Takht-i Fûlâd-i Işfahân: Lisân al-Arḍ* (Işfahân : Injuman-i Kitâbkhân-i-hâ-yi 'Umûmî-yi Işfahân, 1991), pp. 208-213.

¹³⁶ A member of anyone of various Muslim ascetic orders, some of which perform whirling dances and vigorous chanting as acts of ecstatic devotion. "The word *dervish* calls to mind the phrases *howling dervish* and *whirling dervish*. Certainly there are dervishes whose religious exercises include making loud howling noises or whirling rapidly so as to bring about a dizzy, mystical state. But a dervish is really the Muslim equivalent of a monk or friar, the Persian word *darvêsh*, the ultimate source of *dervish*, meaning "religious mendicant." The word is first recorded in English in 1585." See *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition* (1992, Houghton Mifflin Company). Or a member of a Muslim religious order noted for devotional exercises (as bodily movements leading to a trance). See also *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, (Toronto: Merriam-Webster INC., 1983), s.v. "Dervish."

Hear-ceremony aside,- is the fortune of Dervishes.

7) Khusravân¹³⁷ are the Qibla¹³⁸ for the needs of the people of the world; but,

The cause is their service of the majesty of Dervishes.

8) From coast to coast, is the army of tyranny; but,

From eternity without beginning to eternity without end is the opportunity of Dervishes.

9) The form of the object that the Kings of the world seek,

Its manifestation is the mirror of the countenance of Dervishes.

10) O potent one! Boast not all this pomp: for you,

Cypress tree of gold is in the shelter of ambition (endeavor) of Dervishes.

11) Qârûn's treasure that, from the wrath (of Mûsâ), yet descendents (into the earth),

That also, thou will have read, is from the zeal of Dervishes.

12) I am the slave of the glance of the Âşîf¹³⁹ of the age, who

Has the form of chiefship and character of Dervishes.

13) Hâfîz! If you seek the water of life of endless eternity,

Its fountain is the dust of the deserted of Dervishes.

14) Hâfîz!¹⁴⁰ Be here with respect. For sovereignty and country,

All are from the service of the majesty of Dervishes.¹⁴¹

3.8. The Influence of the School of Isfahan on India

One of the more interesting questions is that of the extent of the reverse influence that the members of the school of Isfahan, including figures such as Mîr Dâmâd and Mîr

¹³⁷ Plural of khusraw, the title of the ancient Sassanian king of Persia.

¹³⁸ Direction in which Muslims turn in praying i.e. Mecca.

¹³⁹ Âşîf was a vizier to Solomon, and Solomon was a messenger of God. See Qur'ân Chapter 27; al-Naml.

¹⁴⁰ This verse was not in my version of *Dîvân-i Hâfîz*. I quote it from the translation of H. Wilberforce Clarke, *Dîvân-i Hâfîz*, vol. 1 (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1970), pp. 99.

¹⁴¹ I have taken the translation of this ghazal from H. Wilberforce Clarke, *The Dîvân Written in the Fourteenth Century by Khwâja Shamsu-d-Dîn Muḥammad-i-Hâfîz-i-Shîrâzî otherwise known as Lisânu-l-Ghaib and Tarjumânu-l-Asrâr*, vol. 1 (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1970), pp. 98-9.

Findiriskî, exercised on India. According to S. H. Nasr,¹⁴² the establishment of Islamic philosophy in the Indo-Pakistani sub-continent dates from the Şafavîd period. During this period many Iranian scholars, philosophers and mystics migrated or traveled to India, e.g., Qâdî Nûr-Allâh Shûstari, author of *Majâlis al-Mu'minîn* and *Iḥqâq al-Ḥaqq*, Muhammad Dihdâr Shîrâzî, author of *Ishrâq al-Nayyirayn*, Bahâ' al-Dîn Isfahânî, known as Fâḍîl-i Hindî, who summarized the metaphysics of the *Shifâ'*, as well as Mîr Findiriskî. In addition, the teachings of Mîr Dâmâd and Mullâ Şadrâ became widespread in India. The *Sharḥ al-Ḥidâyah* of Mullâ Şadrâ became in fact one of the most popular works on the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent. The extant commentaries upon the works of Şafavid masters bear witness to the remarkable spread of the teachings of the school of Isfahan in this region.¹⁴³

3.9. Mîr Findiriskî's Works

Mîr Findiriskî left behind several works, among which we find his mystico-philosophical ode (*Qaṣîdah Ḥikmîyah*) which has been quoted in many anthologies and was commented upon by three major scholars: Khalkhâlî, Gîlânî and Dârâbî;¹⁴⁴ a philosophical work in Arabic on motion (*Risâlah fî al-Ḥarakah*); a Persian work on the aims and classification of professions, crafts and sciences (*Risâlah Şinâ'îyyah*); a number of *ghazals*, *rubâ'îs* and verse fragments (some of which have a Şûfî coloring); and his comments on Panipati's Persian translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* (including Mîr Findiriskî's marginal notes on Nizâm al-Din's translation of it, *Muntakhab-i Jug Basasht*,

¹⁴² Nasr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 696.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ See A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, introduction.

his glossary of the same work and his verses in Persian in praise of it),¹⁴⁵ to note only the more important ones. Recently, according to S. H. Naşr,¹⁴⁶ his treatise on alchemy, in Persian, and a Persian poem on the art of Kingship, have been discovered in a manuscript acquired by the Library of the Faculty of Letters of Tehran University, but this has remained unedited.¹⁴⁷ There are also some other works such as the manuscript of the *Uşûl al-Fuşûl* on Hinduism and a history of the Şafavîds, which are attributed to him, but which have not yet been discovered.¹⁴⁸ Mîr Findiriskî was an important thinker who wrote little, although what he did write is all of exceptional interest and considered highly significant by many scholars.¹⁴⁹

Since in his lifetime he was extensively engaged in teaching sciences and philosophy, Mîr Findiriskî was not a very fertile writer. Mîr Dâmâd (1041) died ten years before Mîr Findiriskî, with the result that the teaching of peripatetic philosophy lost a very great figure. As a result during the last ten years of his life Mîr Findiriskî had to undertake much more teaching than before.

3.9.1. *Risâlah-i Şinâ'îyyah*¹⁵⁰ (Treatise on Professions and Crafts)

Perhaps the most important of these works is his *Risâlah-i Şinâ'îyyah* ("Treatise on Professions" or "Crafts"/ "Skills") in Persian edited by Alî Akbar-i Shihâbî (Tehran:

¹⁴⁵ F. Muţtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xx; F. Muţtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 170; see also Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308; A. Sâvî, *Tuţfat al-Murâd*, p. 5; Mudarris, *Rayĥânât al-Adab*, p. 358; M. Ma'sûm-'Alî Shâh, *Īrâ'iq*, vol. 3, p. 158; see also *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaţfî-yi Kitâbkhânah-i Markazî-yi Âstân-i Quds-i Raġavî*, vol. 10, pp. 154-5; Naşr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676; Naşr, "The School of Isfahan," p. 922.

¹⁴⁶ Naşr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676.

¹⁴⁷ M. T. Dânişpazhûh, *Catalogue méthodique... des manuscrits de la bibliothèque privée de l'Imâm Jum'a de Kermân donné en legs à la Faculté des Lettres de Tehran* (Tehran, 1965), p. 11 (quoted in, Naşr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676).

¹⁴⁸ Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

¹⁴⁹ Naşr, "Spiritual Movements," p. 676.

¹⁵⁰ *Şinâ'ah* and *Şanâ'ah* both are correct. See Luis Ma'lûf, *al-Munġid* (Qum: Intishârât-i Ismâ'îlîyân, 1983), s.v. *şana'a*.

Sa'adat Press, 1317 Solar).¹⁵¹ This treatise, which is also famous under the title *Ḥaqâyiḡ al-Ṣanâyi'* or *Ṣanâyi' al-Ḥaqâyiḡ*,¹⁵² offers a metaphysical¹⁵³ study of human society (sociology) from the traditional metaphysical point of view. As Naṣr explains, "In this work various occupations and professions in society are placed in a hierarchy corresponding to the hierarchy of knowledge and also of being."¹⁵⁴ He classes human actions, vocations, jobs and activities according to a hierarchy, which culminates in the prophets, Imams and philosophers. He devotes several pages to "prophetic philosophy," but in order to avoid confusion for people who read the latter chapter, he also devotes a chapter to the "differences between prophets and philosophers" to classify them at their specific levels.¹⁵⁵

This *Risâlah*, which contains an introduction, twenty-four chapters and a conclusion, tries to arrange the diverse matrix of Islamic intellectual output in a coherent form. In the introduction Mîr Findiriskî enumerates the subjects with which he deals in the work. As he says, this *Risâlah* includes the definition of the *ṣinâ'ah*, the kinds of *ṣinâ'ah*, the benefits, advantages and disadvantages, ends and relations of *ṣinâ'ât*, the portion and position of each *ṣinâ'ah*, warning against vanity and inactivity, the different levels of benefits conferred by the *ṣinâ'ah* create different levels of *ṣinâ'ah*. The *Risâlah*

¹⁵¹ An incomplete version of this *Risâlah* is also included in Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtiyânî and H. Corbin, *Muntakhabât az Ḥukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran*, vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tabliqât-i Islâmî, 1985, pp. 63-80). For more information of the authenticity of the text of *Risâlah-i Ṣinâ'iyah* and its attribution to Mîr Findiriskî see Shaykh 'Âqâ Buzurg Tihrânî, *al-Dharî'ah 'ilâ Taṣânîf-i al-Shî'a*, (Bayrût: Dâr al-'Aḡwâ', 1983), vol. 15, p. 89; see also Ahmad Gulchîn Ma'ânî, *Fihrist-i Kitâbkhânah-i Âstân-i Quds-i Raḡawî*, vol. 4 (Mashhad: Châpkhânah Tûs, 1926), pp. 204-5; and *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭî-yi Kitâbkhânah-i Markazî-yi Âstân-i Quds-i Raḡawî*, vol. 1, p. 170; *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭî-yi Majlis-i Showrâ-yi Milli*, vols. (9), p. 618, (11), p. 153, (12), pp. 293-4, (13), p. 199; m.t. Dânish Pazhûh, *Fihrist-i Nuskhah-hâ-yi Khaṭṭî-yi Kitâbkhânah-i Dânishkadah-i Adabîyyât*, p. 351.

¹⁵² See note 146 and *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭî-yi Majlis-i Showrâ-yi Milli*, vol. (9), p. 618.

¹⁵³ Immaterial, insubstantial, spiritual. The central meaning shared by these adjectives is "lacking material body, form, or substance."

¹⁵⁴ Naṣr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

¹⁵⁵ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 341.

urges people to seek out vocations and jobs, warns them against doing less profitable jobs or against dishonorable vocations, vocations limited in actuality (*bi al-fi'l*) and unlimited in potency (*bi al-quwwah*). It also states that the subject of some *ṣinâ'ât* (pl., of *ṣinâ'ah*) may be the goal of some other *ṣinâ'ah*, and that this continues until one reaches a *ṣinâ'ah* for which there is no further goal. In this *Risâlah* Mîr Findiriskî describes man as a "small world," a "microcosm," and the world, as a vast human entity, a "macrocosm." He proclaims that as man's organs need each other, -- such that the indisposition of one can cause derangement of the others -- the indisposition and untidiness of a single person in an unsuitable vocation creates disorder in the whole world. He compares different people in society and the different levels of society and the portion of each of them in society to the main elements of the world, and worlds of intellects and souls together and maintains them as equals together. Mîr Findiriskî furthermore tries to explain certain philosophical and mystical points in the light of the Qur'ân, as well as the words of theosophers and saints, and does so as clearly as possible.¹⁵⁶

Mîr Findiriskî is not alone in enumerating the physical as well as spiritual vocations and sciences of his time. For example, we may mention Mîr Dâmâd's *Risâlah al-I'dâlât fi Funûn al-'Ulûm wa al-Ṣinâ'ât*, Mullâ Muḥsin-i Kâshânî's *Fihrist al-'Ulûm*, and Muḥaqqiq-i Shîrwânî's (d.1099/1687) *Unmûdhaj al-'Ulûm* among the most notable examples of this type of writing.¹⁵⁷

Since this *Risâlah* is of particular significance and considered by many authors of *tadhkiras* as the principal and most original work of Mîr Findiriskî, I will return later to

¹⁵⁶ See J. Âshtîyânî et H. Corbin, *Anthologie*, pp. 32-42; see also F. Muḥtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171.

¹⁵⁷ See Ḥamid Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the Founding of the 'School of Isfahan,'" in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Naṣr and Oliver Leaman, part 1, pp. 597-635 (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 624.

discuss all of its chapters and summarize them briefly. In this way we will show that *şinâ'ah* in Mîr Findiriskî's view refers not to a simple human action, but rather to everything, which in his view is displayed or obtained through man's intellect or man's agency.

3.9.2. *Risâlah-i Harakah*

All authors of *tadhkiras* refer to the existence of this *Risâlah*. However, the only available complete version of this *Risâlah* is the one published by Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî and H. Corbin in *Muntakhabâtî az Hukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran*.¹⁵⁸ This work is a highly original treatise in Arabic on motion which begins by seeming very peripatetic and anti-Platonic. It consists of five chapters: on the definition of motion, on the kinds of motion, on the fact that every motion needs a mover, on the fact that all motion should end with one mover who remains unmoved, that is, the first mover of the world. The fifth chapter is on the needlessness of the existents from the Platonic Ideas. In this chapter, he rejects the Platonic Ideas, basing himself on the principles of Aristotelian philosophy.¹⁵⁹ I will explore this debate in greater depth in an independent chapter.

3.9.3. *Risâlah-i Tashkîk*

This *Risâlah* is identical to the work referred to in the various *tadhkiras* by the title *Jawâb-i Su'âlât-i Âqâ Muẓaffar-i Kâshânî*. This *Risâlah* is included in Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî and H. Corbin's work *Muntakhabâtî az Hukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran*.¹⁶⁰ This work is a treatise in Persian on the gradation of essences. Âqâ Muẓaffar Kâshânî, a

¹⁵⁸ (vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tabliqât-i Islâmî, 1363 A.H.), pp. 81-87).

¹⁵⁹ For more information on the authenticity of the attribution of the text to Mîr Findiriskî, see Tîhrânî, *al-Dharî'ah*, vol. 6, p. 395; *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭî-yi Kitâbkhânah-i Markazî-yi Âstân-i Quds-i Raḍavî*, vol. 10, pp. 154-5; see F. Muṭtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p., xx; F. Muṭtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171; see also Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308; A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, p. 5; Mudarris, *Rayḥanat al-Adab*, p. 358.

¹⁶⁰ (vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tabliqât-i Islâmî, 1985), pp. 91-94).

philosopher and contemporary of Mîr Findiriskî, asked him whether he believed in the analogy of essences (*dhâtîyât*) as well as of accidents. In his answer Mîr Findiriskî, follows those who believe in the principality of quiddities and claims that there is no analogy between essences. This position is as far from that of the illuminationist philosophers as it is from the metaphysics of being of such thinkers as Mullâ Şadrâ, who believed in analogy, both between essences as well as accidents. This treatise too, together with Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî's commentaries upon it published in the above-mentioned book,¹⁶¹ will be elucidated later.

3.9.4. *Risâlah Dar Kîmîyâ.*

This work is a treatise on alchemy in Persian.¹⁶² It is likely that, as F. Muţtabâ'î says,¹⁶³ it is the same work referred to under the titles *Arkân-i Arba'ah*, *Risâlah dar Zaybaq va Kibrît*¹⁶⁴ and *Bâb al-Aşghar*.

3.9.5. Mîr Findiriskî's Works on the Panipatî's Persian Translation of the Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha.

Since this work is of particular historical importance it deserves a somewhat more expanded explanation.

Preliminary Observation

¹⁶¹ For the authenticity of the attribution of this text to Mîr Findiriskî see Tihrânî, *al-Dharî'ah*, vol. 11, p. 148; see also F. Muţtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171; Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

¹⁶² See Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî and Henry Corbin, *Muntakhabâtî az Hukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran*, vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tablîqât-i Islâmî, 1363 A.H.), French introduction to Mîr Findiriskî by H. Corbin, p. 46. For the authenticity of the attribution of the text to Mîr Findiriskî see Tihrânî, *al-Dharî'ah*, vol. 18, p. 196.

¹⁶³ See F. Muţtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171; see also Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

¹⁶⁴ For the authenticity of the attribution of this text to Mîr Findiriskî see *Fihristi Kutubi Khaṭṭî-yi Majlisi Shûrâ-yi Millî*, vol. 9, part I, p. 230.

Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha which is known as the *Mahâ-Râmâ-yaṇa*, or *Vâsiṣṭh-Râmâyana* is a vast Hindu mystico-philosophical work composed between 700 and 800 B.C. (according to one estimate)¹⁶⁵ in more than 23,000 ślokas (verses) and containing six chapters and a total of 55 stories. The work is a long philosophical dialogue between the sage Vasiṣṭha and the prince Râma Chandra, the eldest son of the king Daṣaratha. The text explains the main mystical Hindu school, namely, that of absolute reality (Advaita-Vedanta). The author attempts to illustrate his views by using examples, stories, metaphors and analogies. This work also deals with subjects such as the soul and the nature of the world. Since its style is poetical the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* has long been of great interest not only to scholars such as philosophers and mystics, but also to common and ordinary people. The original, full-length version has never been translated into Persian; however, during the 16th and 17th centuries, condensations of it were translated into Persian. Among these abridged translations the most famous are the *Shâriq al-Ma'rifah* (The Rising Sun of Knowledge) and *Muntakhab-i Jûg-Basasht* (Selections from the *Yoga-vâsiṣṭha*). The poetical style as well as the intriguing philosophical contents of the *Yoga-vâsiṣṭha* received substantial attention not only from Hindu scholars, but also from a large number of Muslim scholars. A long list of their works on this philosophical text has been given by F. Mujtabâ'î in his dissertation. The popularity and appreciation of the work among Muslim intellectuals are also partly due to similarities that exist between the Advaita philosophy of *Yoga-vâsiṣṭha* and the pantheistic trend of thought made popular by the mystical philosophy of Ibn al-'Arabî (1165-1240) and his followers, as well as in the works of such well-known Şûfî poets and writers as Rûmî (d.1283), 'Aṭṭâr

¹⁶⁵ Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. x.

(d. 1230?), Shâh Ni'mat-Allâh Walî (d. 1431), Maghribî (d. 1406), Sayyid Ḥusainî (d. 1317?), Shabistarî (d. 1320), Awḥadî (d. 1338), Ḥâfîz (d. 1391), Qâsim Anwâr (d. 1433) and Fânî Işfahânî (d. 1807).¹⁶⁶

In what follows I shall give a brief exposition of Mîr Findiriskî's work on the Persian translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*. Since I did not have access to the actual manuscripts, however, I have had to rely on biographical material and especially the writings of F. Mujtabâ'î.

3.9.5.A. Mîr Findiriskî's Marginal Notes on Panipatis's Persian Translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*.¹⁶⁷

These notes are quite important. S. H. Naşr declares¹⁶⁸ that Mîr Findiriskî's comments upon the Persian translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* comprise one of the major works in Persian on Hinduism. In these notes he illuminates, clarifies and rephrases difficult points, and compares them with Islamic teachings and with Platonic and Aristotelian ideas. "Sometimes he tries to make improvements upon the translation by using his own understanding of the text, and for some of the stories of the book he gives his own allegorical interpretations. Often to support the validity of Hindu religious doctrines he adduces Qur'ânic verses or sayings of the Prophet."¹⁶⁹ According to F. Mujtabâ'î, these notes suggest that he had considerable respect for the Hindu scriptures. As we mentioned before, Mîr Findiriskî may well have discovered certain affinities between Islamic and Hindu mysticism, a finding that may have inspired him to travel so

¹⁶⁶ F. Mujtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171-2; F. Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, pp., x-xvi.

¹⁶⁷ MS. No. 651, Majlis Library, Tehran; MS. Preserved at the Library of Âstân-i Quds-i Raḍavî, Mashhad (described in *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭî-yi Kitâbkhânah Markazî-yi Âstân-i Qudsî Raḍavî*, vol. 4, pp. 339-400. (Quoted F. Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xxvi, note 36).

¹⁶⁸ Naşr, "Spiritual Movements" p. 676.

¹⁶⁹ F. Mujtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xxvi.

often to India. F. Muḡtabâ'î¹⁷⁰ gives, for instance, examples of where the *Yoga-vâsiṣṭha* teaches indifference to worldly gains or losses, for which Mîr Findiriskî has provided Qur'ânic verses expressing the same meaning. "...that you may not grieve for what escapes you, nor rejoice in what has come to you;..." (57/24).¹⁷¹ In another passage where the *Yoga-vâsiṣṭha* tells about the seven stages of ignorance and the seven stages of knowledge, Mîr Findiriskî observes that these seven stages are like the sevenfold path of Paradise alluded to in the following Qur'ânic verse (23/18) "And we create above you seven ways and we are not heedless of creation."¹⁷² The other seven stages furthermore correspond to the seven grades of Hell.¹⁷³

3.9.5.B. Glossary.

Mîr Findiriskî prepared a list of difficult or specialized words with their definitions appearing in the Persian translation of *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*, which contains 460¹⁷⁴ Hindu religious and philosophical terms. This glossary is attached, under Mîr Findiriskî's name, to the MSS. of Pânîpâtîs's translation.¹⁷⁵

3.9.5.C. Mîr Findiriskî's Verses in Praise of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*.

A short verse passage may be found on the front pages of manuscripts of Pânîpâtîs's translation as well as on the front of the manuscript of *Muntakhabât-i Jug-Basasht* in F. Muḡtabâ'î's edition (dissertation), which is attributed to Mîr Findiriskî. Mîr Findiriskî in these verses praises, glorifies, and celebrates the spiritual value of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* and compares its value and worthiness to that of the Qur'ân. In the first two verses he says "These words are in the world like water - Pure, and increasing

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ See *The Koran Interpreted*, trans., and introd., Arthur J. Arberry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ F. Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, pp. xxvii-xxviii.

¹⁷⁴ See Tihriânî, *al-Dhari'ah*, vol., 18, p. 57.

¹⁷⁵ See F. Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. xxviii. A separate copy of it is preserved at the Central Library of the Tehran University. Ms. No. 528; see Bibliothèque de L'Univ. De Tehran (Collection du Mishkât), vol. III, 1333 HS, no. 528, (quoted from the same address in this note).

wisdom, even as the Qur'ân. Save the Qur'ân and the traditions – No one has sayings of this kind”¹⁷⁶ He vociferously blames those who are fools and who bury themselves in external appearances and do not see further than the outward forms of words.

3.9.5.D. *Muntakhabât-i Jug Basashat*.

The manuscript of this work is preserved in the Kitâbkhânah-i Dânishkadâh-i Adabîyât, University of Tehran.¹⁷⁷ As noted earlier, this work is comprised of mystico-philosophical selections from Nizâm al-Dîn Panîpât's rather free Persian translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* together with a large number of Persian verses from the works of different well-known Ṣûfî poets.

Two points should be made here; first the nature of Nizâm al-Dîn Panîpât's Persian translation and second Mîr Findiriskî's selections.

1. According to F. Muḡtabâ'î, Nizâm al-Dîn Panîpât's free Persian translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*, from which Mîr Findiriskî's selections were made, is full of historical and spiritual significance. It is the first editorial comment on Vedânta philosophy written in a way that could be read by anyone outside India. It was also the first attempt to accustom and familiarize Muslims in India with one of the most significant features of Hindu religion and its mystico-philosophical propositions. Although Nizâm al-Dîn's Persian translation is far from literal, in that he tries to reconstruct the ideas in his own language using his own explanations and comments, nevertheless, he retains the basic ideas and many of the basic topics. F. Muḡtabâ'î makes it clear that one should be aware that Nizâm al-Dîn Panîpât's translation lacks precision

¹⁷⁶ F. Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, pp. xxviii, xxix.

¹⁷⁷ MS., no. 428. This work has been edited by Faṭḥullah Muḡtabâ'î in his Ph.D. dissertation entitled “*Muntakhabât-i Jug-Basashat, Selections from the Yoga-Vâsiṣṭha Attributed to Mîr Findiriskî*.” Described also in Dânish Pazhûh, , *Fihristi Nuskhah-hâ-yi Khaṭṭi-yi Kitâbkhânah-i Dânishkadâh-i Adabîyât* (1339 HS), p. 195.

on the whole, a fact which is, however, common enough in such works. In this regard, not even Dârâ Shikûh's translation of the Upaniṣads, can claim literal precision, and consequently there is often not much exact agreement. Still, in general, the translation is not very far from the basic ideas and contains many of the original, axiomatic points. Nizâm al-Dîn also explains the text, adding his own observations, comments and analogies.¹⁷⁸

2. In contrast to Nizâm al-Dîn Panîpât's Persian rendering and annotated translation of the *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha*, Mîr Findiriskî's selections from the latter are very sober. We find no personal judgment or commentaries added to it, unlike Dârâ Shikûh in his comparison of the Vedânta and Şûfî teachings. Mîr Findiriskî discreetly and carefully compiles and collects passages from the Persian *Laghu-yoga-vâsiṣṭha* which correspond, harmonize and parallel pieces of Şûfî poetry and he lets them speak for themselves. Perhaps, he thinks, this way of compiling is more effective.¹⁷⁹

This work, however, is of special, historical importance. It is a window into the contact being made between Hindus and Muslims in India during the late medieval period of Indian history and shows that there were particular efforts among scholars to compare Hindu and Muslim mystical, theological and philosophical ideas, as well as to indicate similarities, present suitable examples of agreement between Hindu and Muslim mysticism, and improve their cogency and veracity. Put briefly, this work shows especial effort at mutual understanding, both at a popular level and a scholarly one. The latter

¹⁷⁸ F. Muḡtabâ'î furnishes several examples in this regard, see *Muntakhab*, pp. xxx-xxix.

¹⁷⁹ F. Muḡtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, pp. Lvii & lxi, note 89. See also F. Muḡtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 172.

point is of particular historical importance, for we find very few similar examples elsewhere from that period.¹⁸⁰

3.9.6. Poems

Mîr Findiriskî left behind several poems; two *Qaṣīdas*, a number of *Ghazals*, *Rubâ'is* and verse fragments, some of which have a Ṣūfī coloring. Of these two *Qaṣīdas* (odes), one complains of an unfavorable, inclement world, of unappreciative days and poor fortunes while the other is a mystico-philosophical ode in which Mîr Findiriskî summarized the principles of *ḥikmah*, and which has been commented upon by three significant and important scholars.¹⁸¹ A commentary on this work by Mullâ Muhammad Ṣāliḥ-i Khalkhâlî (12th century, A.H.) was printed in 1312 A.H. together with *Sharḥ-i Du'â-yi Ḥaḍrat-i Amîr* and *Lawâyiḥ-i Jâmî* in Tehran, and another by Ḥakîm 'Abbâs-i Sharîf Dârâbî Shîrâzî, edited under the title *Tuḥfat al-Murâd, Sharḥ-i Qaṣīdah Ḥikmîyah Mîr Abu al-Qâsim-i Findiriskî*.¹⁸² This latter edition was edited, introduced and commented upon by Faḍl al-Allâh Lâ'iq. There also exists a new version of *Tuḥfat al-Murâd, Sharḥ-i Qaṣīdah Ḥikmîyah Mîr Abu al-Qâsim-i Findiriskî* edited by Muhammad Husain Akbarî Sâvî and introduced by Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî under the title *Tuḥfat al-Murâd; Sharḥ-i Qaṣīdah Mîr Findiriskî Bi Ḍamîmah Sharḥ-i Khalkhâlî va Gîlânî*, with an introduction by Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî. (Tehran: Intishârât al-Zahrâ, 1372, A.H.). This version includes the commentary of Ḥakîm 'Abbâs-i Sharîf

¹⁸⁰ F. Muḥtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p. Lx. For the identity of Mîr Findiriskî's selections from "*Muntakhabât-i Jug Basashar*" and a discussion of the fact that all the selected Persian poets lived during or before the 15th century A.D., with one exception, (Fânî Isfahânî, the 18th century Ṣūfî poet, who died in Isfahân in 1807) and a consideration of whether this problem disproves the attribution of the text to Mîr Findiriskî, see F. Muḥtabâ'î, *Muntakhab* pages lvii-lxii, and from the same author "Abu al-Qâsim Findiriskî," in *Dâ'irat al-M'ârif-i Buzurg-i Islâmî* vol. 6 (Tehran, 1994), p. 172.

¹⁸¹ F. Muḥtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 172.

¹⁸² (Tehran: Shirkat-i Nisbîy-i Muḥammad Ḥusayn 'Iqbâl va Shurakâ', 1337 H.S., 182 pages).

Dârâbî Shîrâzî on the *Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah* in one section (pages 35-180), the commentary of Muhammad Ṣâliḥ-i Khalkhâlî in another (pages 180-243) and that of Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî in yet another (pages 245-291). This version also includes a good biographical introduction by Muhammad Husain Akbarî Sâvî on Mîr Findiriskî as well as on three commentators, Ḥakîm ‘Abbâs-i Sharîf Dârâbî Shîrâzî, Muhammad Ṣâliḥ-i Khalkhâlî, Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî. This *Qaṣīdah*, is the subject of the present work and will be dealt with in an independent chapter.

3.9.7. Other Works

There are a few other works attributed to Mîr Findiriskî in the *tadhkiras* which we have not consulted, among them *Târikh-i Ṣafaviyah*,¹⁸³ *Taḥqîq al-Mazalla*,¹⁸⁴ *‘Uṣûl al-Fuṣûl*,¹⁸⁵ *Risâlah dar Kîmîyâ*,¹⁸⁶ and *Risâlah dar Zaybaq va kibrît*.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸³ Mudarris, *Rayḥānat al-Adab*, vol. 4, p. 358; see also F. Muḥtabâ’î, “Findiriskî,” p. 172; Naṣr, “The School of Isfahan,” p. 922; Naṣr, “Findiriskî,” p. 308.

¹⁸⁴ Described in Tihrânî, *al-Dharī‘ah*, vol. 3, p. 485.

¹⁸⁵ Naṣr, “Spiritual Movements” p. 676; Naṣr, “The School of Isfahan,” p. 922; see also M. Ma’ṣûm-‘Alî Shâh, *Ṭarâ‘iq*, vol. 3, pp. 158-9.

¹⁸⁶ See notes 78 & 83.

¹⁸⁷ Described in *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭi-yi Majlis-i Shûrâ-yi Millî*, vol. 9, part I, p. 230.

Part II

Mîr Findiriskî

On

Ontological Problems

- Chapter 4: Mîr Findiriskî On Motion (1)
- Chapter 5: Mîr Findiriskî On Motion (2)
- Chapter 6: Mîr Findiriskî On Vocations (*Şanâyi`*)
- Chapter 7: Mîr Findiriskî On *Tashkîk* (Gradation)

Chapter 4

Mîr Findiriskî

On

Motion
(1)

Introduction

As we saw in the previous chapter, one of Mîr Findiriskî's genuine works in Arabic is his *Maqâlat al-Ḥarakat* (treatise on motion). All the authors of *tadhkiras* attribute this *Maqâlah* to him. The only available complete edition of the work is the one published by Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshfîyânî and H. Corbin in *Muntakhabâtî az Ḥukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Irân*.¹⁸⁸ Although it is very short, it nevertheless includes a discussion of the most controversial problems in the theory of motion, particularly the problem of proving the existence of a first mover (God) in the world. Its five chapters deal with, respectively, the definition of motion, the kinds of motion, the fact that every motion needs a mover, the fact that all motion should end with one mover who is unmoved (that is, the first mover of the world), and finally the needlessness of virtually all existents according to Platonic ideas. He rejects, in this chapter, the Platonic ideas, basing himself on the principles of Aristotelian philosophy.¹⁸⁹ In the following I will survey the problem of motion in philosophy in general and the position of Mîr Findiriskî in particular.

The Goal of the Discussion of Motion in Philosophy in General and in Islamic Philosophy in Particular.

The issue of motion has been discussed throughout history from various perspectives, and discussions are especially common in Islamic philosophy.¹⁹⁰ Despite the controversy over its nature, definition, characteristics and principles, Muslim philosophers have taken great interest in the issue as a means of proving the existence of a first mover, God. This proof arose out of an awareness that it is too

¹⁸⁸ (vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tabliqât-i Islâmî, 1363 A.H.), pp. 81-87).

¹⁸⁹ For more information on the authenticity of the attribution of the text to Mîr Findiriskî, see Tihirânî, *al-Dharî'ah*, vol. 6, p. 395; *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṭṭî-yi Kitâbkhânah-i Markazî-yi Âstân-i Quds-i Raḡavî*, vol. 10, pp. 154-5; F. Muṭtabâ'î, *Muntakhab*, p., xx; F. Muṭtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171; see also Nasr, "Findiriskî," p. 308; A. Sâvî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd*, p. 5; Mudarris, *Rayḥanat al-Adab*, p. 358.

¹⁹⁰ See Ṣadr al-Dîn Muhammad Shîrâzî, *al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'aliyah fil al-Asfâr al-Aqliyah al-Arba'ah*, vol. 1, pt. 3 (Beirût: Dâr al-Iḥyâ' al-Turâth al-'Arabî, 1990).

much taken for granted that the motion of the world and everything in it, is self-ordered and not in need of a first mover. Philosophers, having proved the perpetual motion of the world argued not only for the concept of a first mover and creator of the world, but also for the perpetual, incessant, and continuous creation of the world. Motion also helped explain other confirmations by theologians, such as the idea that there is a "purposefulness of the cosmos," that "that world has a final cause," and that consequently "the world has not occurred or been created by chance," "that the world, in addition to having an 'essential contingency,' and 'existential poverty,' has also a 'temporal contingency.'"¹⁹¹ The goal of Mîr Findiriskî's *Maqâlah al-Ḥarakat* is the same as that of many other philosophers who wrote before him, such as Aristotle, to show the necessity of a first mover in the world and to prove that the world is not self-organized and moreover, that the world is in constant need of a creator.

The same philosophers also argued on behalf of the purposefulness of the cosmos. For example, Aristotle's view regarding final cause in the first book of his "Metaphysics," where he explains the views of the ancient philosophers in regard to the cause of the engendering of phenomena and insists that none of them ever took the final cause into precise consideration.¹⁹² He asserts that the analysis of motion and change in material existents leads us to conclude that every moving or changing existent is traveling towards an end which is its perfection and that the motion itself, which is a prerequisite for the above-mentioned end, is considered to be its first perfection. Hence, motion is defined as "the first perfection of potential existent *qua* potential."¹⁹³ The above statements from Aristotle clearly indicate that on the question

¹⁹¹ Murtaḍā Muṭahharî, *Ḥarakat wa Zamân dar Falsafah-i Islâmî*, vol. 1 (Tehran: Intishârât-i Hikmat, 1991), pp. 16-17.

¹⁹² Aristotle, *Metaphysic*, trans. Sharaf al-Dîn Khurâsânî (Tehran: Intishârât-i Hikmat 2000), pp. 29-44.

¹⁹³ Muḥammad Taqî Meşbâḥ Yazdî, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2 (Tehran: Sâzmân-i Tablighât-i Islâmî, 1989), pp. 110-111.

of "motion" he sought to prove that there was a first mover, creator of the world, that the world had a purpose and that it is not self-organized.

Further Problems Involving the Subject of Motion

In addition to proving the existence of God, philosophers have wanted to solve other controversial problems of which three in particular stand out. The first of these is whether material phenomena must necessarily originate in a previously existing matter, so that consequently the chain of material events extends infinitely from pre-eternity and is without beginning; or whether they must originate in an existent which is at the head of a chain of material phenomena, so that the chain of material events has a temporal beginning. The second problem is whether motion is a continuous and gradual phenomenon that exists in the external world or is instead, nothing more than a collection of fixed movements, which are brought about in succession and destroyed, and from which the mind of man abstracts the concept of motion. In other words, are all changes instantaneous, or are there also gradual changes? The third problem arises once it is established that there is motion, i.e., whether gradual change occurs only in accidents, or goes further and can be motion, or motions, in substance as well.¹⁹⁴ To obtain a clearer understanding of the concept and definition of motion, certain preliminary concepts should be introduced for a better understanding of motion and the problems outlined above. We shall begin with two very clear, self-evident starting points in the discussion of motion.

The Immutable and the Changing (*thâbit wa mutaghayyir*).

Change is one of the constants of this world. Every one of us, every day, experiences hundreds of changes in our life. The world is far from immutable.

¹⁹⁴ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2, pp. 229-230. See also Mîr Findiriskî, "Maqâlah al-Harakah," published by Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî and H. Corbin in *Muntakhabâtî az Hukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran* (vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tabliqât-i Islâmî, 1363 A.H.), pp. 81-87). p. 85.

Everything is changing moment by moment from one state to another, from one position to another, and from one quantity and quality to another. How these occur is the concern of the human sciences while the rules governing changes in nature are the subject of the natural sciences. Philosophy also studies these changes but from another angle. What philosophers' study, examine and investigate, is more general and universal. They do not consider or analyze one particular incident or one specific category; rather, they study the general and universal character of the rules governing the whole of nature and the whole of existence. These rules must be expressed in philosophical terminology. While they are not true in an absolute sense, they also are not all sense-based. Terms such as actual and potential may be the closest possible approximations of the truth, but they owe nothing to the senses. The same may be said of the concepts of existence, non-existence, unity, multiplicity, causality, causedness, contingency, eternity, possibility, necessity, impossibility, simultaneity (*ma'yyat*), priority and posteriority. These concepts are the most basic and primary in the thought of mankind. Without these concepts no other thought, no other science could be formed or evaluated.

Among the primary divisions, which philosophers have imposed on existence is that between the immutable and the mutable. The immutable existences include the necessary existent and all immaterial beings while changing existences include all material existents and souls that belong to matter. In this section I will first explain the concepts of immutable and change and their kinds; I shall then explain the concepts of potential and actual existence followed by the concept and definition of motion, before proving the existence of motion and presenting the types of motion. This I will try to do according to the concepts and definitions of potentiality and actuality that we see in Mîr Findiriskî's definition of motion.

An Explanation Regarding Immutable (*thâbit*) and Changing (*mutaghayyir*)

Taghayyur is an Arabic word which means "becoming another."¹⁹⁵ It is a concept which, to be abstracted, requires the consideration of two things or two states or two parts of one thing, one of which perishes and is replaced by the other. It is clearly a self-evident concept. The same argument is made about the concept of immutable, which is the opposite of change. It is also a self-evident concept, which does not need any definition or explanation. The existence of change also is self-evident because every person finds changes within his own internal state by knowledge of presence. However, immutable existence, like the existence of God, which is not the object of any sort of change or alternation, needs to be established by proof.¹⁹⁶

Types of Change

Change is divided into two kinds: sudden or instantaneous change, where there is a specific boundary between the prior and latter conditions, and there is no temporal gap between them, like the falling of a fruit from its tree; and gradual change, where there is no specific boundary between the prior and latter conditions, and there is a temporal gap between them, like a change in the temperature of water which occurs gradually. Some phenomena are combinations of the two, such as in the transformation of water into steam, which occurs in a single moment, or when a zygote gradually becomes complete, but a spirit becomes attached to it in a single

¹⁹⁵ See Luis Ma'lûf, *al-Munjid* (Qum: Intishârât-i Ismâ'îlîyân, 1983), s.v. *taghayyur*.

¹⁹⁶ Muhsin Gharavîyân, *Darâmadi bar Âmuzish-i Falsafah-i Ustâd Muḥammad Taqî Mişbâḥ Yazdî* (Qum: Intishârât-i Shafaq, 1998), pp. 245-6.

moment. The first type is called, in philosophical terminology, "generation and corruption" while the second is referred to as "motion."¹⁹⁷

The Key Positions of the Philosophers Regarding the Types of Change

An investigation of the confirmations of philosophers regarding all the different types of change is beyond the scope of this study; however, four main positions may be identified. The first is the well-known position of certain philosophers who consider the creation of every material phenomenon to be necessarily preceded by matter and time, and who deny that the material world has a temporal beginning and an end. The second is the positions of those who do not consider motion to be gradual, but rather hold that changes all occur suddenly, instantaneously and in a moment. A third position, that of the majority of philosophers before Mullâ Şadrâ, is to accept the existence of motion but to restrict it to accidents. Finally, there is the position of Mullâ Şadrâ, his disciples and his school, who believe in substantial motion.¹⁹⁸

The Potential and Actual (*quwwah wa-fi'l*)

In contrast to the concept or problem of "cause" and "caused," which was the first philosophical problem to exercise the minds of men,¹⁹⁹ the concepts of actual and potential are relatively new. They are certainly not as old as the concepts of cause and caused. It was Aristotle who opened a new chapter in his philosophy when he decided to deal with actual and potential. Nevertheless these two concepts did not attract later

¹⁹⁷ Mîr Fındıriskî, "Maqâlah al-Harakah," p. 82. See also M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2, p. 228.

¹⁹⁸ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2, p. 229.

¹⁹⁹ See My M.A. thesis. Mahmoud Namazi, "Causality and its Relation to the Unity of Existence According to Mullâ Şadrâ's View" (Montreal: McGill U., Institute of Islamic Studies, 1994) First Chapter.

philosophers since these latter did not look at the problem of motion against the background of actual and potential. Early Muslim philosophers, like Ibn Sînâ, discuss the problem of actual and potential in primary philosophy (*philosophia prima*, *falsafah ûlâ*) and since they consider the problem of motion as the concomitants (*lawâḥiq*) of the natural body, they discuss it under the heading of the natural sciences (*tabî'îyyât*).²⁰⁰

Changes occur everywhere. We are constantly witness to the changes and variations that occur in material existents, bodies and souls, so that it may be acknowledged that there is no material existent nor any existent attached to matter which is not subject to some kind of change or alternation. These transactions are so general that in modern physics the commonly accepted theory is that matter and energy and even all types of energies can change into one another. However, despite the generality of variation in relation to all material existents, practical experience shows that not everything is directly able to change into something else. For example, soil cannot directly change into an animal. In order to be changed into an animal it must go through several stages and variations. This led philosophers to think that an existent can only change to another existent when it possesses the potentiality of the other existent. In this way the expressions potential and actual emerged in philosophy, while change came to be interpreted as emergence from potentiality to actuality (as we will see in the definitions of motion formulated by philosophers and particularly by Mîr Findiriskî).²⁰¹ Accordingly, another division had been made by philosophers

²⁰⁰ Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabâṭabâ'î, *Uṣûl-i Falsafah wa Rawish-i Rialism*, introd. and comm. by Murtaḍâ Muṭahharî, vol. 4 (Tehran: Intishârât-i Şadrâ, 1989), p. 166.

²⁰¹ Mîr Findiriskî, "Maqâlah al-Ḥarakah," p. 85.

with respect to existents. They divided existents into two types: actual (*bi al-fi'l*) and potential (*bi al-quwwah*) existents.²⁰²

The Concepts of Actual and Potential

The Arabic word potential (*quwwah*) literally means power, ability and capability. Although it has different technical meanings in the various sciences and in philosophy too,²⁰³ nevertheless the main sense of this word in philosophy is the potentiality of an agent to be the source of the emergence of an action (*quwwah fâ'ilî*). Since according to this meaning the agent, prior to performing a deed, has the capability to perform it, philosophers developed this meaning to apply to material existents also and maintained that matter should also possess the ability of acceptance (*isti'dâd*) and receptivity (*qâbiliyyat*). For this the philosophical expression is *quwwah*, meaning passive potential (*quwwah infî'âlî*). The concept of passive potential is abstracted by the comparison of two existents, prior and posterior. Since the prior existent lacks the posterior existent and it is possible for the prior to possess the later one, therefore there should be particular readiness in the prior existent to join and compose the posterior existent. The ability and readiness of the prior existent is called potential existent. Contrary to this is the actual existent, which is the result of the occurrence of the posterior existent. Accordingly potentiality and actuality are two abstract concepts, neither of which is considered to be an essential concept (*mafhum-i mâhuwî*).²⁰⁴ However it should be realized that a potential existence in relation to an actuality, which it can possess, is called potential, even though with respect to the

²⁰² Muḥammad Taqī Meṣbāḥ Yazdī, *Durūs-i Falsafah* (Tehran: Mu'assasah Muṭāli'āt wa Taḥqīqāt-i Farhangī, 1975), pp. 265-8. See also S. M. H. Ṭabāṭabā'i, *Uṣūl-i Falsafah*, vol. 4, pp. 10-11.

²⁰³ See Ḥāj Mullā Ḥādī Sabzawārī, *Sharḥ-i Ghurar al-Farâid or Sharḥ-i Manẓûmah-i Hikmat*, ed. M. Muḥaqqiq and T. Izutsu, 2d ed. (Tehran/Montreal, 1981) pp. 124-5.

²⁰⁴ To observe differences between abstract concepts like "actual" and "potential" and essential concepts like "immutable" and "changing" see M. T. Meṣbāḥ, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2 p. 237.

actuality which it presently possesses it is an actual existent. Water with respect to its essence is called water and an actual existent and with respect to the point that it can change to steam it is called steam, which is a potential existent. In other words, the division of existence into actual and potential is like the division of existence into mental and external. When we compare two existents, one to another, and see that one has the potential to change to the other, the same existent with respect to its ability to change another is potential existent, just as with respect to its present actuality it is actual existent.²⁰⁵

Aristotelians, including Mîr Findiriskî, assumed that the division of actual and potential existence was similar to that between cause and effect. They considered complete immaterial existents (*mujarradât-i tâmm*) to be actual without any trace of potentiality, prime matter (*hayûlâ or mâddah-i awwalîyah*) to be potentiality without any actuality, and all material existents (*ajsâm*) as possessing aspects of both actuality and potentiality.²⁰⁶

The Concepts of Generation and Corruption (*kawn wa fasâd*)

As we explained earlier, changes in the material world are of two kinds: instantaneous and gradual. Gradual change is motion, and will be discussed below more fully. Instantaneous change on the other hand, while seemingly straightforward, requires some explanation as well. Philosophers considered instantaneous changes occurring in potential existence, like the burning of wood and its changing to ashes, to fall under the heading of being and corruption (*kawn wa fasâd*). According to M. Meşbâh²⁰⁷ the expression “*kawn*” in Arabic means “being” and in philosophical terminology amounts to the same as “*hudûth*” (coming into existence over time in a

²⁰⁵ M. T. Meşbâh, *Durûs-i Falsafah*, pp. 268-70.

²⁰⁶ M. Gharaviyân, *Darâmadî bar*, p. 246.

²⁰⁷ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2, pp. 256-261.

lasting sense). The expression "*fasād*" (corruption) is used to mean the sudden disintegration of a phenomenon. In our example wood is an actual existent, which includes in itself the potential existence of becoming ashes. Since the form of wood changes into ashes instantaneously without any temporal gap, this called in philosophical terms "generation" (of ashes) and "corruption" (of wood). Finally, although a single kind of change cannot be described as being, at one and the same time, instantaneous and gradual, this does not mean that wherever motion exists we cannot have generation and corruption. Rather it is quite possible for a moving thing to be characterized by generation and corruption. For example, it is possible for an existent to possess motion that ends in a single instant.

The Concept and Definition of Motion

As we mentioned earlier the simplest definition of motion is "gradual change." The ancient philosophers used to define motion as the gradual emanation (*khurūj*) of something from a state of potentiality to a state of actuality.²⁰⁸ However there are still other definitions of motion. Here we shall discuss the most famous ones, i.e., those of Aristotle, Ibn Sînâ, Mullâ Şadrâ and Mîr Findiriskî.

Aristotle's (and Ibn Sînâ's) Definition of Motion

Aristotle in his *Physics* states that:

[A] Motion is defined as the actuality of the potentiality existing qua existing potentially. For example, the actuality of the alterable qua alterable is an alterable, the actuality of what can be increased or (its opposite) what can be decreased [qua such] is an increase or decrease (no name exists which is a common predicate of both), the actuality of the generable or destructible [qua such] is a generation or a destruction, and the actuality of the movable with respect to place [qua such] is a locomotion. That a motion is what we have stated it to be is clear from the following. When the buildable, insofar as it is said to be such, exists in actuality, it is then [in the process of] being built, and this is [the process of] building; and similarly in

²⁰⁸ Şadr al-Dîn Muhammad Shîrâzî, *al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'aliyah fil al-Asfâr al-Aqliyah al-Arba'ah*, vol. 1, pt. 3 (Beirût: Dâr al-Iḥyâ' al-Turâth al-'Arabî, 1990) p. 22. See also 'Alî ibn Aḥmad ibn Maḥmūd, 'Risâlah fî Baḥth al-Ḥarakah,' in *Collected Papers on Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*, ed. M. Muḥaqqiq and H. Landolt (Tehran/McGill, 1971) p. 39.

the case of learning, healing, rolling, leaping, ripening, and aging..... By "qua" I mean the following. Bronze is potentially a statue, yet it is not qua bronze that the actuality of bronze is a motion; for to be bronze and to be movable by something are not the same, since if they were the same without qualification or according to formula, the actuality of bronze qua bronze would be a motion.²⁰⁹ So they are not the same, as stated. This is clear in the case of contraries; for to be capable of being healthy and to be capable of sick are distinct, for otherwise being sick and being healthy would be the same. It is the underlying subject, be it moisture or blood, which is one and the same, whether in health or in sickness. Since, then, to be bronze and to be potentially something else are not the same, just as to be a color and to be visible are not the same, evidently it is the actuality of the potential qua potential that is a motion.²¹⁰

The above definition was generally accepted by the majority of philosophers up to Mullâ Şadrâ, including Mîr Findiriskî.²¹¹ Ibn Sînâ likewise defined motion as Aristotle had done. He regarded motion as "gradual change of a stable state in-the-body (*tabaddul-i ḥâlin qârratin fî al-jism yasîran yasîran*), but in such a way that it is directed, proceeds and is situated to an actual or potential point."²¹² Although Ibn Sînâ's definition of motion was phrased differently, nevertheless he confirmed Aristotle's definition. Aristotle's definition is in fact in need of further clarification and elucidation. Before doing so, however, I would like to narrate another definition of motion by Aristotle, which is very close to the above definition. Aristotle, with regard to the final cause in the first book of his "Metaphysics," where he explains the views of the ancient philosophers regarding the cause of generation of phenomena, insists that none of them took into consideration the question of their final cause. Then he asserts that the analysis of motion and change of material existents leads us to conclude that every moving or changing existent is traveling toward an end, which

²⁰⁹ In other words, the notion bronze itself does not indicate a motion but something static, the actuality of bronze, also, *qua* bronze is not motion because its actuality, in the case of a bronze statue, is the form of statue and the statue need not be in motion. But the potentiality of bronze to be changed by something else discloses a possible motion. See Aristotle, *Aristotle's Physics*, trans. Hippocrates G. Apostle (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1969), p. 223.

²¹⁰ *Aristotle's Physics*, pp. 43-4.

²¹¹ Mîr Findiriskî, "Maqâlah al-Ḥarakah," p. 85.

²¹² See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Najât fî al-Manîq wa al-Ilâhiyyât* (Beirut: Dâr al-Jil, 1992), p. 131.

is its perfection, and that motion itself, which is preliminary to reaching the above-mentioned end, is to be considered its first perfection. Hence, motion is defined as “the first perfection of potential existent qua potential”²¹³ which means that an existent, which possesses the potentiality and capacity for perfection but lacks it at present, will move toward it under certain conditions. Motion is thus an introduction and beginning to the achievement of the quest for perfection. For example, the proceeding of a body toward a place and its being there, are clearly perfections of this body. Since “proceeding toward a place” is prior to “replacing itself there” and only possesses the potentiality of “replacing itself there,” it is not absolute perfection. Aristotle considered it rather to be first perfection. Thus motion is, according to Aristotle, the first perfection of a body (for example), which is potential in respect to both “proceeding toward a place” and “replacing itself there.”²¹⁴ He adds that since every existent has its own specific perfection, every moving thing has a given end, which it wants to attain. This perfection is sometimes the form, which it wants to take, such as the form of an oak tree for an acorn, even while it is in the process of germinating and growing. Sometimes, on the other hand, it is one of its accidents, such as when a stone moves from the sky to the earth, and comes to rest on the ground. Thus every natural existent has a specific natural inclination towards a given end, which causes motion in the direction of that end and destination, and this is the same as the final cause for the occurrence of motion and the determination of its direction.²¹⁵

The above definitions include three assumptions: a) that motion involves a situation where there is potentiality -- hence there is no motion among immaterial

²¹³ Aristotle, *al-Tabî'ah*, trans. Ishâq ibn Hunain, part, 1 (Cairo: al-Dâr al-Qawmîyyah li al-Tibâ'ah wa al-Nashr, 1964), pp. 165-85. See also S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 24.

²¹⁴ S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 24. See also Muḥammad Ḥusain Ṭabâṭabâ'î, *Āghâz-i Falsafah*, trans., Muḥammad 'Alî Girâmî (Qum: Intishârât-i Ṭabâṭabâ'î, 1990), pp. 213-4.

²¹⁵ M. T. Meşbâḥ, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2, p. 110-111.

beings for they are without any potentiality; b) that not every emanation (*khurûj*) from the state of potentiality toward the state of actuality is motion, since motion is by nature gradual in terms of time too; and c) that motion is where emanations occur in time. Hence where there is no time, there is no motion. Consequently instantaneous changes are not motion.²¹⁶

A General Critique of the Above Definitions

Although none of above definitions may be considered what in logical terminology is called a "complete definition" (*ḥadd-i tâmm*) -- for a "complete definition" (*ḥadd-i tâmm*) applies only to essences (*mâhiyyât*) which possess a genus (*jins*) and specific difference (*faṣl*), while the concept of motion is a secondary philosophical intelligible, abstracted from the mode of the moving existent and as in the external world there is no substance nor accident called motion -- nevertheless, since the first definition is more concise and conceptually clear, it is better than the others.²¹⁷ For in a definition each of the elements must be more abstract or universal than the things defined. Since in the case of last three definitions, both terms -- actuality as well as potentiality -- are in need of explanation, these definitions may be considered to be more complex.

Moreover, according to Ibn Sînâ, Aristotle considered his predecessors' definition circular. And since circularity,²¹⁸ logically, is nonsensical and meaningless, the definition is also logically senseless.²¹⁹ He explains that since "a gradual thing" corresponds to time and it is impossible for "a gradual thing" to be without a

²¹⁶ S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 182.

²¹⁷ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol 2, p. 266.

²¹⁸ The impossibility of circularity means no cause can be the effect, of its own effect, nor can a cause be the cause of its own cause. In other words, it is impossible for an existent to be both cause and effect of another existent. From another perspective a single existent by the side in which it causes something, it is impossible to be affected the same side by the same thing.

²¹⁹ Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'; al-Tabî'iyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1 (Qum: Manshûrât Maktabah Âyatu Allâh al-Uẓmâ al-Mar'shî, 1983), p. 82.

correspondence to time, the corresponding extension in time is considered to be one of the fundamentals of motion. Consequently time and motion are two sides of one coin. So, while prior to understanding motion it is necessary to understand time and graduality, yet time itself is based upon the definition of motion. For the same reason Ibn Sînâ also rejected the ancient philosophers' definition and suggested another. He considered the argument circular as well, and therefore null and void. He believed that, since it is necessary to consider motion according to the definition of time, the latter according to the definition of graduality and both time and graduality according to the definition of motion -- thus despite the fact that the ancient philosopher's definitions were rather simplistic -- the circularity is unavoidable.²²⁰

Criticisms of Aristotle's Definition of Motion:

Despite the fact that Aristotle's definition was well received by the majority of Muslim philosophers, nevertheless they did detect several problems with it. For example, M. T. Meşbâh, in his *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*,²²¹ argues that the fact that the end of motion is a perfection for all moving objects cannot be firmly asserted, nor can it be said that moving objects always become more perfect with their movement so that consequently one can interpret motion in the light of this as "the first perfection." On the contrary, there are many changes and movements, which involve decrease, not increase, such as when animals and plants reach the limit of their growth, and begin their slow decline toward dryness and death.

Crescas also finds fault with the definition on account of the term "potentiality," which he felt might lead to certain difficulties. He maintains that the object of Aristotle's definition is to verify the nature of motion as something which is neither a pure potentiality nor a perfect actuality but a potentiality in the process of

²²⁰ *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Tabî'iyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 82. See also Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 23.

²²¹ Muḥamad Taqî Meşbâh Yazdî, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, pp. 111-2.

realization. He argues "if every transition from potentiality to actuality is motion, then the transition of a motive agent from the state of a potential motive agent to that of an actual motive agent will be motion. Every motivity then will be motion. As every motion requires a motive agent, every motivity will also require a motive agent. But this is contradictory to Aristotle's view as to the existence of a prime immovable mover."²²² Consequently while in a general sense motion is the process of actualization of that which is in potentiality, the term potentiality is to be understood as referring only to a potentiality for receiving motion and not to a potentiality for causing motion.

It seems, however, that there is no ground for Crescas's criticism. For it is not true that every motion is in need of a motive agent. For example this is not the case with the prime immaterial immovable mover. The latter causes motion without there being potential motivation, which predetermined a phenomenonal (natural) agent. Consequently the term potentiality may refer to both the potentiality of receiving and that of causing motion.

Mullâ Şadrâ's Definition of Motion

Mullâ Şadrâ appears to have contributed the most important definition of motion up to his time. First he insists that there is no complete logical definition (*ḥadd-i tâmm*) for motion. All suggested definitions are merely descriptive (*rasm* or *ḥadd-i nâqış*). He presents the traditional definition along with its major problem, i.e., its circularity, then reviews the definitions of Ibn Sînâ, Aristotle, Plato, and Pythagoras before finally suggesting his own as the most acceptable one, viz., "a constant attainment (*muwâfât*) of potential limits (*ḥudûd bi al-quwwah*) gradually and

²²² Harry Austryn Wolfson, *Crescas' Critique of Aristotle, Problems of Aristotle's Physics in Jewish and Arabic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 75-6.

continuously ('*ala al-ittiṣâl*').²²³ This definition may be explained as follows. Motion is where the entire number of potential points between the starting and final points is achieved either simultaneously (*daf'atan*) or gradually (*tadrîjan*). The constant gradual attainment of the total points is motion. Accordingly there is no single point between the beginning (*mabda'*) and final (*muntahâ*) points to which motion is not applicable. In other words the body reaches every single point exclusively. According to Mullâ Şadrâ this process is called motion.

Mîr Findiriskî's Definition of Motion

Mîr Findiriskî for his part follows the majority of ancient philosophers who accepted Aristotle's first definition of motion, basically regarding motion as the procession from not being in matter (*mâddah*) to being in it. Consequently he defines motion as the "gradual emanation (*khurûf*) of something from a state of potentiality to a state of actuality."²²⁴

Given the fact that the earlier definition suffered from being circular in nature, the same might be said of Mîr Findiriskî's solution as well. However in my opinion there is no difficulty in using terminology based on the reality of time, in its general sense, to define motion. It seems that the concepts of gradualness and time are self-evident concepts, regarding which there is no need to involve oneself in different conceptual analyses. Accordingly Mîr Findiriskî's definition of motion, despite its apparent simplicity, is at least as sound and perhaps even superior to the others, even though it may not be the ideal one.

The Existence of Motion

The question, however, is whether, having established the concept and definition of motion, the existence of motion is in itself possible? Do we have motion

²²³ Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 21-31.

²²⁴ Mîr Findiriskî, "Maqâlah al-Ḥarakah," pp. 81-2.

in the external world? This may seem a surprising question, yet it is a valid one. Both Parmenides and Zeno of Elea, despite the very clear fact of different types of motion in their daily life and of their own moving around as well, not only denied “gradual change” or “motion” but also maintained the impossibility of “motion.”²²⁵ They considered motion a mental act and not external fact. A careful examination of their position shows that they realized a very deep and important point. They considered motion not as continual, gradual change, but rather as a collection of successive instantaneous changes. For instance, they considered the motion of the solid body from one point to another to be only the successive points at which a solid body rests between the two assumed points. In other words, they considered motion as a collection of successive restings (*tanâwub sukûnât*).²²⁶ However Zeno, together with his teacher Parmenides furnished different reasons in support of their position. The basic element of their reasoning was the concept of “indivisible parts” (*juz’ lâ yatajazzâ*) and “successive restings” (*tanâwub sukûnât*), both of which deny motion. Since there is insufficient space to conduct such a discussion in this paper I invite readers to examine the relative philosophical texts in this regard. What I would like to point out here is that the existence of motion as a single gradual change, such as gradual changes in psychic qualities, which can be perceived by knowledge by presence, is undeniable.

Fundamental Factors (*muqawwimât*) of Motion

As we saw from our prior discussion, it may be said that the actualization of motion in the external world rests on three factors. First, motion is abstracted from a single existent. Second, since what is “gradual” corresponds (or should correspond) to time, motion is not (or cannot be) attributed to immovable existents and also is not (or

²²⁵ Hannâ al-Fâkhûrî and Khalîl al-Jarr, *Târîkh-i Falsafah dar Jahân-i Islâmî*, trans. ‘Abd al-Muhammad Âyatî (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishârât-i ‘Ilmî wa Farhangî, 1995), pp. 36-8.

²²⁶ M. T. Meşbâh, *Durûs-i Falsafah*, pp. 289-90.

cannot be) abstracted from instantaneous changes. In other words, motion has fluidity and extension just as time has; accordingly it should be extended as time is expended. Third, as is the case with every extension, which is infinitely divisible (such as with time, quality and quantity), motion is also infinitely divisible.²²⁷

Features (*mushakhiṣât*) of Motion

Moreover, we may encounter several different features of motion and thus specific types of motion when we consider motion in respect to different modes (*haythiyyât* plural of *haythiyyah*). For example, it is possible to consider an apple falling from a tree to have three simultaneous "beds" (*bistar*). The bed for the motion toward the earth is space. This motion is called motion in the category of space (*`ayn*). The same apple at the same time undergoes another change in another "bed," change in redness. This is considered to be a change in the category of quality (*kayf*). Finally it has another motion in another "bed," involving circuit. The rotation of an apple in this bed is called change in the category of position (*waḍ'*).²²⁸

Other examples of motion may occur in a single bed, such as in the case of the spatial (*makânî*) motion of a star, which may happen to be either circular or oval. This is called the orbit (*madâr*) of motion. Motion in a single orbit may also take place in different directions, from left to right or from right to left, over different periods of time (one minute or two minutes for instance) and with different rates of rapidity, acceleration or deceleration. These are called the direction (*jihah*), speed (*sur`at*), and rapidity (*shitâb*) of motion. Moreover, motion in respect to its agent may also be divided into different types. When it occurs by nature, it is called natural motion and when it happens through the will of a man, it is called volitional motion.

²²⁷ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, p. 276.

²²⁸ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, pp. 276-7.

Correspondingly, multiple individual agents cause multiple volitional individual motions, just as multiple natural sources cause multiple natural motions.²²⁹

Sequentiality (the essential properties *lawâzim*, pl. of *lâzimah*) of Motion

Philosophers considered six terms to be the consequential, coordinated and essential properties of motion: beginning (*mabda'* or *mâ minhu al-ḥarakah*), end (*muntahâ* or *mâ ilayhi al-ḥarakah*), time (*zamân* or *mâ `alayhi al-ḥarakah*), distance (*masâfat* or *mâ fihi al-ḥarakah*), subject (*mawḍû'* or *mutaḥarrak* or *mâ bihi al-ḥarakah*), and agent (*muḥarrrik* or *mâ `anhu al-ḥarakah*).²³⁰ Since the latter is of particular importance to the whole discussion of motion, especially in Mîr Findiriskî's thought, I shall deal briefly with the first five categories and then devote more time to the discussion of agent or mover (*muḥarrrik*).

1&2) First and Second Sequences of Motion: Beginning and End

(*mabda' wa muntahâ* or *mâ minhu al-ḥaraka wa mâ ilayhi al-ḥarakah*)

The concepts of "beginning" and "end" are the two most controversial principles of motion. Some philosophers considered beginning and end as two undeniable sequences of motion. They claimed that beginning and end are abstracted from the extremes (*aṭrâf* pl. of *ṭaraf*)²³¹ of motion and that they are as a consequence not part of motion itself. For, in this case every part of motion, no matter how small a part it is, is extended and consequently divisible. And every divisible also has a beginning and an end.²³² And this may continue ad infinitum. Consequently,

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Ṭabî'îyyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 87.

²³¹ *Ṭaraf* in philosophical expression means the "side" where the object no longer exists. For instance *ṭaraf al-zamân* (the side of time), which is called "moment (*ân*)," is where time begins or ends and the *ṭaraf al-khaṭṭ* (side of line), which is called "point (*nuqtah*)," is where line begins or ends and *ṭaraf al-ḥarakah* (side of motion), which is called "immovable (*sukûn*)," is where motion begins (*mabda'*) or ends (*muntahâ*).

²³² Since motion is a kind of stable continuous quantity (*al-kamm al-muttaṣil al-qârr*), like line (*khaṭṭ*) and place (*saṭḥ*), and the stable continuous quantity is able to be divided without limit, motion is ready to be divided ad infinitum. This means that every part of motion, no matter how small a part is

according to the view of these philosophers, beginning and end are extreme limits or terms of the motion, like point (*nuqṭah*), which is the side of a line, or moment (*ân*), which is the side of time. So, here, beginning and end are the non-existents modes (*ḥayyithîyyât-i `adamî*) of motion, just as point (*nuqṭah*) is the non-existent mode of line, and moment (*ân*) is non-existent mode of time.²³³ In contrast to these, another philosopher maintains²³⁴ that since the assumption of having an infinite motion without beginning and end, is not inconceivable, we may extrapolate from this that motion, essentially, does not require (*lâ iqtidâ*) beginning or end. In other words we might assume a motion without beginning and end. For instance ancient philosophers believed in the everlasting nature of celestial motion (*al-ḥarakah al-falakîyah*). They held that “beginning and end” are sequences of limited motions and are suggested by their limits, not by motion itself. In this sense every extension has a beginning and an end. Accordingly these philosophers noted that “beginning and end” couldn’t be considered as part of the sequence of all motions.

Comment

It seems to me that, since motion, like its associated notions time and line, is extensible and that every extended term is divisible; thus, we may not have any real beginning and end for motion. What we may consider as a beginning and end for line, time or motion is relative. This means that we may conceive of a beginning and end for time, line and motion by comparing only one part of time, or line, or motion to another part of time, or line, or motion, and say, for example, that this part compared

can be divided unlimitedly. Since it has been approved by philosopher that the indivisible part is impossible and it has been approved by the philosopher also that the motion potentially divisible not actually, for actual part of motion are happen instantaneously and they are not any more motion, we may not consider beginning and end for motion. In other word, since there is neither first indivisible part nor last indivisible part in motion, there exists no beginning and no end for motion. See S. M. H. Tabâtabâ’î, *Âghâz-i Falsafah*, trans. M. `A. Girâmî, pp. 217-218.

²³³ See Ibn Sinâ, *al-Shifâ’*; *al-Ṭabî’îyyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 204.

²³⁴ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, p. 278

to that is called the beginning, and that part compared to the former is called the end. By this definition the attribution of time, or line, or motion itself and motion in itself is relative, having neither beginning nor end. Of course limited motions should have beginning and end, but this will be the attribution of the limitation and not of motion in itself. However, beginning and end in both their relative sense and in limited motions are directional, which means that they play the role of directing motion. In other words they indicate the direction of motion.

3) The Third Sequence of Motion:

Time (*zamân* or *mâ `alayh al-ḥarakah*)

Time is regarded as one of the most important consequences of motion. Time itself has been considered by philosophers to be an integral aspect of the discussion of motion. The controversy over motion rests on two issues; first the existence of time, and second the nature and definition of time. While there have always been those who consider time to be illusory, there are still those who believe not only in its existence but also that sometimes it is incorporeal substance, at other times corporeal substance, and sometimes an accident. Since the time of Aristotle it has been realized that time is the magnitude of motion.²³⁵ In the following section we will try to arrive at a clear solution to both the existence and the nature and definition of time.

Time According to Aristotle

Aristotle has discussed time extensively in his *Physics*. His approach in this discussion, is, as elsewhere, designed to show first the existence of a thing (in this context, time), before proceeding to its nature and definition. For it is easier to observe the existence of a thing than to state its definition, besides the fact that

²³⁵ S. Korner, *Falsafah-i Kant*, trans. `Izzat Allâh Fûlâdvand (Tehran: Shirkat-i Sihâmî-i Intishârât-i Khawrazmî, 1989), p. 158. See also Aristotle, *al-Tabî`ah*, trans. I. ibn Hunain, part, 1, pp. 404-410.

nonbeing has neither a nature nor a definition. For this reason Aristotle goes over the difficulties (a) as to whether it (time) is being or nonbeing and then (b) what its nature is.

In regard to the first question he argues that some say that if time is composed of parts, part of it has come and passed away and no longer exists, while the other part will come but does not yet exist. Thus if time is composed of parts which do not exist, then time itself does not exist and consequently has no nature or substance. It should be noted at this stage that he does not consider a "moment" to be a "part." For "moment" is considered to be a side of time and not a part of time, for a part measures the whole, and this a moment cannot do. Since the whole must be composed of the parts, consequently time is not composed of "moments."²³⁶

Comment

Since a moment can divide time into prior and posterior points, and since the prior point has to have been destroyed for the next one to come into existence, we may consider time as a kind of category. Let me explain this by an example. Imagine two movers (for instance two bicycles) beginning to move simultaneously and together ceasing to move at the same time. But they moved two different distances; one of them fifteen kilometers and the other twenty kilometers. Careful examination of these two movements indicates that motion has two quantitative dimensions (extensions): spatial and temporal. For when we measure the distances that they traveled, we realize that the spatial extension of the latter's movement, is more than that the other. It indicates that one moved faster than the other. Consequently we may conclude that the movement of (the latter) one has less extension in time than the other.

²³⁶ See Aristotle, *al-Tabi'ah*, trans. Ibn Hunain, part, 1, pp. 404-405. See also *Aristotle's Physics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, pp. 78-80.

Is time a kind of motion? Since time exists everywhere and with all things while change only exists in the thing which is changing or wherever it happens to be changing and also since every change is subject to the title of faster or slower, whereas time is not, we should not consider time to be a kind of motion.²³⁷

Let us here try to explain Aristotle's definition of the "whatness" of time, in other words, what part or attribute of a motion time is. Aristotle appears to have thought of time as being somehow an attribute of a motion; and as an attribute, it must be in some category.

Aristotle first of all says that time cannot exist without change. For when there is no change in our thought or when we do not notice any change, we do not think that time has passed. Consider Aristotle's statement and how he comes to categorize time:

Since we are inquiring into the whatness of time, we should begin by considering how time belongs to a motion. Now together with a motion we sense time also. For even if it is dark and we are not being affected through the body but some motion exists in the soul, we think without hesitation that along with motion also time has elapsed; and further, when some time is thought to have elapsed, it appears that also some motion has occurred simultaneously. Thus time is either a motion or something belonging to a motion; and since it is not a motion, it must be something belonging to a motion. Since a thing in motion is moved from something to something else and every magnitude is continuous, a motion follows a magnitude; for a motion is continuous because a magnitude is continuous, and time is continuous because a motion is continuous (for time elapsed is always thought to be as much as the corresponding motion which took place). Now the prior and posterior are attributes primarily of a place, and in virtue of position. So since the prior and the posterior exist in magnitudes, they must also exist in motion and be analogous to those in magnitudes; and further, the prior and the posterior exist also in time because time always follows a motion. Now the prior and the posterior exist in motion whenever a motion exists, but the essence of each of them is distinct [from a motion] and is not a motion.(but) It is evident that time is a number of motion with respect to the prior and posterior and that it is also continuous (for it is something which is continuous).²³⁸

²³⁷ See Aristotle, *al-Tabi'ah*, trans. Ishâq Ibn Hunayn, part, 1, pp. 412-3. See also Aristotle's *Physics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, p. 80.

²³⁸ See also Aristotle, *al-Tabi'ah*, trans. I. ibn Hunayn, part, 1, pp. 415-9. See also Aristotle's *Physics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, pp. 80-83.

As is clear from the above, according to Aristotle time is a continuous entity. Since a thing in motion moves from one point to another and every magnitude is continuous, motion is continuous because magnitude is continuous, and time is continuous because motion is continuous.

Comment

As we saw earlier in the definition of motion, motion is gradual change. Since motion is gradual, it is rationally impossible and absurd for a term to be gradual without corresponding to time. The corresponding extension in time (*imtidâd-i munṭabiq bar zamân*) is considered to be one of the essential properties of motion. Accordingly time and motion are together: wherever there is motion there is time and vice versa. In other words they are two sides of the same coin. Thus, if we are among those who believe in accidental motion, like Ibn Sînâ, then accidental motion will be a consequence (*lâzimah*) of time, whereas if we are one of those who believe in substantial motion, substantial motion will be part of the sequence of time.

4) The Forth Sequence of Motion: Distance

(*masâfat* or *maqûlât al-ḥarakah* or *mâ fihi al-ḥarakah*)

By distance of motion, philosophers mean the categories in which motion takes place: whereness (*ayn*), quantity (*kamm*), quality (*kayf*), position (*waḍʿ* according to the philosophers who believe in accidental motion) and substance (*jawhar* according to the philosophers who believe in substantial motion). Distance of motion is like a channel in which 'things subject to moving' run. We may consider these things as similar to the "beds (*bistarhây-i*) of motion" which we talked about earlier. According to the philosophers up to and including Mullâ Şadrâ, the definition and the whatness of these categories were as follows:

Categories in which Motion Takes Place

Introduction

Up to Mullâ Şadrâ, the most celebrated philosophers, disregarding motion-in-substance, all confined and limited motion to accidents. Aristotle for instance denies motion-in-substance. He also denies motion in a particular category such as relation (*nisbah*), acting (*an yaf'al*), being affected (*an yanfa'il*) except for three; the categories of whereness (*ayn*), quality (*kayf*) and quantity (*kamm*).²³⁹ Consider Aristotle's statements:

There is no motion with respect to a substance because no thing is contrary to a substance.²⁴⁰ It remains that there can be a motion only with respect to quality or quantity or place, for there is a contrariety in each of these.²⁴¹

According to Aristotle motions are restricted to three kinds: with respect to quality (alternation), with respect to quantity (increase and decrease), and with respect to place (locomotion). Although there are a few ancient Greek philosophers whom some claim to have believed in substantial motion, nevertheless among Islamic philosophers it was Mullâ Şadrâ Shîrâzî who developed and demonstrated different reasons in support of the possibility and the existence of motion-in-substance.²⁴² Ibn Sînâ was also the first to differentiate between the category of whereness (place = *ayn*) and the category of position (*waq'*). Although he did not reveal a new kind of motion, and although what he found was a kind of motion in the category of whereness, nevertheless he demonstrated that motion as such should be differentiated from whereness and should be put in the category of position (*waq'*).²⁴³ Accordingly the total number of categories of motion up to Ibn Sînâ were three; quantity, quality

²³⁹ Aristotle's *Physics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, pp. 93-4.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 80-105.

²⁴³ See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Tabî'yyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 103-4.

and place. Ibn Sînâ added another one, the category of position while Mullâ Şadrâ added yet another: the category of substance. In the following I shall take a quick look at the definition and existence of these categories.

4-1) Motion-in-place or Spatial Motion (*ḥarakat-i makânî*)

Motion-in-place is the most perceptible type of motion. Every one of us, at every minute, is witness to hundreds of instances of this type of motion. Ibn Sînâ says: "verily the existence of motion-in-place is plain and obvious."²⁴⁴ Motions-in-place are either intended, like when man travels from one location to another of his own accord, or unintended, like the spatial movements of non-living bodies.

4-2) Motion in Position (*ḥarakat-i waḍʿî*)

Motion-in-position means that the location of an item in respect to its place changes and moves. In motion-in-position the entirety of an item's parts may not necessarily change. It is quite possible that all the parts of a thing may be stable, but the location of the parts in respect to their place changes. Up to Ibn Sînâ many philosophers, following Aristotle, believed in motion only in three categories: quality, quantity, and place. They did not consider motion-in-position as different from motion-in-place. In other words they did not consider rotation of the earth around itself as different from motion-in-place, despite the fact that the earth in this case, besides having motion-in-place, has also motion-in-position. It was Ibn Sînâ who considered these changes under the category of position (*waḍʿ*).²⁴⁵ Ibn Sînâ, although he considered and returned motion-in-position to be a kind of motion-in-place, nevertheless he believed that it is different. For, although in motion-in-position the place of the whole body does not change, nevertheless the location of the parts in respect to the place of moving things gradually changes: for example when a sitting

²⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 103.

²⁴⁵ See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Tabîʿiyyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 104.

person stands up. In this change this person has no motion-in-place; rather, the place is identical with previous one, but the location of his parts in respect to the place has changed. Motion-in-position, like motion-in-place, is also divided into intended motion, like a sitting man who stands by his own will, and unintended, like the earth which, besides rotating around the sun, also rotates around itself. This is called motion-in-position.

4-3) Motion in Quality (*ḥarakat-i kayfī*)

According to Ibn Sînâ, motion in quality applies either to qualities belonging to the soul, i.e., mental qualities (*kayfiyyât-i naḥsânî*), or to sensible qualities (*kayfiyyât-i maḥsûsah*). The first sort (motion-in-mental quality) is similar to loving or hating someone where this love or hate increases or decreases gradually. According to philosophers, these kinds of gradual mental changes are motions-in-souls. This kind of motion is considered – by virtue of knowledge by presence – to be the most trustworthy and reliable type of motion. The second type (motion-in-sensible quality; auditory quality (*kayf al-masmûʿ*), visual quality (*kayf al-mubṣar*), the quality of taste (*kayf al-madhûq*), olfactory quality (*kayf al-mashmûm*), and tangible quality (*kayf al-malmûs*) is like experiencing sound, color, taste, smell or touch, as everyday occurrences. Ibn Sînâ recalls two other types of motion-in-quality; namely, “motion in shapes,” which he calls “motion in qualities peculiar to quantities” (*kayfiyyât-i al-mukhtaṣṣat-i bi al-kammîyyât*), like curved (*inḥinâʿ*) and straight (*istiḳâmah*), and “motion in qualities-through-preparedness” (*kayfiyyât-i al-istiʿdâdiyyah*), like potentiality and unpotentiality (*quwwah* and *lâ quwwah*).²⁴⁶

However, in my opinion, we may consider the latter as a motion-in-quality with one condition. For as we mentioned earlier, the concept of potential and

²⁴⁶ See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâʾ*; *al-Ṭabîʿiyyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 101.

unpotential or preparedness and unpreparedness are abstract concepts (*mafâhî-i intizâ'î*), not "whatness" concepts (*mafâhîm-i mâhuwî*) that can be abstracted from the increase or decrease of the condition of the occurrence of a phenomenon. Accordingly if the occurrence of the conditions is truly gradual, motion in quality can be real; otherwise we cannot consider the latter (motion in quality-through-preparedness) motion in quality.

4-4) Motion in Quantity (*ḥarakat-i kammî*)

Motion in quantity is like the increase or decrease of the size of a body as a result of the expansion or compression of its parts. Philosophers consider the growth of plants and animals the clearest example of this kind of motion. However, since proving motion in quantity is one of the most controversial problems in philosophy, it is best to consider the texts themselves.²⁴⁷ Here I would like to propose a few points. It may seem that what is called motion-in-quantity is either motion-in-place or instantaneous connection and disconnection, or instantaneous generation and corruption. For the increase and decrease of the size of a body as a result of the expansion or compression of its parts is simply another way of expressing the motion-in-place or motion-in-position of its molecules and atoms. According to physicists the increase of the size of a body is nothing other than the increase in the distance of the molecules, while the decrease of the size of a body is nothing but the decrease in the distance separating the molecules and atoms. Accordingly, it is difficult to prove motion-in-quantity as an independent form of motion beside motion-in-place, position and quality. Thus according to those who believe in motion-in-substance, this kind of motion (motion-in-quantity) amounts to a kind of motion-in-substance.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 102. See also Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 88-95.

4-5) Motion-in-Substance or Trans-substantial Motion

As we mentioned earlier, the peripatetic philosophers, such as Aristotle, Ibn Sînâ, Mîr Findiriskî and their followers, considered motion divisible into four categories: motion in locality which is referred to as locomotion, motion in quantity or quantitative motion, motion in position, and motion in quantity or qualitative motion. Up to the time of Mullâ Şadrâ nobody claimed that there is motion in the substance or the essence of things. All philosophers before Mullâ Şadrâ considered substance to be static. Even the great philosophers such as Ibn Sînâ asserted that if the substance of things moved, their entities and identities would automatically change into other entities and identities, which make no sense.²⁴⁸

Objection

We may summarize the objections of those who reject the notion of substantial motion as follows. First, one of the sequences of motion is the subject of motion. We shall see below that philosophers considered the subject of motion (*mawḍiʿ al-ḥarakah*) to be one of the consequential and essential properties of motion; (according to philosophers up to Mullâ Şadrâ the term “*mawḍiʿ*” in its philosophical sense applies to the subjects of accidents). Second, the essence of all movers is fixed and it is the attributes, which are changed. Lastly, if we say that the essence itself is not fixed and, thus also subject to change, then to what are we to connect this change? In other words if we accept that in addition to attributes the subject or the essence changes also, motion-in-substance will be a motion without a thing moved (subject) and attributes moved without a subject; when in fact this is what attributes are for.

²⁴⁸ See Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâʾ*; *al-Ṭabîʿiyyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 98-99.

Answer

An analytical examination of the concept of motion shows that motion is not an external accident, which requires a subject. Motion is part of the very flowing (*sayalân*) of the existence of both substance and accident. Therefore it is not an accident alongside of other accidents. The very heart of Mullâ Şadrâ's theory is that the concept of motion is not an essential (*mâhuwî*) concept; rather it is a secondary philosophical intelligible concept (*ma`qûl-i thâni-yi falsafî*).²⁴⁹

Mullâ Şadrâ's Theory of Substantial Motion

Mulla Sadra contended that if there were no essential motion in the nature and essences of things, it would be impossible for their attributes to change. Furthermore he argues that the qualities of objects change simultaneously and together with a certain consistency, e.g. the fruit's growth which is quantitative motion is accompanied by change in color and taste, which is qualitative motion. And since an object's quality is not separate from its essence, and it is a part of the entity of the object, then how would it be possible for motion to be both present in and absent from an entity?

Mullâ Şadrâ's theory of substantial motion like many other issues in his philosophy, depends on the concept of the fundamental reality of existence, the analogical gradation of existence and the unity of existence and only becomes meaningful in that system. To fully appreciate Mulla Sadra's proofs and arguments in proving substantial motion, as detailed in his *Asfâr*,²⁵⁰ would take us beyond the scope of this thesis. Here we must restrict ourselves to summarizing his argument, which follows three lines:²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, pp. 306-7.

²⁵⁰ *Asfar*, vol. 1, pt.3 pp. 100-5.

²⁵¹ Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 95-107. See also M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, pp. 308-11.

The first argument for substantial motion has two premises. One is that accidental changes in a thing are the effects of the substantial nature of that thing. In other words, the proximate agent of all motion is nature; thus no motion can be connected directly to an incorporeal agent. The second premise is that the natural cause of motion must be a moving thing. Consequently, a substance which is the cause of motion in accidents must be a moving thing.

The second argument also has two premises. One is that accidents do not have existence independent of their subjects. Their existence depends upon the existence of substance. In other words, they have no existence independent of their subjects. The second premise is that every kind of change that occurs in accidents is a sign of change in their subjects. This change is of an internal and essential (*dhâtî*) nature. Therefore, changes or motions in accidents are a sign of changes or motions in the existence of their subjects or substances.

The third argument says that all material existents have a temporal dimension. We have seen, previously, that every existent which has a temporal dimension has gradual existence, which means that one part of it does not occur until another part passes. Since substance possesses time in its essence, it has gradual existence. Given these two premises we may conclude that the existence of material substance is gradual and constantly regenerated. This is substantial motion. Further aspects of Mullâ Şadrâ's theory of substantial motion will be introduced in the discussion of first mover.

5) The Fifth Sequence of Motion: The Thing Subject to Motion

(*mawḍû' al-ḥarakah, mutuḥarrik, qâbil, mâ bih al-ḥarakah*)

As motion requires an agent (*fâ'il, mâ 'anh-u al-ḥarakah*), it also needs a recipient (*qâbil, mâ bih-i al-ḥarakah*). In other words motion needs both an agent and

a recipient, and yet the agent cannot also be the recipient. Philosophers considered the subject of motion (*mawḍūʿ al-ḥarakah*) one of the consequential and essential properties of motion. The term “*mawḍūʿ*” in its philosophical sense applies to the subjects of accidents.²⁵² Since the place of accidents and that which receives accidents is body (*jism*), body was considered by philosophers as the “*mawḍūʿ*” of motion. Accordingly, by the time of Mullâ Şadrâ, philosophers (including Mîr Findiriskî), believed that motion must have a subject and that this subject should not be either pure potential -- for what is pure potential has no actual existence to be subject of the motion -- or perfect actual -- for what is absolutely actual is corporeal and has no relation to motion. Motion after all was seen as the gradual emergence (*khurûj*) of something from a state of potentiality to a state of actuality and since the corporeal cannot emanate from the state of potentiality to the state of actuality because it is meaningless to say that any non-material entity can emerge from potentiality to actuality. In other words it is impossible for anything in every respect to be in the process of movement. By contrast, anything capable of motion has in itself something potential because anything which, seeks to move, looks for something, which it has not yet accomplished. Accordingly the subject of motion should be something composed of something potential and something actual. This in fact applies ideally to the body (*jism*), which is potential in respect to something and at the same time is actual in respect to an other thing.²⁵³ According to the above reasoning, wherever there is motion, there should be also a body (*jism*), which is moving. This result, which is accepted by Mullâ Şadrâ in chapter eighteenth of his *Asfâr*, is however subjected to criticism in chapter nineteen of the same book. According to his

²⁵² This is according to the majority of philosophers, but Mullâ Şadrâ believes that *mawḍūʿ al-ḥaraka* (the things subject to motion) include accidents as well as substance.

²⁵³ Ş. M. Şîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 59-60.

argument in chapter nineteen, there is no need to believe in the necessity of body as the subject of motion.

Mullâ Şadrâ denied the necessity of body being the subject of motion. He asserts that this idea leads us to believe that there should be always an actualized body for motion to exist. Since Mullâ Şadrâ saw motion as occurring through substance and believed in motion-in-substance, he came to believe that it is not necessary to consider the body (*jism*) as the subject of motion. For, according to him, even body (*jism*) is in constant motion.²⁵⁴

In contrast to Shaykh-i Ishrâq²⁵⁵ who considered motion as an independent accidental category in addition to the categories of place, quality, quantity, and position, and thus in need of a subject, the majority of philosophers, including Mîr Findiriskî, did not consider motion to be an independent category. They believed that it was not something different or separate from other categories. However, the accidental categories (according to philosophers up to Mullâ Şadrâ) and the accidental categories as well as substance (according to Mullâ Şadrâ), are the subject and recipient of motion.²⁵⁶

One point is to be noted here: both Ibn Sînâ and Mullâ Şadrâ maintain that it is unsound to maintain that motion is a form of bodily substance (*al-jawhar al-jismânîyah*) and this for a number of reasons. First, since motion is an accident, it is a quality of something in motion and therefor "relative," not the reality by which something moves. Thus motion cannot be the form of a substantial existent, for nothing can come from something, which is existentially more imperfect than itself. Second, as we learned earlier the subject of motion is the actual body not some vague

²⁵⁴ Ibid, pp. 64-7.

²⁵⁵ Suhrawardî, *al-Mashârî' wa al-Mufârihât*, "al-Mashra'-u al-Thânî," Chapter 5, see also chapter 12 of *al-Mashra'-u al-Thâlith*.

²⁵⁶ For more details of this issue see Ş. M. Shirâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 59-64 and Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Ṭabî'îyyât*, vol. 1, pp. 98-101.

body-in-general, a concrete body is necessary for motion. Body-in-general corresponds to no specific natures and thus cannot be subject of motion. Third, motion is not actual and stable in all respects and what is not actual in all respects (thus being potential in some of respects) cannot specify anything, which is actual. The third reason claims that nothing potential (even in some respects) can specify anything that is actual.²⁵⁷

6) The Sixth Sequence of Motion: Mover (*muḥarrrik*)

The sixth sequential of motion is the mover (*mâ minh al-ḥarakah, fâ'il, muḥarrrik*). That which is in motion is moved by something. The thing that causes motion is taken for granted by philosophers altogether. Aristotle says: "everything in motion is necessarily being moved by some thing."²⁵⁸ The hypothesis, however, is that a thing in motion is caused to be in motion by some thing. Since motion is a possible existential attribute (*ṣifah wujûdiyyah imkânîyah*) and contingent (*ḥâdith*), it is necessarily in need of both, a recipient (*qâbil*) as subject of motion and an agent (*fâ'il*). In other words as motion needs subject, a recipient (*mâ bih al-ḥarakah*) needs an agent (*mâ anh al-ḥarakah*). For receptivity (*qâbiliyah*) and agency (*fâ'iliyah*) are two opposites and cannot be applied to one entity in the same respect. Mîr Findiriskî also recognized the necessity of a mover in his *Risâla al-ḥarakah*, in the second chapter. He affirms that, since motion is an emanation (*khurûj*), from the state of potentiality to the state of actuality, there should be an agent to do this, otherwise it won't be an emanation (*khurûj*). However since a problem might arise whereby we do not consider the recipient itself as the agent of motion, Mîr Findiriskî tried to answer this question.

²⁵⁷ S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 59-64 and Ibn Sînâ, *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Ṭabî'yyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 98-101.

²⁵⁸ See also Aristotle, *al-Ṭabî'ah*, trans. I. ibn Ḥunain, part, 2, p. 733. See also Aristotle's *Physics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, p. 127. See also Ibn Sînâ *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Ṭabî'yyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 87.

A) The Mover Itself Should Be Movable²⁵⁹

Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshṭīyānī²⁶⁰ in his notes on the third chapter of Mīr Findiriskī's *Resāla al-ḥarakah*, indicates that that which does not possess something (*fāqid al-shay*) cannot be the giver (*mu'fi*) of the same thing. Mīr Findiriskī tried to put this another way. He argues that a single entity cannot be both "*mufīd*" which causes motion to come into existence, and "*mustafīd*" which receives it, in the same respect. For example, he says, "how is it possible that a scholar (the knower) receives knowledge from one who does not possess that particular knowledge and how is it possible that a scholar (the knower) receives perfection (existence) from someone who holds no perfection."²⁶¹ Consequently the recipient (*qābil*) receives and accepts motion and perfection and the agent (*fā'il*) gives the motion and perfection. The recipient, thus, is only potentially and not actually moving, and it is the agent, which makes the recipient (*qābil*) actually moving. Consequently that which moves (*qābil, mutaḥarrik*) cannot move by it; it needs a mover, a cause, and an agent.²⁶² Ibn Sīnā also dealt with this problem in his *Shifā*. He argues that "that which moves" either moves by its essence *qua* its natural body (*min ḥaythu huwa jismun ṭabī'ī*) or it is caused by a cause. If motion were caused by its essence, it would never stop so long as 'that which moves' exists, whereas we observe that motion decease, perishes and departs from many bodies while their essences still exist."²⁶³ Thus, the motion of 'that which moves' must be caused by something other than its essence.

²⁵⁹ It should be kept in mind that when we say the mover itself should be movable we mean the natural mover, the proximate mover and not divine mover, the first mover, which is immovable.

²⁶⁰ Mīr Findiriskī, "Maqālah al-Ḥarakah," p. 84.

²⁶¹ Ibid.

²⁶² Mīr Findiriskī, "Maqālah al-Ḥarakah," pp. 82-3. See also Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*; *al-Ṭabī'īyyāt*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 87.

²⁶³ Ibn Sīnā *al-Shifā'*; *al-Ṭabī'īyyāt*, vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 87.

B) That which Moves (*qâbil, mutaḥarrik*) Cannot Move by Itself: Reasons

Mîr Findiriskî, following Aristotle, states, "Everything which is in motion is moved by something else. It is impossible that the thing, which is in motion, moves by itself. In the short chapter that he devotes to this issue Mîr Findiriskî claims that since motion is defined as an emanation (*khurûj*) of a thing from the state of potentiality to the state of actuality, it is necessary for the thing to emerge from matter (*mâddah*) prior to emanation, otherwise it would not be an emanation."²⁶⁴

Comment

It should be noted at the outset that agent, or the creative cause (*'illat-i hastî bakhsh*) is not restricted to motion alone, for every effect needs a cause. Indeed, nothing that is effected can be without a cause. Moreover we had said earlier that the concept of motion is an abstract concept (*mafḥûm-i intizâ'î*), not a "whatness" concept (*mafḥûm-i mâhuwî*) which is abstracted from the mode of the existence of substance or accident. Thus motion has no concrete specific referent beyond the existence of substance or accident that is abstracted from it. Consequently it is the existence of the substance or accident, which is in need of a creative cause. In other words it is the creation of the substance or accident that in turn creates substantial or accidental motions. Furthermore natural agency, which is preparatory cause and not creative cause, applies only to material, accidental changes and motions. We shall declare that motion-in-substance does need this type of natural agent cause.²⁶⁵ It was Mîr Findiriskî's position that motion-in-substance does not need this type of natural agent cause.

²⁶⁴ Mîr Findiriskî, "Maqâlah al-Ḥarakah," p. 82.

²⁶⁵ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, pp. 280-1.

D) Types of Movers (Agents) or Efficient Causes

The mover (*fâ'il al-ḥarakah*) or efficient cause is an existent by which motion or another existent (the effect) is brought about. The ancient philosophers acknowledged two types of actions: willful, voluntary or intentional action (*fi'l irâdî*), which is a product of consciousness and is performed by the will of an agent (like the voluntary (*ikhtiyârî*) actions of men); and involuntary or unintentional action in which consciousness and knowledge play no part (as in actions performed by existents without consciousness or knowledge which are always monotonous and without change). This latter is called natural action (*fi'l ṭabî'î*). Later, they considered that some motions and influences on things occur contrary to their natural partialities (requirements); thus a third kind of action was envisioned called obstructive action (*fi'l qasrî*). Thus when a voluntary agent is forced to move contrary to his own will because of the domination of a more powerful agent, another kind of agency (*fâ'ilîyyah*) was fixed. That is called forceful agent (*fâ'il jabrî*). Muslim philosophers studied the ideas of willful agent in more depth and classified it into eight types; natural agent (*fâ'il bi al-ṭab'*), obstructive agent (*fâ'il bi al-qasr*), intentional agent (*fâ'il bi al-qaṣd*), forceful agent (*fâ'il bi al-jabr*), compulsive agent (*fâ'il bi al-taskhîr*), foreknowing agent (*fâ'il bi al-'inâyah*), agreement agent (*fâ'il bi al-riḍâ*), and self-manifest agent (*fâ'i-i bi al-tajallî*).²⁶⁶ In the following passage Hâj Mullâ Hâdî Sabzawârî refers to the basic principle from which are to be obtained the definition and justification of the above several divisions. According to him,²⁶⁷

The "agent" either has knowledge of its actions, or not. In this latter case the "agent" is either such that its action accords with its

²⁶⁶ For more detail see H. M. H. Sabzewari, *Sharḥ-i Ghurar al-Farâid*, pp. 156-7.

²⁶⁷ Hâj Mullâ Hâdî Sabzawârî, *The Metaphysics of Sabzawârî* (*Sharḥ al-Manẓûmah fi al-Hikmah*), trans. Mehdi Mohaghegh and Toshihiko Izutsu (Delmer, New York: Caravan Books, 1977), p. 176. See also M. T. Mişbâḥ, *Durûs-i Falsafah*, pp. 86-9.

"nature," in which case it is an "agent-by-nature," or not. In the latter case it is an "agent-by-being-pushed."

The first (i.e., the case in which the "agent" has knowledge of its action), is either such that its action is not based on its "will"-in which it is an "agent-by-being-forced"- or it is (based on its "will").

In the latter case, either (1) its knowledge of its action coincides with its action, rather it is the same as its action, while its knowledge of itself is the same with its preceding and non-detailed knowledge of its action only-in which case it is an "agent-by-agreement"-(2) or not, that is, its knowledge of its action precedes it action.

Then, either its knowledge is connected with an additional "motive"-in which case it is an "agent-by-intention"-or not, that is, the knowledge itself acts actively and produces the object of knowledge.

In this case, either that knowledge of the action is something additional to its self-in which case it is an "agent-by-foreknowledge"-or not, that is the knowledge of the action is the same as its knowledge of itself, which, again is the same as its self. And this is the non-detailed knowledge of the action, which is the same as the detailed revealing. Then it is an "agent-by-self-manifestation." It is also called an "agent-by-foreknowledge" in its more general sense.

E) The First Mover or Intellectual Mover

The first mover is an unmoved mover in whom all types of motion have their source. Mîr Findiriskî, like Aristotle, maintains that it is necessary that all motions finally end in a stable and unmoved mover, otherwise, there would be an infinite regress or a vicious circle. Let me explain this idea more carefully.

One of the most controversial problems in motion is the first mover and how it can be proved. Aristotle, who identified this problem, paraphrased the first mover as God. He looks to prove the existence of God through the first mover. Accordingly Aristotle's proof for the existence of God is the proof of the first mover. In this sense the first mover is identified with an intellectual mover or God.

Introduction

The first mover or intellectual mover is that which does not move and does not change at all. Thus the beginning of motion is either nature or soul or intellect. Yet, since neither nature nor soul is immovable, neither can be the beginner of the motion. For the beginner of motion must be immovable.²⁶⁸ Mîr Findiriskî linked the first mover to the intellectual mover. This is normal, for the first mover, the one that is immovable, is incorporeality (*mujarradât tâmm*), which is no more than universal intellect.

Philosophers have substantiated different types of movers. Philosophers divided movers into mover-by-essence (*muḥarrik-i bi al-dhât*) and mover-by-accident (*muḥarrik- bi al-`araḍ*). Ibn Sînâ dealt with this division extensively at the end of his discussion of motion in his *Shifâ'*.²⁶⁹ They further divided movers into direct (*mubâshir*) and indirect (*ghayr-i mubâshir*). For example, if A moves B and B moves C, B is the direct mover for C and A the indirect mover of C. In other words A moves C, not directly, and primarily but through B. They also divided movers into by-intermediary and without-an-intermediary. For example the energy in our body moves nerves without an intermediary and moves our hand through nerves or by the intermediacy of our nerve.

Many philosophers, including Aristotle and Mîr Findiriskî, substantiated the above divisions. They divided movers into stable (*thâbit*) and movable (*mutuḥarrik*). Some movers themselves are movable, like the hand, which causes movement in the pen. The stable mover on the other hand possesses no movement.

²⁶⁸ Mîr Findiriskî, "Maqâlah al-Ḥarakah," pp. 85-6.

²⁶⁹ Ibn Sînâ *al-Shifâ'*; *al-Ṭabî`îyyât*, vol. 2, pt. 1, pp. 329-333.

Aristotle's (Mîr Findiriskî's) Proof of the Unmoved, Intellectual Mover: God

Aristotle deals extensively with this problem in his *Physics* both in chapter Seven (Book H) and chapter Eight (Book Θ). In summary, he says that everything in motion needs to be moved by something. Now if it does not have the source of motion in itself, some other thing must move it. In other words, every mover is either moved by itself or by an unmoved mover. In the latter case the mover is God and we need no more proof. But in the first case, where the mover is being moved by another, that is, if it is in motion, this mover is being moved by another. This pattern cannot go on infinitely but must stop at some point where there will be something, which is unmoved, i.e., the first mover, God.²⁷⁰ We may put this proof in four premises.

- 1) Every thing in motion is necessarily in need of a mover.
- 2) Every thing in nature is in motion whether gradually or instantaneously.
- 3) Infinite regress of cause is impossible.

Al-Farâbî tried to prove the third premise, i.e., that infinite regress of cause is impossible. Calling his proof *burhân-i asadd akhṣar* (the firmest and most concise proof), he explained it thus: if we supposed a chain of beings in which each being is dependent upon another, such that if a prior one does not exist, the dependent one would also fail to take place, this indicates that this regress as a whole is dependent on another existent, for it is supposed that all of its links have this characteristic (of being dependent on another); accordingly there is no option but to suppose that there is an existent at the top of the chain which is not dependent on something else. Until that top existent is reached, the chain itself will not come into existence. Thus, such a

²⁷⁰ See also Aristotle, *al-Tabî'ah*, trans. I. ibn Ḥunain, part, 2, p. 733-5. See also *Aristotle's Physics*, trans. H. G. Apostle, pp. 127-9.

chain cannot be infinite in the direction of its beginning. Consequently, an infinite regress of causes is impossible.²⁷¹

4) The simultaneity of cause and effect.

As it is evident that the occurrence of an effect is impossible without its internal causes, and that where there is complete cause, the existence of its effect is necessitated, it is also evident that whenever an effect is temporally existent and at least one of the parts of its complete cause is also temporal, the cause and effect will occur simultaneously, and the occurrence of the complete cause will have no temporal distance from the effect. For if it is supposed that some time, no matter how short, expires after the occurrence of all parts of the complete cause and the effect occurs after that, this would indicate that the existence of the effect is not necessary at that time, while the implication of the relative necessity of the effect in relation to the complete cause is that the existence of the effect becomes necessary as soon as the cause is complete.²⁷²

According to the above premises we may conclude that, since the existence of motion in nature is self-evident, based on the first premises it needs a mover. It is evident that every mover must be moved by itself or by an unmoved mover. In the latter case the mover is immaterial, intellectual, and God and we need no more proof to prove the existence of unmoved mover, God. But in the first case, where the mover is being moved by another, that is if it is in motion, this mover is also being moved by another. According to the third premise this cannot go on infinitely, for an infinite regress of causes is impossible. Accordingly the regress of causes must stop at some point, where there will be something which is unmoved, that is the first mover, God.

²⁷¹ Quoted in (M. T. Meşbâh, *Durûs-i Falsafah*, pp. 79-80.)

²⁷² M. T. Meşbâh, *Durûs-i Falsafah*, pp. 56-7.

The above discussion constitutes the entire proof substantiated by Mîr Findiriskî in regard to the first mover and the existence of God. However this proof was criticized by later philosophers, particularly Mullâ Şadrâ, an issue with which we will deal in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Mîr Findiriskî

On

Motion
(2)

Insufficiency and Incompleteness of Aristotle's Proof of "First Mover"

In Aristotle's proof of first mover we may find some sign of alteration. It is very possible that this proof may suffer some shortcomings. In other words this proof is problematic. Let me start by raising the following question. Does Aristotle's proof of "first mover" validate and subsist without accepting substantial motion? As we saw, Aristotle and Ibn Sinâ restricted motions to accidentals. In this respect we may ask does Aristotle's proof of "first mover" accord with the philosophical principles that he accepted?

To clarify the problem, we should review one more time Aristotle's proof of "first mover." We may put this in the following premises: A. Things subject to motion need a mover other than themselves (*kullu mutuharrikin lahû muharrikun ghayruh*) B. The source of accidental motion in nature is a potency subsisting in nature. In other words the metaphysic does not move nature, rather it creates nature and motion subsists in the essence of nature. C. Material things subject to motion are both movers (the other things) and moving (being moved by others). It is impossible that natural things subject to motion

are motionless (*sâkin*). D. Effect (or caused) is in conjunction always with its creative cause. E. Since the infinite regress of causes is impossible, as we saw earlier, the chain of movers, which are subject to motion, should be finally ended with a mover, which is unmoved.

Aristotle states that since every natural mover naturally subsists in mater (*jism*), when it moves mater (*jism*), it is also moving itself. Like the potency that we have in our hand when it wants to move something, it, itself, also moves. Taking into account this proof we realize that the movement of the hand is an accidental motion and not a substantial motion. But Aristotle's third premise is universal. It says, "every natural mover is moving" either accidental or substantial. Considering third premises in which Aristotle argues that every natural (material) mover (*muḥarrik, mâ 'anhu al-ḥarakah*) is also subject to motion (*mutuḥarrik, mâ bihi al-ḥarakah*) and that natural mover (*muḥarrik*) is nothing more than the natural potencies or the natural essences, we may ask did Aristotle and Ibn Sînâ and Mîr Findiriskî believe in substantial motion. The answer, however, is that, although they did not believe formally in motion-in-substance, nevertheless they have no choice except to believe in motion-in-substance. For the premises "every natural mover is moving," third premises in Aristotle proof, cannot be restricted in accidental motions because they are metaphorical, rather this statement is universal, includes both accidental (*'araḍī*) as well as substantial (*jawharī*) motions. This attests that Aristotle's proof of first mover is incomplete without accepting the theory of motion-in-substance. Accordingly Mullâ Şadrâ's theory of substantial motion is complete in this sense. Since Mullâ Şadrâ believes in motion-in-substance, he has no problem with third premises. Moreover, he basically changes the third premise (every natural mover is moving) to

another principle, that is, "the cause of changing is changing" (*'illatu al-mutaghayyir-i mutaghayyirun*).

Aristotle's proof of "first mover" has been considered, verified and completed in Islamic philosophy. For in Islamic philosophy matter (*mâddah*) is considered to be identical with motion.²⁷³ And thus it is in constant need of immaterial creation and cause. In evolutionary and elevating motions (*ḥarakât-i takâmulî va şu'ûdî*) constantly new perfection's are being created and thus are in argent need of causes other than themselves (*mâddah*) because matter lacks those perfections and that which lacks a thing can be the giver of the same thing (*fâqid al-shay' mu'fi ân shay' nîst*). In summary, new incidents or natural phenomena's, which, are, a kind of motion constantly are in need of creator. Matter itself cannot be the creator and cause. Matter, at least, can be the preparatory condition. Thus there should be a cause and creator for all these phenomena.²⁷⁴

Objections on Aristotle's proof of "first mover"

Aristotle's proof of first mover has been criticized by later science and philosophy from two points of view.

First problem

The First problem considered the last premises, the impossibility of infinite regress of causes. They maintain that the infinite regress of causes is not impossible. There is no problem if we suppose that the motion managed by a mover before him (as a mater of time, timely) and the same mover be motivated by the mover before him and this may continue infinitely. We may offer example of the movement of a leaf, which caused by win and the win itself subsisted by exchanges of weather in the

²⁷³ M. T. Meşbâh, *Ta'liqah*, pp. 138-41. See also M. H. Ṭabâtabâ'î, *Uşûl Falsafah*, vol. 4, pp. 9-142.

²⁷⁴ Muhammad Taqî Mişbâh, *Pâsdârî az Sangarhâ-yi Ideologic*, Qum: Muassasah-i Dar Râh-i Haqq, 1982, pp. 178-180.

sky and exchanges themselves are caused by frigidity and torridity and this continues forever and without end. Accordingly there is no problem to have endless mover which are themselves subject to motion without having unmoved mover.

Rejoinder: In response to this problem, Muslim philosophers still insist on the impossibility of infinite regress of causes. They maintain that scientific analysis is different from the philosophical analysis of the causality. For in the above explanation of the proof of first mover, since it is a scientific analyzes of causality, it is not considered the simultaneously of the cause and caused. Accordingly it is evidence from the above explanation that this problem is based on the fact that every motion is motivated by a mover that subsisted before him. As we observe that they considered wind to be the cause of the movement of the leaf. In this case there will be no problem for the infinite regress of causes. For every mover which existed before the caused, moves thing subject to motion later, in a time different from the time of the existence of the mover itself. While Muslim philosophers believe that in the proof of "first mover" it has been supposed that every thing is subject to motion is synchronized with its mover. There is no priority and posteriority between caused (thing subject to motion, *mutuḥarrik*) and cause (mover). Muslim philosophers think that it is basically impossible to recognize the cause and the mover of a moment ago to be the cause and the mover of the motion of the next moment. According to them, philosophical analysis of causality is totally different from scientific analysis. For in philosophical analysis of causality one should consider the simultaneously of the cause and the effect. Accordingly motion in every moment needs a mover at the same moment. Thus the cause and the mover of a motion are lain down in nature itself. Nature is the proximate cause and mover of every motion. Therefore if nature itself is also in motion we should find the simultaneous cause or the mover of the nature too. In

summary, to find the mover and the cause of every motion we should always look for a simultaneous cause for motion. In this respect the first mover is not the one who turns on the world and leaves the world and does not do anything as naturalists think, rather the first mover of the world is a central power or simultaneous cause of nature which exists forever. Therefore, Muslim philosophers do not acknowledge this problem for although the infinite regress of cause is possible in scientific analysis or unsimultaneous causes, nevertheless it is hardly impossible for simultaneous causes.²⁷⁵

The Second Problem

The Second problem addresses the first principle i.e., "things subject to motion need a mover." It has been noted in new sciences that motion in its essence does not need a mover. What in this procedure needs agent, cause and mover is its magnitude.²⁷⁶ To clarify this point we should differentiate between motion in fullness (*mala'*) and motion in emptiness (*khala'* = vacuum). Motion in fullness, like motion in a space that is full of wheather, is faced with insulators or obstacles. It needs a kind of power to remove this obstacle from its way. If we consider a space that is full of water, motion in this space is made more difficult because the obstacle is much stronger than wheather. In this case it needs a stronger power to remove this obstacle from its way. For the obstacle of water is stronger than the obstacle of wheather. In contrast to motion in fullness is motion in emptiness. Suppose a space that is absolutely vacuum. Since there is no obstacle in this space a minimum or smallest motion in a thing subject to motion shall cause that thing to continue endlessly. Since there is no agent to cause any change in motion of the thing, there will be no modification or variation in its speed. It is what is called in new physics the principle

²⁷⁵ Murtaḍā Muṭahharī, *Ḥarakat wa Zamān dar Falsafah-i Islāmī*, vol. 1 (Tehran: Intishārāt-i Hikmat, 1991), pp. 93-5.

²⁷⁶ M. Muṭahharī, *Ḥarakat wa Zamān*, pp. 95-6.

of constraint or force (*aṣl-i jabr*) or mound theory. According to this principal if an agent causes or motivates multiple motion in a given body (*jism-i mafrûd*), it remains as such forever. Vice versa, if an agent causes immovability in a given body, again this given body remains as such (immovability) forever. Thus we must change the first principle of Aristotle's proof of "first mover" (things subject to motion need a mover) to "change in degree of magnitude of motion needs a cause or agent."

Rejoinder: In response to this problem we should consider that it is hard to say that the principle "change in degree of magnitude of motion needs a cause or agent" results in the principle that "motion does not need a mover rather the magnitude of motion does need a mover." I see no contradiction between these two principles. Having compared these two scientific and philosophical principles, we may realize that there is no contradiction between these two. What has been approved in physics is true and has nothing to do with the law of causality. In my opinion what has been approved in physics supports the law of causality.

Mullâ Şadrâ's Proof of First Mover

Before we begin our commentary on Şadrâ's proof of first mover, it might be helpful to survey some fundamental principles of Mullâ Şadrâ's general philosophical position in his mystic-philosophical system, called *al-Ḥikmat al-Muta'âlîyah* (transcendental philosophy). However a full bestowal and defense of them would demand much more space than is available in this thesis.

The most central principles of Mullâ Şadrâ's entire thought are two; the fundamental reality of existence or the primacy of existence over essence in the concrete, (*aṣâlat al-wujûd*) and the analogical gradation of existence or the principle of grades of existence (*tashkîk al-wujûd*). According to Mullâ Şadrâ, the most important principle in the treatment of motion is fundamental reality of existence or

the primacy of existence over essence in the concrete, (*aşâlat al-wujûd*); for him existence is the ultimate reality, which encircles everything while essences are merely the limits of existences. In contrast to Mullâ Şadr, essentialist philosophers who believe in the fundamental reality of essence (*aşâlat al-mâhîyyah*), like Ibn Sînâ and Mîr Findiriskî, held that being firstly and fundamentally is essence and secondarily is existence.

The second principle is the gradation of being (*tashîk al-wujûd*), a cornerstone of Şadrian metaphysics. According to him existence is of unlimited levels. Every higher level of *wujûd* contains all the reality that is manifested below it. Mullâ Şadrâ bases himself upon the Suhrawardian doctrine of light in which Suhrawardi verifies the differentiation and gradation of things according to which things can be distinct from each other through the very element that unites them such as the light of the candle and the light of the sun which are united by being both light and yet are distinct from one another also by light which is manifested in the two cases according to different degrees of intensity. Being is like light in that it possesses degrees of intensity while being a single reality. It follows that only existence is capable of being manifested, and in the actual finite world, this manifestation is in different of existents, which form a hierarchy in levels and degrees of perfection. Şadrâ's technical term for this hierarchy is "*waḥdah al-tashkîk-i al-wujûd*."

Every corporeal substance has a mode of existence such that some of its accidents are necessary and inseparable from it. These accidents are related to individual in the same way as the essential properties of derived differentiae are related to species. Most philosophers call these inseparable accidents "specific differences. But a matter of fact they are signs of specific differences. Here the signs are a token of something interpreted conceptually. Thus derivative real differentiae are interpreted conceptually by logical difference. For example, growth in plants, sensibility in animals and rationality in man are logical differentiae. The first is a sign of vegetative soul; the second of animal soul and the third of rational soul. These souls are differentiae, which are derived. The same principle applies to the other differentiae

in substantial composites because every one of these differentiae is a simple substance interpreted by universal logical differentiae. Thus we call something by the name of its essential property. In fact, however, these differentiae are simple individual existents, which have no essence. The same is true of the essential properties of individuals named by the individualizing characteristic. The reason is that in some sense of existence, individuation is nothing but the individualizing characteristic itself. And these essential properties issue from existence like light, which emanates from its luminous source or like heat from its radiating source, fire. If this point has been established, then we say that in every corporeal substance these characteristics (time, quantity, position, place, etc.) are transformed. Their transformation, therefore, is subject to that of existence proper to them. Better their transformation is identical, in some sense with that of existence. The reason is that every corporeal nature is predicated essentially of existence, which is a substance essentially temporal, localized, in position, quantitative and continuous. Transformation of quantity, or color, or position, therefore, necessitates transformation of the bodily, substantial and individual existence. This is what we mean by transubstantial motion. Substance is the existence of substance and accident is the existence of accident.²⁷⁷

Mullâ Şadrâ, based on his philosophical principles, verifies that considering the definition of motion “the first perfection of potential existent qua potential”²⁷⁸ one may realize that the potentiality for “thing subject to motion” qua “thing subject to motion” is undeniable sequentially. Since motion is a possible existential attribute (*şifah wujûdiyyah imkânîyah*) it is in urgent need of a recipient (*qâbil*). On the other hand since motion is contingent (*ḥâdith*) or is in itself contingency (*ḥudûth*), it needs an agent (*fâ'il*) or mover. Receptivity (*qâbiliyah*) and agency (*fâ'iliyah*) are two opposite categories, for it is impossible for a single thing be both recipient (*qâbil*) and mover or agent or cause (*fâ'il*). From another angle, Mullâ Şadrâ says, it is impossible that a single entity be both (*mufîd*) that which brings motion into existence and

²⁷⁷ Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, pp. 103-4. Translation of Mehdi Dehbashi's PH. D. dissertation on “Mullâ Şadrâ's Theory of Transubstantial motion: A Translation and Critical Exposition” at Forham University, New York, 1981, pp. 123-125.

²⁷⁸ Aristotle, *al-Ṭabî'ah*, trans. Ishâq ibn Hunain, part, 1, pp. 165-85. See also Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 24.

(*mustafid*), that which gets receives it in the same respect (*bi-'iyn-i-hî*).²⁷⁹ Therefore, according to Mullâ Şadrâ, motion needs two things: a recipient (*qâbil*), for it is a possible existential attribute (*şifah wujûdiyyah imkânîyah*), and a mover or originator, for it is contingent (*hâdith*) or rather, it is essentially contingency (*hudûth*). To put it differently, the thing subject to motion receives it but actually possesses no motion. This is why it accepts motion; while the agent gives to the recipient from the perfection (*kamâl*) which the agent or originator has. The recipient is only potentially, not actually, moving; therefore it is the agent which makes the moving thing (*qâbil*) actually moving. Thus that which moves (*mutaḥarrik*), cannot move by itself; it needs an originator or cause to make it actually moving. Otherwise there would be an effect without an originator or cause.²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, pt. 3, p. 38.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 40.

Chapter 6

Mîr Findiriskî

On

Vocations
(*Şanâyi`*)

Mîr Findiriskî's *Risâlah-i Şinâ'îyyah* (Treatise on Professions and Crafts)

Since this *Risâlah* is of particular significance and is considered by many of Mîr Findiriskî's biographers as Mîr Findiriskî's most original and important work, I would like to consider in this chapter some of its contents and briefly summarize its main philosophical concepts. Written in Persian,²⁸¹ the *Risâlah-i Şinâ'îyyah* is also well-known under the title *Ḥaqâyiḡ al-Şanâ'î* ' (The Truthfulness of the Vocations) or *Şanâyi' al-Ḥaqâ'iq* (The Vocations of Truths).²⁸² It surveys the physical as well as metaphysical²⁸³ vocations in human society from a traditional point of view.

In this work he compares people of different social levels and the portion that each has in society, to the main elements of the world, and (to the) worlds of intellect

²⁸¹ Edited and introduced by Alî Akbar-i Shihâbî (Tehran: Sa'âdat Press, 1317 Solar). An incomplete version of this *Risâlah* is also included in Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtiyânî and H. Corbin, *Muntakhabâtî az Ḥukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran*, vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tablîqât-i Islâmî, 1985, pp. 63-80). For the sake of authenticity of the text of *Risâlah Şinâ'îyyah* and its exact attribution to Mîr Findiriskî see Shaykh 'Âqâ Buzurg Tihrânî, *al-Dharî'ah 'ilâ Taṣnîf-i al-Shî'a*. Bayrût: Dâr al-'Aḡwâ', 1983. Vol. 15, p. 89. See also Ahmad Gulchîn Ma'ânî, *Fihrist-i Kitâbkhânah-i Âstân-i Quds-i Raḡawî*, vol. 4 (Mashhad: Châpkhânah Tûs, 1926), pp. 204-5, & *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaṡṡî-yi Kitâbkhânah Markazî-yi Âstân-i Qudsî Raḡavî*, vol. 1, p. 170. & *Fihristi Kutubi Khaṡṡî-yi Majlisi Shûrâ-yi Milli*, vols. (9), p. 618, (11), p. 153, (12), pp. 293-4, (13), p. 199. & Dânish Pazhûh, *Fihristi Nuskah-hâ-yi Khaṡṡî-yi Kitâbkhânah Dânishkadîhah Adbîyyât*, 1339 solar, p. 351.

²⁸² See note 146 and *Fihristi Kutubi Khaṡṡî-yi Majlisi Shûrâ-yi Milli*, vol. (9), p. 618.

²⁸³ Means immaterial and incorporeal. However the central meaning shared by these adjectives is lacking material body or form. See *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Third Edition*. Electronic version.

and soul, and maintains that there is equilibrium between them. Mîr Findiriskî was not the only thinker to consider the variety of sciences known in his day. For we may consider Mîr Dâmâd's *Risâlah al-I'ḍâlât fî Funûn al-'Uûm wa al-Şinâ'ât*, Mullâ Muḥsi-ni Kâshânî's *Fihrist al-'Ulûm*, and Muḥaqqiq-i Shîrwânî's (d.1099/1687) *Unmûdhaj al-'Ulûm* to be other notable examples of this genre of writing.²⁸⁴

The *Risâlah*, which is comprised of an introduction or "preliminary notes" twenty-four chapters and a conclusion, tries to convey the diverse nature of Islamic intellectual output in some conceptual form. In the introduction Mîr Findiriskî enumerates the subjects with which he plans to deal in the work; this includes the definition of *şinâ'ah*, the kinds of *şinâ'ah*, the benefits of *şinâ'ah*, the advantages and disadvantages of *şinâ'ah*, the ends and classification of *şinâ'ah*, the relations between *şanâyî*, and the portion and the position of each *şinâ'ah*.

Chapter One: Definition of *şinâ'ah* (pl. *şanâyî*).

As is clear from the title and from the author's explanations, the *şanâyî* are defined here very broadly. They include everything, which is obtained from man's knowing faculties (*quwâ-yi 'âqilah*) as well as man's cognitive faculties (*quwâ-yi 'âlimah*). Accordingly *şinâ'ah* here does not only mean industries, crafts, arts and related occupations. Naşr says in this regard: "In this work various occupations and professions in society are placed in a hierarchy corresponding to the hierarchy of knowledge and also of being"²⁸⁵ He classes human actions, vocations, jobs and theoretical as well as practical activities according to a hierarchy, which culminates in the responsibilities of prophets and philosophers.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁴ See H. Dabashi, "Mîr Dâmâd and the Founding of the 'School of Isfahan,'" P. 624.

²⁸⁵ Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

²⁸⁶ Mîr Findiriskî, *Risâlah Şinâ'îyyah*, ed. & introd. 'Alî Akbar-i Shihâbî (Tehran: Sa'âdat Press, 1317), pp. 1-3.

Chapter Two: The necessity of the *san`ah* and a core clarification of the structural nature of the *san`ah* and its benefits.

In describing *sinâ`ah* as a warning to people against vanity and inactivity, an incitement to people to pursue vocations and a counsel against taking up less profitable jobs or dishonorable vocations, he depicts man as a “small world” (*`âlam-i saghîr*) or “microcosm” and the world as a “great man” (*insân-i kabîr*). He proclaims that as man’s organs need each other in completing, performing, and upholding man’s potential, such that the indisposition of one organ can cause derangement of the others, the assuming of an unsuitable vocation by one person causes disturbance in the order of the whole world. Again, as even a single limb in a healthy man’s body is not idle, useless, wasted, suspended or inactive, and since when such things happen, disorder arise in man’s mood, health, condition and pleasure, then he tries to treat that limb. If that limb is not treated, is considered useless and as extinct and nonexistent, the same is true in regard to the position of a person in the world. Since everybody in this world, this “great human” (*insân-i kabîr*), is considered a limb, each must perform and accomplish his duty and responsibility, and if he does not do so, he should be considered a useless limb, which causes disorder. Consequently, the great human, which is the world, in keeping with its universal intellect, should recognize, treat and even, if necessary, cut off that limb. This ontological and philosophical problem, Mîr Findiriskî says, recalls what intellectuals say in regard to justifying the divine reward and God’s punishment. God’s discontent and anger as well as His satisfaction are neither revenge (*intiqâm*) nor retaliation (*mukâfât*), for God has no need to do these things. It is, philosophers say, justice and valuation. This is, Mîr Findiriskî says, exactly what Plato has declared: God, exalted and created the world and arranged and ordered it with an intellectual classification, so that one who

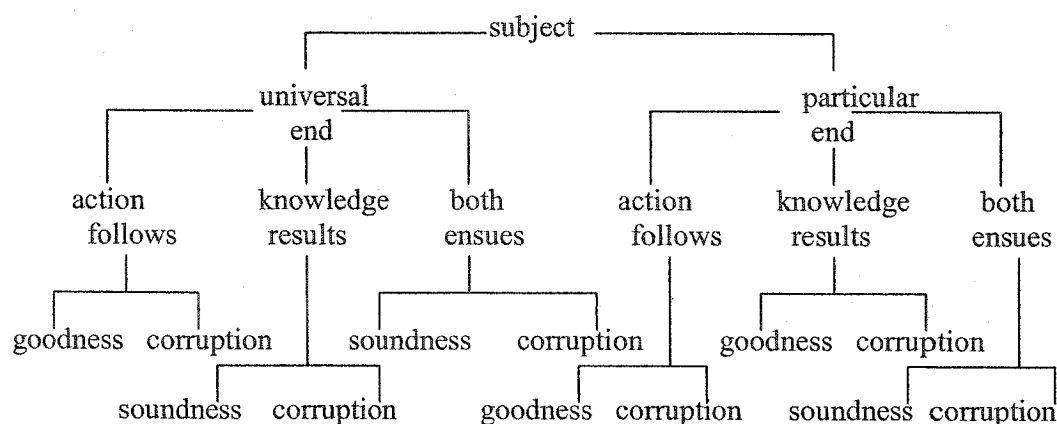
disagrees with what God arranged opposes him and one who opposes him deserves and is liable to evaluation, and evaluation is punishment. The above clarification, Mîr Findiriskî says, shows that everybody must try, as best he can, to pursue a *şinâ`ah* which represents the order of individuals, the order of mankind and the order of the whole world.²⁸⁷

Chapters Three to Eighteen

Chapters three to eighteen constitute the major portion of this *Risâlah*. In them Mîr Findiriskî discusses the divergences of *şanâyi`*. He divides *şanâyi`* into two main categories; those that may be considered exalted, noble and honorable and those characterized by small-mindedness, meanness and wickedness. In these sections Mîr Findiriskî considers some *şanâyi`* as necessarily fruitful, some others as unnecessarily fruitful, still others as essentially good and yet others as only accidentally good and worthy.²⁸⁸ In spite of the fact that he made different divisions of diverse vocations in Chapters Three to Six, I think the most comprehensive division is the one that he delineates in Chapter Six, while the following twelve chapters are designated as an explanation of this division. Thus, in Chapter Six, he maintains that *şinâ`ah* in its general and extensive meaning includes metaphysical and theoretical sciences as well as the sciences of society. In the following twelve chapters he proceeds to explain in detail the components and contents of this breakdown, distinguishing between twelve vocations and sciences in society depending on the subject and the end with which each one deals. The subjects and possible results of the various vocations and sciences are as follows:

²⁸⁷ Findiriskî, *Şinâ`îyyah*, ed. Shihâbî, pp. 3-5.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, pp. 8-10



These twelve vocations, depending on their subjects and ends can lead to different results: (i) where the subject is universal or general and the end is both action as well as knowledge from both of which there comes only goodness; (ii) the subject is universal and the end is both action as well as knowledge from both of which there comes only corruption; (iii) the subject is universal and the end is knowledge whence there comes only goodness; (iv) the subject is universal and the end is knowledge whence there comes only corruption; (v) the subject is universal and the end is action whence there comes only goodness; and (vi) the subject is universal and the end is action whence there comes only corruption.

Mîr Findiriskî adds to the above categories six more vocations and sciences the subjects of which are no longer general. These include a series of vocations and sciences where: (vii) the subject is partial and the end is both action and knowledge,

from both of which there comes only goodness; (viii) the subject is partial and the end is both action and knowledge, from both of which there comes only corruption; (ix) the subject is partial and the end is knowledge whence there comes only goodness; (x) the subject is partial and the end is knowledge whence there comes only corruption; (xi) the subject is partial and the end is action whence there comes only goodness; and (xii) the subject is partial and the end is action whence there comes only corruption.²⁸⁹

Mîr Findiriskî provides both models, patterns and representations of the above twelve categories allowing him to place every group at its own level and also provide some explanation of each group and its identification. He says²⁹⁰ that the first class of the twelve vocations includes prophets, Imams and philosophers. They are the most exalted of men who sustain the noblest vocation in which the subject covers universal goodness and the end is both knowledge and action from which there comes only goodness. The second includes those who opposed prophets, Imams and philosophers. They are the leaders of atheists, free thinkers, repressive caliphs, and sophists. They are the lowest of men and possess the lowest of vocations in which the subject accommodates universal evil and where the end is both knowledge and action whence there comes only corruption. This group is in turn composed of three classes, with each class formed of three levels.²⁹¹ The third vocation includes theologians who enrich and cultivate speculative philosophy (*hikmat-i nazari*), while the fourth vocation represents the opposite of the third. The fifth category is made up of the jurists (*fuqahâ'*) who cultivate practical philosophy (*hikmat-i 'amali*), while the sixth category is composed of their opposites,²⁹² e.g., Mazdak who believed in the communal ownership of women and property.

²⁸⁹ Ibid, pp. 13-14.

²⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 14.

²⁹¹ Ibid, pp. 22-24.

²⁹² Ibid, p. 43.

The last six vocations refer to particular professionals and sciences. The first of this group of vocations, or the seventh in our index, is that of professionals in particular and includes vocations like that of physician, machinist, operator, craftsman, and engineer. The eighth on the other hand is that of their opposites, those who misuse these vocations. The ninth includes people who have only a theoretical knowledge of their particular vocation and science like music, medicine, or the principles of jurisprudence, while the tenth is the opposite of the ninth. The eleventh is that of vocations limited to a particular subject while the twelve is that of its opposite whence includes the rejection of those vocations.²⁹³

In this classification the honor of each vocation rests on the greatness of the subject matter in question. Also the degree of disgrace of a person or group depends on the truth that has been negated; the higher the degree of truth, the lower is he who negates it. The classification configured by Mîr Findiriskî mirrors the hierarchy of both sciences and also that of *hikmat* itself. However, in both cases religious sciences like theology, jurisprudence and practical and theoretical philosophy are regarded as superior to the natural sciences, while *hikmat* is seen to be above theology and prophecy and the Imamate is above all vocations, physical as well as spiritual.²⁹⁴

Mîr Findiriskî designates for each of the twelve categories a chapter in which he describes in brief the comprehensive attitude of each group. Since a survey of all the chapters is beyond the limitations of this work, we will glance at the most important philosophical and mystical points.

Prophecy, Imamate and Philosophy

²⁹³ Ibid, p. 50 and Naşr, "The School of Isfahan," p. 925.

²⁹⁴ Naşr, "The School of Isfahan," pp. 925-926.

The first of the twelve categories, as stated above, concerns the prophets, Imams²⁹⁵, and philosophers.²⁹⁶ These vocations, Mîr Findiriskî says, in which the subject is universal and the end considered to be both action and knowledge from both of which there comes only goodness; are the most noble jobs in the world. The performers of these vocations are the most exalted and are pure blessing to men who maintain the order of the universe. They are universal intellects that possess the divine code of law (*sharî'ah*).²⁹⁷

Mîr Findiriskî surmises that prophets and Imams are like physicians. As the doctors and physicians are the healers of the bodies of individuals, the prophets and the Imams²⁹⁸ are doctors of the souls and hearts and society. This means that as the doctors of the human body know how to treat the diseases of their patients, the doctors of the souls and society (Prophets and Imams) know how to remove the sociological, psychological and spiritual ailments of their patients by their skillful guidance and their use of knowledge derived from the realm of reality and *sharî'ah*. So, just as it is not permitted for one who is physically sick to object to the method of treatment nor the nature of medicine given by the physician, the person who is sociologically, spiritually or psychologically sick is not permitted to object to the spiritual doctor, nor to his methods of guidance. Indeed, objecting to any doctor,

²⁹⁵ According to Shî'h religious thought, Imam 'Ali Ibn Abî Tâlib (as) (and his eleven descending sons one after other) are legitimate successors and rightful Caliphs of all Muslims as decreed by the Almighty God in the Qur'ân and well versed in Ghadîr Khum (18/4/10 HQ) through His most infallible and faithful servant, Mohammad ibn Abdullah, the last Holy Prophet and the Messenger of Allâh (as).

²⁹⁶ Findiriskî, *Sinâ'îyyah*, ed. Shihâbî, p. 14. Since Mîr Findiriskî in this chapter sets philosophers in the category of prophets and Imams to avoid confusion, he consigns a new chapter on the "differences between prophets and philosophers" to classify them in their real and specific levels.

²⁹⁷ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 341.

²⁹⁸ Seyyed Husyn-i Nasr, *Sûfî Essay* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 108. According to Shî'î doctrine, besides the power of prophecy in the sense of bringing a divine law (*nubuwwah* and *risâlah*), the Prophet of Islam, like other great prophets before him, had the power of spiritual guidance and initiation (*walâyah*) which he transmitted to Fâtimah and 'Alî and through them to all the Imâms. Since the Imâm is always alive, this function and power are also always present in the world and are able to guide men to the spiritual life. The cycle of initiation (*dâ'irat al-walâyah*), which follows the cycle of prophecy (*dâ'irat al-nubuwwah*) is therefore one that continues to this day and guarantees the ever-living presence of an esoteric way in Islam.

whether of the physical or the spiritual, only increases the sickness of the sick person, for illness will be communicated through other parts of the sick person. In other words, if the physically sick person objects to the physician, and the physician abandons the course of treatment, disaster occurs. Similarly, if the spiritually sick person objects to the spiritual and social doctor, and the social and spiritual doctor abandons the treatment (that is the guidance), the sick person inevitably goes the false way. Thus, just as a physically sick person for his perfect health is obliged to take medicine from the physician, willingly or unwillingly, without objection, the spiritually sick person who desires perfect health is also obliged to accept spiritual medicine (guidance) from the spiritual doctor, willingly or unwillingly, without objection. Allâh refers to this meaning when he says: "But no, by thy Lord! They will not believe till they make the judge regarding the disagreement between them, then they shall find in themselves no impediment touching the verdict, but shall surrender in full submission" (*fa-lâ wa rabb-i-ka lâ yu'minûn hattâ yuḥakkimûnaka fimâ shajara baynahum thumma lâ-yajidû fî anfus-i-him ḥarajan mi-mmâ qaḍayta wa yusallimû taslîmâ*)²⁹⁹ This verse clearly explains that prophets are not only physicians of souls, they are also healers as well as fair judges. The result of such general treatment by prophets and Imams will be, Mîr Findiriskî says,³⁰⁰ a universal goodness in the society just as by contrast, laxity in treating social and spiritual problems infects the whole society.

"Prophetic philosophy" is a subject that has been raised and discussed by Sayyid Ḥaydar-i Âmulî (b.719/1298) one of the most famous mystical writers of the eighth/fourteenth century. The approaches of these two great Twelvers Shî'î mystical-philosophers are very similar. For this reason, I would like to offer a comparison of

²⁹⁹ Arthur J. Arberry, tran. *The Koran*, Oxford University Press, 1964. (4/69).

³⁰⁰ Findiriskî, *Şinâ'îyyah*, ed. Shihâbî, p. 15.

their positions on "prophetic philosophy." Since Sayyid Haydar Âmulî is a relatively unknown figure, I will present his biography³⁰¹ and then explain his outlook on the Sharî'ah.

Sayyid Haydar Âmulî was born in 719/1298, and was active to the advanced age of 63. Sayyid Haydar Âmulî says himself at the end of the introduction to *Naşş al-Nuşûş* (the Text of Texts), which is a commentary on the *Fuşûş al-Hikam* (*The Bezels of Wisdom*) of Shaykh Muḥyi al-Dîn ibn 'Arabî, "I completed this commentary in 782 A.H. at the age of sixty-three."³⁰² Although no complete account of the life of this great gnostic has been written in Persian or Arabic, according to Muhammad Khâjavî,³⁰³ the brief genealogy and biography that appears in the first volume of his commentary entitled *al-Muḥîṭ al-'A'zam wa al-Ṭawd al-Asham fî Ta'wîl Kitâbillahi al-'Azîz al-Muḥkam* (The Mighty Ocean and Lofty Mountain: Esoteric Exegesis on the Clear and Precious Book of Allâh)³⁰⁴ is of particular value. In this book he says: "I am Rukn al-Dîn Haydar, the son of Sayyid Tâj al-Dîn Haydar 'Alî Pâdishâh, ..., the son of 'Ali ibn al-Husayn Zaynul al-Âbidîn, the son of Husayn the Shahîd-the martyr, the son of 'Ali ibn 'Abî Ṭâlib," thus he clearly linking himself to the Imâmîyah sect. In the introduction to his *Majma' al-'Asrâr wa Manba' al-Anwâr*, he himself points out that from his childhood to the age of thirty he was engaged in studying the doctrine of the Imâmîyah sect (*sharî'ah*) and their juridical school on the one hand while on the other, he devoted his attention to the Sûfis (*ḥaqîqah*); and he found that

³⁰¹ This section is partly based on my unpublished paper on "The Need of Intellect for the Divine Code of Laws and the Dependence of the Divine laws on the Intellect According to Sayyid Haydar Âmulî's View (b. 719-1298)."

³⁰² Sayyid Haydar Âmulî, *Kitâb Naşş al-Nuşûş min Sharḥ-i Fuşûş al-Hikam of Shaykh Muḥyi al-Dîn ibn 'Arab*, Ed. Henry Corbin and Osmân Yahyâ (Tehran: Institute of Iran and France, 1975), p. 537.

³⁰³ Muḥammad Khâjavî, *Inner Secrets of the Path; Sayyid Haydar Âmulî (Asrâr al-Sharî'ah wa Aṭwâr al-Ṭarîqah wa Anwâr al-Ḥaqîqah), With an Introduction and Explanatory Notes by Muḥammad Khâjavî*, Translated from the Original Arabic by Assadullah al-Dhâkir (Yate: Element Books in association with Zahra Publications, 1989), P. xiv.

³⁰⁴ The only copy of this book (*al-Muḥîṭ al-'A'zam wa al-Ṭawd al-Asham fî Ta'wîl Kitâbillahi al-'Azîz al-Muḥkam*) is held in Âyat Allâh Najsfî Mar'ashî's Library in Qum.

these two aspects came together without any real contradiction.³⁰⁵ He strongly emphasized that he was only the follower of his own forefathers - the infallible Imams - and never adopted invalid means. According to Henry Corbin, over the centuries there have only been a few people who have accepted Shi'ism in its totality, and Haydar Âmulî was one of them. "All through the centuries, one of the most moving aspects of Shi'ism has been the struggle of those who, along with the teaching of Imâms, have accepted Shi'ism in its totality. Such are Haydar Âmulî, Mullâ Sadrâ Shîrâzî...."³⁰⁶

According to H. Corbin "He was a follower of Ibn al-'Arabî, whom he admired and commentated, but he differs from him in one essential respect (*walâyah*)."³⁰⁷ He was contemporary with Rajab ibn Muḥammad al-Bursî, whose crucial work on Shiite gnosis was written in 774/1372. In the same context, H. Corbin says, "we may mention the names of great Sûfî shaikhs and prolific author, Shâh Ni'mat Allâh al-Walî (d. 834/1431), two Shî'î followers of Ibn al-'Arabî, Sâ'in al-Dîn Turkah al-Işfahânî (d. 830/1427 and Muḥammad ibn Abî Jumhûr al-Aḥsâ'î (d. 901/1495) and Shams al-Dîn Muḥammad al-Lâhijî (d. 918/1512), commentator on the famous mystic of Azerbâijân, Maḥmûd Shabastarî, who died in 720/1320 at the age of thirty-three."³⁰⁷ From 782/1261 A. H. onwards - apart from the fact that he wrote a book entitled *Risâlah fî al-'Ulûm al-'Âliyah*, - we know nothing about him. However apparently wrote over forty books and treatises about different subjects: mystic, logic, theology, ethics, philosophy and interpretation of Qur'ân. Of the forty or more works of this great gnostic few survive in substantial form. S. H. Âmulî in his introduction of to *Nass al-Nusûs* has listed about twenty-two of his books and treatises. Some of them

³⁰⁵ M. Khâjavî, *Inner Secrets of the Path*, 1989. p.xv.

³⁰⁶ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 26.

³⁰⁷ Ibid, P. 34.

are: 1. *Majma' al-Asrâr wa Manba' al-Anwâr* (Collection of Secrets and the Source of Lights). 2. *al-Muḥîṭ al-A'ẓam wa al-Ṭawd al-Asham fî Ta'wîl Kitâbillahi al-'Azîz al-Muḥkam* (The Mighty Ocean and Lofty Mountain: Esoteric Exegesis on the Clear and Precious Book of Allâh). 3. *Asrâr al-Sharî'ah wa Aṭwâr al-Ṭarîqah wa Anwâr al-Ḥaqîqah* 4. *Risâlat al-Wujûd fî Ma'rifat al-Ma'bûd* (Treatise on Existence; on the knowledge of the Deity). 5. *Naqd al-Nuqud fî Ma'rifat al-Wujûd* (Final Examination of the knowledge of Existence). 6. *Naṣṣ al-Nuṣûṣ fî Sharḥ al-Fuṣûṣ* (the Text of Texts Elucidating the Bezels).

Sayyid Ḥaydar Âmulî's Outlook on Sharî'ah

One of the most significant of his works is *Asrâr al-Sharî'ah wa Aṭwâr al-Ṭarîqah wa Anwâr al-Ḥaqîqah*, published with an introduction and corrections by M. Khâjavî in 1982. This book is twice mentioned by S. Ḥ. Âmulî in *Majma' al-Asrâr* and contains the subject matter for seven or eight of his main books. It contains the finest selection of S. Ḥ. Âmulî's ideas, both about the Islamic system of belief and the acts of worship. According to M. Khâjavî³⁰⁸, in the view of S. Ḥ. Âmulî, *Sharî'ah*, *Ṭarîqah*, and *Ḥaqîqah* are different names indicating one truth- namely the pattern of behavior of Muḥammad. Each has its own specific realm of meaning, as the almond consists of a shell, an outer skin and the kernel, so the shell is as the *Sharî'ah*, the outer skin the *Ṭarîqah* and kernel the *Ḥaqîqah*- the inner core; the almond as a whole embraces all three. In other words *Sharî'ah* is on a par with the divine message, *Ṭarîqah* with prophecy, and *Ḥaqîqah* with *wilâyah* (intimacy with Allâh).

S. Ḥ. Âmulî tried to reconcile Shî'ism and mysticism, just as he had done with intellect and the Divine code of laws, (*sharî'ah*). In this book (*Asrâr al-Sharî'ah wa Aṭwâr al-Ṭarîqah wa Anwâr al-Ḥaqîqah*) he deals with the problem of the need

³⁰⁸ M. Khâjavî, *Inner Secrets of the Path*, p. xli & xlii.

of the intellect for the divine law and the dependence of the divine law on the intellect. He outlines a critical history of Islamic philosophy and theology. S. H. Âmulî on this problem states that the likeness of the divine code and the intellect and the dependence of each on the other are also the likeness of the soul and the body and the dependence of each on the other. In other words, just as the manifestation of the soul and its attributes and perfection are not possible except by means of the body and its physical strength and the various limbs, the manifestation of the divine code and its various levels are not possible except by means of the intellect and by means of the different levels and stations of the intellect.³⁰⁹ Consequently, the divine code is not independent of the intellect nor the intellect independent of the divine code. S. H. Âmulî quotes³¹⁰ the most important Gnostic and philosopher al-Shaykh Abu'l Qâsim al-Husayn ibn Muḥammad al-Râghib al-Iṣfahânî from his book *Tafṣîl al-Nash'atain fi Taḥṣîl al-Sa'âdatain* and says:

"Know that the intellect never guides except by the divine code and that the divine code will never be understood except by the intellect. The intellect is like the foundation and the divine code is like the building: the building cannot be firmly established without a foundation. In another words, the intellect is like the faculty of sight and the divine code like the rays of light: sight is of no use without light and because of this Allâh says: '[A] Book manifest whereby God guidance whosoever follows His good pleasure in the ways of peace, and brings them forth from the shadows into the light by His leave; and he guides them to a straight path.'³¹¹ Again, the intellect is like a lamp and the divine code like the oil: if there is no oil, then the lamp will not burn, and without the lamp, there will be no light. Allâh has indicated this matter to us with His word "God is the Light of the heavens and the earth;... (He is) Light upon Light."³¹²

"Light upon Light", in this verse, clearly means that light of the divine code is above the light of intellect because the former will not shine without the latter.

³⁰⁹ M. Khâjavî, *Inner Secrets of the Path*, p. 45.

³¹⁰ Ibid, p. 46.

³¹¹ Arberry, *The Koran*, (5/19).

³¹² Ibid, (24/35).

Similarly we can say, the divine code is the intellect from outside and the intellect is the divine code from inside.

In summary, according to S. H. Âmulî, the two (the divine code and the intellect) are mutually supportive, even united. Because if the intellect is missing the divine code does not cover in detail all aspects of belief and if the divine code is missing, the intellect is incapable of dealing with many of the details. This is because the divine code is as the eye and the intellect is as the light or vice-versa: neither of the two can do without the other.³¹³

Mîr Findiriskî's Outlook on *Sharî'ah*

Mîr Findiriskî also assigned a high range of responsibility to the *sharî'ah* and its apostles and possessors. He considered the latter as universal medicine for both individual as well as social problems. He maintains that as physicians should treat an illness of a limb as soon as they can, otherwise the problem develops and covers the whole body, prophets and Imams (who are in this world as sun and moon in whose hand is the order of the world), should treat, medicate, and manage psychological and social problems; otherwise, the problem grows and covers the whole society, with the result that society itself suffers and is hurt. Like a skillful physician looking for the general goodness of individual bodies and not the goodness of mere segments of bodies, Prophets and Imams also look for the universal goodness of society and not only the goodness of individuals and persons.

In Chapter Twenty the author maintains that the vocations are limited in actuality (*bi al-fi'l*) and unlimited in potency (*bi al-quwwah*), and that the subject of

³¹³ M. Khâjavî, *Inner Secrets of the Path*, p. 47.

some of the *ṣanâ'iyi* is the end of another *ṣanâ'ah* and this continues to reach to a *ṣanâ'h* for which there is no goal.

Mîr Findiriskî's Position in Regard to Şûfism

Some authors of *tadhkiras* are of the opinion that Mîr Findiriskî was a şûfî and even a dervish who possessed no mystical or even philosophical knowledge.³¹⁴ Since I had explained Mîr Findiriskî's scientific life in my biographical notes in the first chapter, here I would like to indicate two points. In the above chapter where Mîr Findiriskî speaks of philosophers, not only he did not mention mystics in the line of philosophers, moreover, in regards of differences between Amîr al-Muminîn (the commander of the faithful) 'Alî ibn 'Abî Tâlib (as); cousin of the prophet Muḥammad and husband of Muhammad's daughter, who were appointed by the Prophet as his first successors, and Ḥasan-i Başrî³¹⁵ Mîr Findiriskî clearly states that while Amîr al-Muminîn 'Alî ibn 'Abî Tâlib (as) was fighting, defending and developing Islam and looking for universal goodness for Islamic society, Ḥasan was praying, striving to acquire a good living for himself alone and looking for personal goodness. How do we judge these two actions? Mîr Findiriskî asks. One is that 'Alî (as) who was looking for universal goodness for the whole society and did not mind what might happen to himself, whether he benefits from this high risk situation or no; in other words, he devoted himself for the sake of the happiness of the Muslim Cummunity while the other (Ḥasan) who was looking to develop his own personal benefits, goodness and happiness which *follows evil*.³¹⁶ Since Amîr al-Muminîn 'Alî ibn 'Abî Tâlib (as)

³¹⁴ See Alî Akbar-i Shihâbî in his introduction to Mîr Findiriskî's *Risâlah Şanâ'îyyah* (Mshhad: Intishârât-i Farhang-i Khurâsân, 1317 Solar), Introduction.

³¹⁵ al-Ḥasan al-Başrî, the leader of the disciples of the Companions of the Prophet was, in fact, the son of Yasar the slave of Zayd Ibn Thabet al-Anşârî. His mother Umm al-Ḥasan was a slave woman of Umm al-Salamah, the wife of the Prophet peace be upon him. So he was born in the house of the Prophet, and his father's master was one of the famous scribes who recorded Divine revelation for the unlettered Prophet.

³¹⁶ Mîr Findiriskî, *Şinâ'îyyah*, ed. Shihâbî, p. 16.

constantly put himself in dangerous positions for the sake of defending Islam and the Muslim Ummah and was faithfully looking for the universal happiness of Muslims, God praised him, Mîr Findiriskî says, in Qur'ân in chapter 2, verse 207, "And among men there is one³¹⁷ who sells his self (soul) seeking the pleasure of God; and verily, God is affectionate unto His (faithful) servants." According to Sunni commentators (such as Tha'âlabî, Ghazâlî the author of *Ihyâ' 'ulûm al-dîn*) and all Shî'î commentators, who are unanimous, this verse was revealed in praise of 'Alî (as) when he slept in the bed of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (ṣ), when the latter in response to the will of the Lord, had to suddenly migrate from Mecca to Madina.³¹⁸ In this regard Mîr Findiriskî considered Ḥasan's action useless for the Ummah or action, which definitely, Mîr Findiriskî says, follows corruption. This judgment about Ḥasan clearly indicates that Mîr Findiriskî was neither a "Sufi" nor even pro-"Şûfî." There is yet another reason why we can not consider Mîr Findiriskî as a "Şûfî." For in chapter eleven, he strongly praised the jurists, *fuqahâ*, and considered their motivation to be assimilated in man's body.³¹⁹

³¹⁷ 'Alî Ibn Abî Ṭâlib who readily risked his life to save the Holy Prophet on the night of his Hijrah (migration) from Meccâ to Madina.

³¹⁸ See *The Holy Qur'ân*, With English Translation of the Arabic Text and commentary according to the version of the Holy Ahl al-Bait (sa), Mîr Ahmed Ali, Elmhurst (New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'ân, Inc. 1995), p. 204, note 231.

³¹⁹ Findiriskî, *Şinâ'iyah*, ed. Shihâbî, p. 40.

Chapter 7

Mîr Findiriskî

On

The Problem of *Tashkîk*
(Gradation)

Introduction

Gradation (Systematic Ambiguity = *tashkîk*) and Fundamental Reality (Principality) of Existence (*işâlah al-wujûd*) (or Quiddity = *işâlah al-mâhîyah*) have remained two great controversial problems in the thought and writings of celebrated Muslim philosophers for a long time. On this problem Muslim philosophers have been divided into two major groups. Those who believe in the fundamental reality and gradation of quiddity like Ibn Sînâ, Shaykh-i Ishrâq, Mîr Findiriskî and their followers, and those who believe in the fundamental reality and gradation of existence like Mullâ Şadrâ, Mullâ Hâdî Sabzavârî and their followers. However, the fundamental reality of existence and the gradation of being are the two most important characteristics of Mullâ Şadrâ's transcendental philosophy (*al-Ḥikmah al-Muta'âlîyah*). Since we have discussed fully this problem elsewhere³²⁰ I am not going to deal with his problem in detail here. In this section, I would like to just address those points that clarify Mîr Findiriskî's position in regard to the problem of *tashkîk*.

³²⁰ M.A. thesis.

Mîr Findiriskî in his *Risâlah-i Tashkîk*³²¹ (that is identical to the work referred to in the various *tadhkira* by the title *Jawâb-i Su'âlât-i Âqâ Muẓaffar-i Kâshânî*)³²² clearly asserts that he believes in gradation of quiddity (*tashkîk al-mâhîyah*). In this work, a Persian treatise on the gradation of essences, Aqâ Muẓaffar Kâshânî, a philosopher and contemporary of Mîr Findiriskî asked him whether he believed in the gradation and analogy of essences (*dhâtîyât*) as well as accidents. Mîr Findiriskî, in his answer, follows those who believe in the principality of quiddity and follows those peripatetic philosophers who believe in gradation in accidents of quiddities and does not claim that there is analogy and gradation between essences too, like illuminationist philosophers, Suhrawardî and his followers who do believe in both gradation in essences as well as accidents. As is evident, this position is as far from that of the illuminationist philosophers as it is from the metaphysics of being of such thinkers as Mullâ Şadrâ, who do not believe in analogy and gradation, neither between essences nor accidents and who basically believe in fundamental reality and gradation only in existence and attribute to essences accidentally. Since *tashkîk*, gradation of essences (or existence) is one of the most crucial polemic problems in Islamic philosophy, I would like, therefore, to identify it in general first and then to identify Mîr Findiriskî's position.

History

Prior to al-Fârâbî almost all philosophical discussions were centered on essences, or to put it differently, they were, at least unconsciously, based on the fundamental reality and gradation of essence. In Muslim philosophical works, such as those of al-Fârâbî, Ibn Sînâ, Bahmanyâr ibn Marzubân, Mîr Dâmâd and Mîr

³²¹ For the authenticity of the attribution of this text to Mîr Findiriskî see Tihirânî, *al-Dharî'ah*, vol., 11, p. 148; see also F. Muḡtabâ'î, "Findiriskî," p. 171; Naşr, "Findiriskî," p. 308.

³²² This *Risâlah* is included in Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî and H. Corbin's work *Muntakhabât az Ḥukamâ-yi Ilâhî-yi Iran*, vol. 1 (Qum: Markaz-i Intishârât-i Daftar-i Tablîqât-i Islâmî, 1985), pp. 91-94.

Findiriskî, not only is this tendency clearly noticed, but also there are clear declarations of this position on the topic. Neither are clear indications found of any tendency toward the fundamental reality and gradation of existence in Greek philosophy. Although Shaykh-i Ishrâq (Suhurvardî), who paid particular attention to intellectual concepts (*i'tibârât-i 'aqlî*), took up a position against the tendency toward the fundamental reality of existence, nevertheless, Şadr al-Muta'allihîn (Mullâ Şadrâ) was the first to place this topic at the head of the discussion of ontology, and he suggested a solution to almost all other philosophical problems on this basis (fundamental reality of existence).³²³ Therefore, it is quite necessary to have a look at the concept and definition of *tashkîk*, the principles, modes and types of *tashkîk*, as well as *tashkîk* in substance, in quiddity, in accidents, and in existence. It is only through this analytical, conceptual, and philosophical discussion that we may arrive at Mîr Findiriskî's position.

The Concept and Definition of *Tashkîk*

What do *tashkîk* (gradation) and *mushakkak* (graduated) mean?

In Logic: with regard to the quality of application to instances, universal concepts, are divided into two groups: 1. Univocal universal concepts (*mafâhîm-i kullî-yi mutawâfî'*) which are those whose applications to all individuals are equal and their individuals have no priority or precedence or other differences in being instances of that concept. For example, the concept of man is equally predicted by all its instances. There is no man, which in respect to its corporeality has any preference over other men. Although each of the men has its own specific (properties) and some of them have advantages over the others, with regard to the application of the concept of man, there is no difference between them. 2. Gradual universal concepts (*mafâhîm-*

³²³ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmûzish-i Falasafah*, vol 1, p. 294.

i kullī-yi mushakkik) are those concepts whose application to individuals (i.e. their instances), are different. Some of them have preference over others with respect to being instances of such concepts, as all lines are not the same with respect to being instances of length. For example, the instantiation of a line of one meter is more than the instantiation of a line of one centimeter. Or, the concept of white is not predicted equally to all its instances, some of which are whiter than others. The concept of existence is a *mushakkik* (gradual) concept, for its application to things is not equal and there are priorities and precedence among its individuals. For example, the application of the existence to God, which has no kind of limitation, is completely different to the application of the existence to other existences. Faḍlur al-Rahmān says:

Essences are dysfunctionally related to existence: the more a thing exhibits by way of essence, the less of existence it has. At the lowest rung of the scale of existence is primary matter which, in fact, does not exist but is merely a concept, i.e., an essence, since it is defined as 'potentiality of existence.' The highest point in this scale is God, who is absolute existence and hence has no essence and is not amenable to conceptual thought at all. Existence is not structured within this scale like static grades or levels of being, as al-Suhrawardī believed, but is actually moving from the lowest point toward the highest.³²⁴

The question, however, is that whether essential concepts (*mafāhîm-i mâhuvi*) are capable of being graduated in and by themselves. Basically, how many kinds of graduation may we consider in essential concepts? It should be noted that the proponents of the fundamental reality of quiddity have accepted several kinds of graduation such as graduation in amount (e.g., length) in quantities and graduation in weakness and intensity (e.g., colour) in qualities. In contrast to proponents of the fundamental reality of quiddities are the proponents of the principality of existence,

³²⁴ F. Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Sadrâ*, p. 36.

who consider graduation in quiddities to be accidental (*'araḡi*) and not essential (*dhātī*). They do believe that the main sources of these differences in quiddities lie in their existences.³²⁵

In philosophy: It should be noted that univocal (*mutawāḡi*) and equivocal (*mushakkik*) are descriptions of concepts and if we call the vocable (word) with these attributions, it is because the words are annihilated into the concepts.³²⁶ Moreover concepts, also, qua concept may not be graduatable. In other words concepts as such are not subject to graduation, and these are instances, which are in different grades. However, here Muslim philosophers have been divided into two groups. Later Muslim peripatetic philosophers believe that there are no differences within a single essence and the differences are only in particular existences of an essence. Thus, for example, when white color intensifies in a body, there is no difference in general "whiteness (*al-bayâḡ*)," but instances of whiteness (*al-bayâḡ*) differ one from another, for when white color intensifies, a new species of white arises and the previous white colour goes out of existence. Moreover, Mullâ Ṣadrâ and Sabzawârî and many others constitute what is known as the Pahlawî School. Their dissension is that both "existence" and "existent" are "one" and, at the same time, "many": multiplicity being unity, and unity being multiplicity. Thus, particular "existences" are not entirely devoid of reality. They are real. Their reality exists in their being "pure relations" (*rawâbiṡ maḡḡah*), not in their being independent entities having relations to their source. This observation about the ontological status of particular "existences" leads the philosopher to the thesis that although "existence" is one single "reality" possessed

³²⁵ Maḡmoud Shahâbî, *Rahbar-i Khirad, Qismat-i Manḡiqiyyât* (Tehran: Châpkhânah-i Haydarî, 1981), p. 35. See also M. T. Miṡbâḡ, *Âmûzish-i Falasafah*, vol. 1, pp. 322-3. See also Ṣadr al-Dîn Muḡammad Shîrazî, *Manḡiq-I Nivîn*, trans. & comment, Abdul al-Husain Miṡkât al-Dînî (Tehran: Muassasah Intishârât-I Âḡâḡ, 1982), p. 147.

³²⁶ See Abû Alî Sînâ, *Dânishnâmah-i 'Alâî*, ed. Ahmad Khurâsânî (Tehran: Kitâbkhânah-I Fârâbî, 1981), p. 8.

in varying grades in terms of intensity and weakness, perfection and imperfection, priority and posteriority, etc. These differences do not compromise the original unity and of the reality of "existence", because that by which they differ from one another is exactly that by which they are united. This is what Mullâ Şadrâ and most philosophers after him call the doctrine of the "analogical gradation" of "existence."³²⁷

In contrast to these philosophers are those (like Suhrawardî) who contended that a single specific essence may have a range of intensity and need not be replaced by another specific essence, while a qualitative intensification takes place. Thus, for example, when white color intensifies, not only does "whiteness" but also "black" remain the same, yet a qualitative increase has taken place. The same point is true with "animal" which remains the same yet animality can increase or decrease. Therefore, according to Suhrawardî, all essences are capable of "more or less" or "increase and decrease": a man can be more of a man as an animal can be more of an animal than another:

The animalness of man, for example, is more perfect than the animalness of a mosquito. One cannot deny that the one is more perfect than the other merely on the ground that in conventional language one cannot say, 'the animalness of this is greater than that of the other.' The opponent's statement that one cannot say 'This is more perfect in point of essence than the other' is based on imprecision in the conventional language.³²⁸

As I mentioned earlier, although Mullâ Şadrâ has accepted the doctrine of "more perfect and less perfect" of Suhrawardî as the bases of his philosophy, nevertheless he made two fundamental changes in it. First, according to him, the principle of *tashkîk* is essentially and primarily applied to existence -for existence is the only original reality- and only derivatively to essences. The second difference

³²⁷ H. M. H. Sabzawârî, *Sharḥ-i Ghurar al-Farâ'id or Sharḥ-i Manzûmah*, edited by M. Muḥqqiq & T. Izutsu (Tehran: McGill University, Tehran Branch, 1969), pp. 119-132.

³²⁸ Quoted in F. Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Şadrâ*, p. 35.

with Suhrawardî is that since existence is not static but in perpetual movement, existence is not only ambiguous, rather it is systematically ambiguous.³²⁹ There exist endless grades and degrees. The lowest grade of the scale of existence is primary matter which it has potentially existence and the highest grade in this scale is God, who is absolute existence.³³⁰

How the Problem of *Tashkîk* Was Composed?

As we saw earlier, the problem of *tashkîk* starts from logic. Logicians were the first group who divided the universal concepts into two groups: univocal (*mutawâtî'*) and equivocal (*mushakîk*) concepts. Since concepts qua concepts are not accorded intensity and weakness, perfection and deficiency, priority and posteriority, thus it should be the instances, which accept intensity and weakness, perfection and deficiency, priority and posteriority. In this case it became a philosophical discussion, for the problem is not still conceptual, rather it is now in reality and actuality. Here, some of those who believe in fundamental reality of quiddity go to prove *tashkîk* to be present in both substances as well as in accidents, and some of them go to prove *tashkîk* to be just in some accidents (like Mîr Findiriskî), and yet those who believe in fundamental reality of existence go to prove *tashkîk* to be essentially in existences only and derivatively in quiddities.

The Modes or the Reasons of *Tashkîk*

We may consider the reasons of *tashkîk* in following ways: 1. superiority (*awlawiyyat*) and unsuperiority, like the superiority of the cause over the caused; 2. wealth and poverty; 3. priority and posteriority; 4. intensity and weakness; 5. Perfection and deficiency; 6. more and less.³³¹

³²⁹ Ibid.

³³⁰ F. Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Sadrâ*, p. 36.

³³¹ See S. M. Shirazi, *Manfiq-i Nivîn*, pp. 147-8.

The Principles of *Tashkîk*

Tashkîk is based on four principles: (i) An equivocal universal concept. (ii) instances of the equivocal universal, in which we observe *tashkîk*. (iii) The source and the origin of communion and similarity, and (iv) the source and the origin of variance and difference. The necessity of the first and second principles to *tashkîk* is evident. We may also observe the necessity of the third and fourth principles for the sake of comparing and preferring. Since there is no preferring between opposites (*mutaḍād* like the concepts of man and tree, none of the instances of the tree is man, and vice versa) and agreeable (*mutawâfiq* like the concepts of man and thinker such that every man is a thinker and every thinker is a man, all instances of these two universal concepts are the same) concepts. In other words, those concepts that are in opposition with each other, or are complete agreeable cannot be compared to or preferred one to another. Thus, so far as these four principles do not exist, we may not observe *tashkîk*.³³²

Types of *Tashkîk*

Anologicity (*tashkîk*) is technically divided into three types: (1) "anologicity" in a specialized sense (*tashkîk khâṣṣī*); (2) "anologicity" in a popular (non-specialized) sense (*tashkîk `ammī*), and (3) "anologicity" in a more specialized sense (*tashkîk-i akhaṣṣī*). The first kind of "anologicity" is where the source of communion (*mansh` al-ishtirâk*) is identical to the source of variance (*mansha` al-ikhtilâf*). For example, the light of the sun, of the moon, of a lamp, and of a firefly is one single reality of light; yet, it is represented in each of them differently. They differ from one another by the very same reality, which makes them identical with each other. The second kind of "anologicity" is where the source of communion (*mansha` al-ishtirâk*) is

³³² Ibid, pp. 147-153.

different to the source of variance (*mansha` al-ikhtilâf*). For example, the concept of "being-existent" as it is predicated on Adam, Noah, Moses, Jesus and Muhammad, (when we say: "Adam is existent") who in spite of "being-existent" were also in the relation of priority-posteriority. The difference among these prophets is not caused in regard to the time of their appearance by their "being-existent" itself, but by the nature of time, which permits priority and posteriority. The third kind of "analogicity" is where what has analogicity (*mâ fih-i al-tashkîk*), the source of communion (*mansh` al-ishtirâk*) and the source of variance (*mansha` al-ikhtilâf*) are identical. Like the reality of existence, which not only acts as the principle of identity and unity of all existent "realities," but it is at the same time the very principal by which they differ one from each other in terms of intensity-weakness, perfection-imperfection, and priority-posteriority. All these differences are nothing other than intrinsic modalities of the same reality visa "existence."³³³

The Meaning of *Tashkîk* in Existence

What does *tashkîk* in existence mean?

As we mentioned earlier *tashkîk* is either in a concept or in the opposite of the concept, i.e. in reality. The *tashkîk* in existence is the second one: I mean it is in reality. "*Tashkîk* in the reality of existence" means that existence by its essence (*bi-dhâti-hî*) differs in terms of intensity-weakness, perfection-deficiency, and priority-posteriority. Fazlur Rahman says:³³⁴

The proposition that existence is systematically ambiguous means:
 (1) that, in a sense, existence in all things is basically the same; otherwise, if there were utter difference between things in point of existence, the term "existence" would not have the same meaning at all and there would not be ambiguity or analogy but utter difference;
 (2) that existence, by being the same, yet creates fundamental differences which render every existent unique: existents are not

³³³ Sabzawari, *Sharh-i Ghurar al-Farâ'id*, pp. 136-7.

³³⁴ F. Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Sadrâ*, pp. 36-7.

like onions, which can be entirely peeled off without a residue, but rather like "family faces" which have something basic in common yet each is unique; and (3) that, thanks to substantive movement in existence, all the lower forms of existence are contained in and transcended by higher forms.

According to Mullâ Şadrâ's doctrine, we may put his doctrine of *tashkîk* in the following way: existence itself is many. This multiplicity is a result of the very nature of the principle of existence, which, by its virtue of being the principle of identity and sameness, is the principle of multiplicity and difference. This is what Mullâ Şadrâ called the principle of *tashkîk*.

The Meaning of *Tashkîk* in Quiddity

Tashkîk in quiddity means there exist many different individuals of a universal concept (for example, the concept of "man") of which their difference as well as their sameness rests in their quiddity itself. In other words, the quiddity, whether substance or accident, is in such a mode that accepts the terms of intensity-weakness, perfection-deficiency, and priority-posteriority by its essence (*bi-dhât-i-hî*).³³⁵ It should be noted that, although it has been accepted, in general, that quiddity is subject to *tashkîk*; it is subject to debate which part of quiddity (substances or accidents) are subject to *tashkîk*. This point is elaborated below.

Tashkîk in Substance

Do substances accept gradation (*tashkîk*)? Great and important different views are shaped here. Some philosophers have accepted the intensity (*ashaddîyata*) of some substances over the others. Some other philosophers reject the *tashkîk* in substances. Mullâ Şadrâ says: "verily the most anterior philosophers maintain that the substances of the present near world (*al-dunîyâ*) are the shadow of the substances of

³³⁵ Muḥsin Gharaviyân, "Baḥṭh Ḥawla al-Tashkîk," *Ma'rifat*, no. -2 (Qum: Mu'assasah Âmûzishî Pazhûhishî Imâm Khumainî, 199), p. 62.

the most high world (*al-âkhirah*). Therefore, how is it possible to be the same? And at the same level?"³³⁶ Mullâ Şadrâ also says in his *Shawâhid al-Rubûbiyah*³³⁷ "the follower of the Stoic philosophers and the Persian philosophers, it has been reported by the author of the *Ḥikmah al-Ishrâq* that, they believe in terms of intensity (*ashaddiyata*) of *tashkîk* in some species (*anwâ'*) and essences (*dhâtîyât*) of things, like the quiddity of light, hotness and quantity and also in substance, as they believe in difference in the terms of priority of quiddities because of their quiddities and we declared their falsity (of these ideas)." The reason of the other groups, who reject *tashkîk* to exist in substances is, that they say when there happen for a substance to be a cause of another substance, the substantiality of the cause as its substantiality is not the cause of the substance of the caused rather, the substance of the cause is better and prior in existence from the substance of the caused; hence, the substantiality of the cause and the caused are the same. Since the body (*jism*) is a substance, its parts are also substances without any priority-posteriority. As it is the case of the substances of the world the most high (*'âlam al-a'lâ*) in relation to the substance of the present world (*'âlam al-adnâ*). Therefore, it may be said that there is no *tashkîk* in substances.³³⁸

Tashkîk in Accidentence

Those who believe in *tashkîk* in accidents do not believe that the term *tashkîk* exists in all accidents. They do believe that the term *tashkîk* exists only in some of quantities and qualities like time (*zamân*), number (*'adad*), line (*khaṭṭ*) and color (*lawn*). However, there are different views in this regard.³³⁹

³³⁶ Şadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî, *Ta'liqah-ih Shifâ'* (Qum: Intishârât-I Bîdâr, 1989), pp. 27-8.

³³⁷ Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *Shawâhid al-Rubûbiyah*, p.134

³³⁸ Ibid.

³³⁹ Ibid. For more information, see Mullâ Şadrâ, *Asfâr*, vol. 1. pp. 430, 433, 437-438, and 443-444; and Shihâb al-Dîn Yahyâ Suhrawardî, *Majmû'ah Muṣannifât Shaykh Ishrâq*, ed. H. Corbin, vol. 2. (Tehran: Anjuman Falasafah Iran, 1355/1977) pp. 242-243, and 294-297.

Some Important Points

Before discussing the reasons of each group in regard of his philosophical positions in regards to "fundamental reality of existence" or "fundamental reality of quiddity," I would like to draw your attention to some important points. (1) As it was mentioned earlier, *tashkîk* is formed in different modes. We may divide the modes of *tashkîk* into "superiority and unsuperiority," "wealth and poverty," "priority and posteriority," "intensity and weakness," "perfection and deficiency," and "more and less." The point, however, is that when we talk about *tashkîk* in substance or accident, we do not intend that all modes of *tashkîk* exist in substance or accident. Rather, we mean that *tashkîk* is compendious and in general exists in substance or accident. In other words, there exists only a mode or some modes of *tashkîk* in each substance or accident. For example, "intensity and weakness" exist in quality and "more and less" exist in quantity or like existence which exist in it different modes of *tashkîk*; the existence of cause is more intense, prior, superior and wealthy than the existence of caused. (2) It is said that, although the Peripatetic philosophers denied the "intensity and weakness" in quantity; nevertheless, they do accept the "more and less mode." They acknowledged that we might say that a number is more than the other.³⁴⁰ Accordingly they accepted the difference between qualitative *tashkîk* (*tashkîk-i kayfî*) and quantitative *tashkîk* (*tashkîk-i kammî*). Hence, they acknowledged that these are two different *tashkîks*. Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Ashtîyânî maintains that³⁴¹ Illuminationists philosophers accepted and acknowledged *tashkîk* in essences (*dhâtîyât*). They affirmed that it is possible a single reality take in, distinct and contrary graduated levels, like the reality of light of which take in itself, the most intensive light, the most weakness light, and the medial light. Neither is intensive the constituent (*muqawwim*)

³⁴⁰ Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, p. 438.

³⁴¹ Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Ashtîyânî, *Hastî az Nağar-i Falsafah wa 'Irfan* (Tehran: Nahdat-i Zanân-i Musalmân, n.d.), p. 50.

of the reality of light, nor does the weakness harm the reality of light. They do say that *tashkîk* in this case is in a specialized sense (*tashkîk khâṣṣî*). The Peripatetic philosophers denied this kind of *tashkîk*.

Mullâ Şadrâ and his followers denied all kinds of the *tashkîk* in specialized sense in quiddities, whether it is substance or accident. (3) Mullâ Şadrâ affirms that universal concepts do not accept "intensity and weakness," whether they are essences (*dhâtîyât*) or accidents (*a'râḍ*), because all these differences in quiddities refer to the existence. For it is singular existence which by its essence differs in terms of perfection and imperfection, priority and posteriority, wealthy and poverty. The reason is that it is existence, which is fundamentally real, and that quiddities are not real; they are mentally posited (*i'tibârî*). Accordingly, the disagreement and dispute between Mullâ Şadrâ and the illuminationist philosophers in the problem of *tashkîk* is basic (*mabnâ'î*), while the debate and dispute between Mullâ Şadrâ and the peripatetic philosophers, who believe in "fundamental reality of existence" in the problem of *tashkîk* is superficial (*zâhirî*).³⁴² Now it is time to go through the most important reasons provided by both; those who believe in fundamental reality of existence, and those who believe in fundamental reality of quiddity.

The Reason of *Tashkîk* in Existence

How can we prove that existence is graduated? In other words, how can we prove *tashkîk* in existence? The reason that we can prove "*tashkîk* in the specialized sense" (*tashkîk khâṣṣî*) in existence is made up of four constituents: (i) the simplicity of the reality of existence and that it does not compose from the genus (*jins*) and specific difference (differentia=*faṣl*). The reality of existence is simple (*basîṭ*), no composition is there. Therefore, both statements, that is "existence is part of a thing"

³⁴² Ş. M. Shîrâzî, *Shawâhid al-Rubûbiyah*, p.135-6.

and "a thing is part of existence" are erroneous. For existence is fundamentally real and non-existence is nothing; therefore, there is no composition of the existence and non-existence. Therefore, existence is the only pure simple reality (*ḥaqīqat-i basīṭ-i sirfah*) and "the purity of a thing" (*sirf al-shay'*) does not duplicate and repeat and does not compose of itself and other than that. (ii) Irrefutable multiplicity of existence in the world. The very evidence of having multiple existents is the existence of superiority (*awlawiyyat*) and unsuperiority, wealthy and poverty, priority and posteriority, intensity and weakness, perfection and deficiency, and "more and less" in existents. These different kinds of existence and different modes of existence are the best evidences of having different modes of existence in the world. (iii) The making (*ja' l*) is actualized only in existence not contingencies (*māhīyāt*). This is because the origin of the external effects in existents is existence. Therefore it -existence- is truly real and contingency is mentally posited (*I'tibārī*) and extracted from the limits of existences. Hence, they are nothing except modalities of the limits of existence. (iv) It was mentioned earlier that the concept of existence is graduated, predicted on things by graduation. Hence *tashkīk* is realized whenever one single "universal" is predicable from its "particulars" in varying grades or degrees, or whenever one single reality actualizes itself in a number of things in varying degrees. T. Izutso says "the concept of "existence" must rather be said to be "analogically" one, because it is predicable of a "cause" and its "effect" ("caused") by way of priority-posteriority, and of a "substance" and its "accident" by way of intensity-weakness. Likewise, the reality of "existence" is also of "analogical" structure. According to Fahlawī philosophers, the reality of "existence" as it appears in the Absolute is clearly different from its reality as it appears in other "possible" existents. In the former the reality is "more intense" and "prior", while in the latter it is "weaker" and "posterior". In the same way, the

reality of "existence" as it appears in a non-material being is "stronger" than the same reality as it appears in material being."³⁴³

Tashkîk al-wujûd, or the gradation or hierarchy from the Being of God to the existence of the pebble on the beach to the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujûd*, is a cornerstone of Ṣadrîan metaphysics. According to him, every higher level of *wujûd* contains all the reality that is manifested below it. Mullâ Ṣadrâ bases himself upon the Suhrawardian doctrine of differentiation and gradation according to which things can be distinct from each other through the very element that unites them, such as the light of the candle and the light of the sun, which are united by being both light and yet are distinct from one another also by light which is manifested in the two cases according to different degrees of intensity. Being is like light in that it has degrees of intensity, while being a single reality. The universe in its vast multiplicity is, therefore, not only unified but is also thoroughly hierarchical. One might say that Mullâ Ṣadrâ accepted the idea of the "great chain of being" which has had a long life in the West from Aristotle to the 18th century but in the light of the unity of being which gives a completely different meaning to the doctrine of cosmic and universal hierarchy.

According to Mullâ Ṣadrâ, there is a difference between the notion and the reality of being.³⁴⁴ Existence manifests itself as billions of external entities which do not belong to the same grade of existence, but some possess a stronger degree of intensity and some less, and we learn this through their effects, because the stronger the ontological intensity in a being, the more power and knowledge it will possess. The main point is that that through which existents are common is the same as that through which they are different; that is, the one reality of being and nothing else is both the cause of their similarity and at the same time of their difference. In the

³⁴³ Sabzawârî, *Sharḥ-i Ghurar al-Farâ'id*, pp. 134-5.

³⁴⁴ S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, p. 433.

ancient Iranian wisdom tradition, existence was called "light" and here, too, we can reach at the analogical nature of being. Light has lots of degrees and grades of being from the sunlight to that of a candle. There are thousands and millions of degrees of light of which some are intense, some are more intense and bright, while others are less luminous and some are extremely dim. The surprising point is that they share light in common with one another and at the same time, their various degrees and differences of grades are through their being "light," and not out of anything else but light. According to Islamic philosophers, "that through which they are common is the same as that through which they are different"; that is the principle through which they are different is identically the same as that through which they are similar, even though this may seem to be a paradox, but it is a fact and a miracle peculiar to light. For example, it cannot be said that intense light is entirely light, whereas dim light is composed of light and darkness! Since we know that light becomes less intense by the reduction of power; however, it never means that the dimmer light mixes with darkness or anything else. Existence is also like this because both the strong and weak existents share in existence but with two degrees and grades. This means that existence in the more perfect existent is more intense and luminous, and in the less perfect existent it is weaker and paler. Therefore, the reality of both is being and they share in existence so to speak and they also differ from each other through the same reality of existence and 'that in which they are different' so to speak, is existence too.

The ancient Illuminationists and Iranian sages believed that there were not several types of being but that existence and existents were all of one logical "species" and the differences of the individual beings rested on their individuation and the degrees of their participation in the reality of being. Mullâ Şadrâ revived this philosophical principle and in spite of Aristotle and his followers considered the

differences of existents in their whole quiddity and essence, he proved that although existents may differ from one another with regard to the temporal anteriority or perfection and imperfection, their difference from one another is not a specific difference but an individual one, and every quiddity means a certain limit of being; if it has a perfect quiddity, it has stronger existence. Therefore, God the Sublime Creator, who is the Principle of Being and the Source of Existence, is the "Most Perfect" and no existent can rival Him. This gradation of being in Mulla Sadra's philosophy is referred to as *tashkîk-i wujûd* or *wujûd-i mushakkak* and Islamic speculative mysticism is based upon this doctrine.

Summary

In summary, (i) multiplicity, which existed in the world, is self-evident; (ii) the existents are not heterogeneous (*mutabâyin*) by their full essence (*bi-tamâm al-dhât*); (iii) since the existents are not discordant by their full essence; therefore, there should also be the cause of communality, it was verified earlier that only the existence is real and genuine and other than existence (excluding existence) is nonexistence (*'adam*), (iv) existence is a simple reality (*ḥaqîqat-i basîṭ*). Thus the thing by which they differ refers to the thing by which they are common. And this very thing is not anything except existence. Thus, existence is a reality holds many instances of which the thing by which they differ (*jihat al-ikhtilâf*) is the same as the thing by which they are common (*jihat al-ishtirâk*); (v) so the reality of existence is unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity. This is what is meant by *tashkîk*.

The Reason of *Tashkîk* in Quiddity (Contingence)

The Illuminationist philosophers do accept *tashkîk* in contingencies; substances as well as accidents.³⁴⁵ Suhrawardî says in his *Hikmat al-Ishrâq*: "what is said, that the self-subsistent (*qâ'im bi al-dhât*) do not accept perfection and imperfection, is domination (*taḥakkum*) (unacceptable)." ³⁴⁶ By Self-subsistent (*qâ'im bi al-dhât*) he means substance (*jawhar*). Also, by domination (*taḥakkum*) he means an confirmation and claims that have no reason behind them. In contrast to accidents that when they want to exist, need a subject, substances (when they want to exist) need no subject (*mawḍû'*). Therefore, it is said that substance is self-subsistent (*qâ'im bi al-dhât*). Thus, Suhrawardî says, since substances do accept perfection and imperfection, this also means that they accept *tashkîk*.³⁴⁷ There are more reasons in regard of existence of the *tashkîk* in the substance. The discussion of the reason of the existence of the *tashkîk* in the substance is too complicated and long to deal with here (for more references, see the footnote below).

The Reason of Peripatetic Philosophers and the Position of Mîr Findiriskî in Denying *Tashkîk* in Substances while Affirming it in some Accidents and the Response of Illuminationist Philosophers

As mentioned earlier, the followers of the fundamental reality of the quiddity have taken different positions; some believe *tashkîk* to be both in substances as well as in accidents, yet some believe in *tashkîk* to be only in some kinds of accidents (qualities and quantities). Like the Illuminationist philosophers, Mîr Findiriskî as one who believes in the principality and fundamental reality of quiddity, believes in

³⁴⁵ See Quṭb al-Din Shîrâzî, *Sharḥ-i Hikmat al-Ishrâq*, (Qum: Intishârât-I Bîdâr, n.d.) p. 237. See also S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, p. 441. See Shihâb al-Dîn Yaḥyâ Suhrawardî, *Majmû'ah Muṣannafât Shêykh-i Ishrâq*, ed. H. Corbin, vol. 2 (Tehran: Anjuman Falasafâh Iran, 1977), p. 128 and vol 1. (1976), pp. 301 & 333-4.

³⁴⁶ S. Y. Suhrawardî, *Majmû'ah Muṣannafât Shaykh-i Ishrâq*, vol. 2, p. 128.

³⁴⁷ To have details of this discussion in the thought and writing of the Illuminationist philosophers look at references addressed in number 340.

gradation in accidents of quiddities and does not claim that there is analogy and gradation between essences. (Suhravardî and his followers do believe in both gradation in essences as well as in accidents). Like the Peripatetic philosophers, Mîr Findiriskî, does not accept *tashkîk* in substance. However, they provide different reasons. First they demonstrate that, the common people or the convention is that the substance does not accept intensity and weakness.³⁴⁸ Quṭb al-Dîn Shîrâzî rejecting this reason asserts that the common sense and ordinary people's judgements do not evaluate realities and truths.³⁴⁹ The second reason of this group in denying *tashkîk* (intensity and weakness) in substances constitutes four preliminary statements (introductions); (i) both intensity and weakness are subsisted only in the opposites, like blackness and whiteness and hotness and coldness; (ii) the substance has no opposite, for the opposites are two existential diametrical entities (*amrân-i dîddân-i wujûdiyyân*) substituted and transposed in a single subject; (iii) the substance is a contingency (*mâhiyah*) when it existed, existing not in a subject; (iv) thus there is no opposite for substance. And, therefore, there are no intensity and weakness, and there is no *tashkîk* in substance.³⁵⁰ This reason has also been rejected by Quṭb al-Dîn Shîrâzî. He insists that we do not accept that the intensity and weakness, and perfection and imperfection, only existed in opposites, for the existence of the causal necessary existence (*wujûd wâjibî-yi 'illî*) is more perfect than the existence of the causedly possible existence (*wujûd imkânî-yi ma'lûlî*) it is while these are not opposites. There is also no substitution of two opposites in one subject, because there is no subject for the existence of the necessary existence.³⁵¹ The third reason, which is

³⁴⁸ Q. Shîrâzî, *Sharḥ-i Hikmat al-Ishrâq*, p. 237. See also S. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 1, p. 236.

³⁴⁹ Ibid.

³⁵⁰ Ibid.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

roughly accepted by Mîr Findiriskî,³⁵² is that the definition of substantiality and animality is widespread, and includes substances, animals and even some kinds of accidents such as line. The linearity of a long line (*khaṭṭiyat al-khaṭ al-tawîl*) is not more intensive than the linearity (*khaṭṭiyat*) of a short line. Therefore there is no weakness and intensity among substances. Mîr Findiriskî clearly asserts, "substances are not subject to gradation."³⁵³ However, this reason has also been recovered. The Illuminationist philosophers, who generalized all kinds of gradation in a given reality, reject this reason and say if the above reason indicates that the substance and quantity do not accept gradation; i.e. intensity and weakness, it should also indicate that quality does not accept intensity and weakness. This is because the same definition is formulated in regard to both intensive whiteness as well as weak whiteness, while the Peripatetic philosophers accept *tashkîk* in qualities.³⁵⁴

³⁵² Mîr Findiriskî, *Risâlah-i Tashkîk*, pp. 91-94.

³⁵³ Ibid, p. 91.

³⁵⁴ Q. Shîrâzi, *Sharḥ-i Fikmat al-Ishrâq*, pp. 237-8.

Part III

Mîr Findiriskî

On

Epistemological Problems

- Chapter 8: *Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah* (Philosophical Ode)
- Chapter 9: Mîr Findiriskî on Epistemological Problem

Chapter 8

Qaṣîdah Hikmîyah

(Philosophical Ode)

Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah (Philosophical Ode)

As stated in Chapter One, besides his various philosophical and mystical works, Mīr Findiriskī also left several poetic compositions. He wrote a number of *ghazals*, *rubā'īs*, other verse fragments and two *qaṣīdas* (odes). One of these two *qaṣīdas* (odes) has drawn considerable scholarly attention during the last three and a half centuries. After Mīr Findiriskī's death, "*Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah*," a Persian mystical - philosophical ode, has been critically analyzed by three significant scholars. The first of these commentaries was written by Ḥakīm 'Abbās-i Sharīf Dārābī Shīrāzī, known as *Tuḥfatu al-Murād*, edited, introduced and commented upon by Faḍl al-Allāh Lā'iq. This was first published in 1337 A.H., under the title *Tuḥfatu al-Murād: Sharḥ-i Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah Mīr Abi al-Qāsim-i Findiriskī*. Another new version of the work has been edited by Muḥammad Ḥusain Akbarī Sāvī and introduced by Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtīyānī. It was published in 1372, H. S. under the title *Tuḥfat al-Murād; Sharḥ-i Qaṣīdah Mīr Findiriskī Bi Ḍamīmah Sharḥ-i Khalkhālī va Gīlānī*. This version

includes the three commentaries on *Qaṣīdah Hikmiyah* by Ḥakīm `Abbās-i Sharīf Dārābī Shīrāzī in one section,³⁵⁵ Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ-i Khalkhālī³⁵⁶ and Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gīlānī.³⁵⁷ This version also contains a comprehensive biographical introduction of Mīr Findiriskī and the three commentators Dārābī Shīrāzī, Khalkhālī and Gīlānī by Muḥammad Ḥusain Akbarī Sāvi.³⁵⁸

Mīr Findiriskī's *Qaṣīdah Hikmiyah* is the most renowned of all his works. A *qaṣīdah* is a poem consisting of anywhere from twelve to seventy or eighty or more verses. The first hemistich (half-verse) rhymes (*qāfiyah*) with the second hemistich in all verses throughout the poem. This explains why Mīr Findiriskī's *Qaṣīdah Hikmiyah* is also referred to as *Qaṣīdah Yâ'iyah*. The last letter of the last word in the first hemistich is *yâ'*, which is repeated at the end of the second hemistich in all the remaining verses.

Moreover, contrary to the view of the author of *Rayḥanat al-Adab*, M. A. Mudarris, who asserts that the *Qaṣīdah* contains up to 32 verses, based on the three manuscripts mentioned above, and on the commentaries done by Dārābī and Khalkhālī, it is in fact clear that the *Qaṣīdah* contains 41 verses.³⁵⁹

The *Qaṣīdah Hikmiyah* survives in three manuscripts. The first of these is preserved in the center (*markaz*) of Āstân-i Quds-i Raḡawī.³⁶⁰ This manuscript is dated to the eleventh century A.H.³⁶¹ The second is also held by the Āstân-i Quds-i

³⁵⁵ (pages 35-180).

³⁵⁶ (pages 180-243).

³⁵⁷ (pages 245-291).

³⁵⁸ In my editorial as well as my commentary clarification of the philosophical ode, all through this dissertation, I frequently refer to this edition of Mīr Findiriskī's ode.

³⁵⁹ See also Hādī, *Sharḥ-i Hâl*, pp. 64-5.

³⁶⁰ Mashhad, Iran (*adabiyât* 229, ff. 685-688).

³⁶¹ Aḥmad Gulchīn Ma'ânī, *Fihrist-i Kitābkhānah-i Āstân-i Quds-i Raḡawī*, vol. 7 (Mashhad: Chāpkhānah-i Tūs, 1926), p. 265.

Raḍawî in its library.³⁶² It is written in *nasta'liq* (a Persian style of writing used in manuscripts and lithography), which dates back to the twelfth century A.H.³⁶³ The third and last version of the work is in the Kitâbkhânah-i Millî-i Malik (number 5824/3, ff. 84r-84p). This version is dated 1122 A.H.³⁶⁴

The authenticity of the *Qaṣîdah* has furthermore been substantiated in all the commentaries written on it, which are three in number. Listed chronologically, they are by Mullâ Muḥammad Ṣâliḥ-i Khalkhâlî (1175-1095 H. S.)³⁶⁵, Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî (13th century H. S.)³⁶⁶ and 'Abbâs Sharîf Dârâbî (ca. 1255-1300 H. S.).³⁶⁷ Evidently, all *tadhkirahs* associate the work with Mîr Findiriskî and frequently quote its verses. It is still highly regarded by most contemporary philosophers and mystics in Iran. Aghâ Buzurg-i Tehrânî wrote: "Mîr Findiriskî's *Qaṣîdah Yâ'îyah* is one of those *Qaṣîdahs* which have been much discussed, and has had different interpretations written on it. It has been also divided into five parts (*khammasuhâ*) by several poets. I saw it with one of its interpretations in the library of al-Mawlâ al-Khwansârî in Najaf, Iraq."³⁶⁸

³⁶² Mashhad, Iran (Adabîyât 231, ff. 1-).

³⁶³ Aḥmad Gulchîn Ma'ânî, *Fihrist-i Kitâbkhânah-i Âstân-i Quds-i Raḍawî*, vol. 7 (Mashhad: Châpkhânah-i Tûs, 1926), p. 267.

³⁶⁴ See Aḥmad-i Munzavî, *Fihrist-i Nuskah-hâ-yi Khaṭṭî-i Fârsî*, vol. 4. (Tehran: Mu'assasah-i Farhangî-i Mantâqî'î, 1969), pp. 3041-2.

³⁶⁵ He was a philosopher of Khalkhâl, a city in north-west of Iran, a pupil of Muḥammad Ṣâdiq-i Arjastânî (d. 1134 HQ) [who was in turn the pupil of Mîrzây-i Jilwâh] and author of different works such as *Al-'Urwa al-Wuthqâ* and *Sharḥ-i Ḥadîth-i 'Âlam-i 'ilwî*. His *Sharḥ-i Qaṣîdah-i Mîr Findiriskî* is preserved in a manuscript dated 1257 HQ., and held in Kitâbkhânah Âstân-i Quds-i Raḍawî under shelf number 700; another manuscript copy is also in Kitâbkhânah Majlis-i Shûwrây-i Islami under number 1866/2. See Âqâ Buzurg, *al-Dharî'ah*, vol. 14, p. 15. See also Muḥammad Ḥusayn Akbarî Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*; *Sharḥ-i Qaṣîdah-i Mîr Findiriskî bi-Ḍamîmah Sharḥ-i Khalkhâlî va Gîlânî*, Muqaddamah: Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî (Tehran: Intishârât al-Zahrâ, 1372, solar), introduction.

³⁶⁶ See below, note on Mullâ Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî.

³⁶⁷ He was a philosopher and pupil of Mullâ Hâdî Sabzavâdî. Accordingly his interpretation influenced by the thought and ideas of Mullâ Hâdî Sabzavâdî a great pupil of Mullâ Ṣadrâ Shîrâzî. See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, introduction.

³⁶⁸ Aghâ Buzurg-i Tehrânî, *al-Dharî'a ilâ Taṣnîf al-Shî'ah*, vol. 17. P. 133.

In regards to Mîr Findiriskî's *Qaṣīdah*, Naṣr³⁶⁹ points out that it is essentially a poem explaining the principles of *ḥikmat*,³⁷⁰ or wisdom, in the sense of esoteric knowledge. He indicates that Mîr Findiriskî accomplishes it while composing verses with a beauty of expression, which rivals those of Mîr Dâmâd and Shaykh-i Bahâ'î.

Khalkhâlî's commentary is perhaps the most significant of the commentaries mentioned above. Like Mashshâ'î, he bases himself on principles which were accepted by Mîr Findiriskî himself. On the other hand, the commentaries of Gîlânî³⁷¹ and Dârâbî³⁷² analyze the *Qaṣīdah* on the basis of Ishrâqî principles, which are closer to Mullâ Ṣadrâ's beliefs.³⁷³

Although Mîr Findiriskî's *Qaṣīdah* was modeled after, and imitated³⁷⁴ the *Qaṣīdah Yâ'iyah* of Nâṣir ibn Khusraw Dihlawî³⁷⁵ and the *Qaṣīdah* of Shâh Ni'matallâh Valî,³⁷⁶ it nevertheless does not follow either of these technically. When attempting to convey requests and wishes, the latter two applied terms such as *gû'î* (having the sense of "indeed," "as if," "as though," "one would say" or "think"), *pendârî* (imagine, as though).³⁷⁷ Compared to Mîr Findiriskî's *Qaṣīdah*, the profundity of Nâṣir Khusraw Dihlawî's *Qaṣīdah* is manifested in the following verses:

چيست اين خيمه كه گویی بر گهر دریاستی یا هزاران شمع در پنگانی از میناستی

³⁶⁹ Naṣr, "Spiritual Movements" P. 676.

³⁷⁰ *Ḥikmat* (frequently used in the Qur'ân in different forms), means neither philosophy as it is currently understood in modern European languages, i.e., one form or another of rationalism, nor theology. It is theosophy and is best designated as "speculative wisdom."

³⁷¹ Mullâ Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gîlânî was the pupil of of Mullâ Muḥammad Ṣâliḥ ibn Muḥammad Sa'id-i Khalkhâlî (1175-1095 Solar), Muḥammad Ṣâdiq-i Arjastânî (d. 1134 HQ) and Âqâ Muḥammad Bîd-âbâdî. A manuscript of his commentary copied in 1264 HQ is preserved under the number 3195/10 in the central library of Dānishgâh-i Tehran. See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, introduction.

³⁷² Ibid.

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ See Sâvî, Introduction, pp. 7-8.

³⁷⁵ See *Dîvân-i Nâṣir Khusru*, ed. Sayyid Naṣru al-Allah Taqavî, Châp-i Chahârum (Tihiran: Amî Kabîr, 1357, AH), p. 439. See also Mujtabâ Minû'î And Mihdî-yi Muḥaqqiq, eds., *Dîvân-i Nâṣir Khusraw* (Tehran: Intishârât-i Dānishgâh-i Tehran, 1989), pp. 220-228.

³⁷⁶ See Ma'sûm Alî Shâh, *Tarâ'iq al-Ḥaqâ'iq*, pp. 158-9.

³⁷⁷ See *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Khaffî-yi Kitâbkhânah Âstân-i Quds-i Raḍavî*, vol. 10, note on pages 154-5.

Transliteration

Chîst 'în khaymah k-i gû'î pur guhar daryâstî,
yâ hazârân sham', dar pingânî az mînâstî.

Literal Translation

What is this camp which is like a sea full of jewels,
or thousands of candles, in a blue glass?

Despite the fact that many biographical works have been written about Mîr Findiriskî, he has not been analyzed critically in a historical, philosophical or mystical context. This task needs to be undertaken especially because of the controversy that exists over his intellectual affiliation. Two views concerning his philosophical approach have been raised. Some scholars consider him a peripatetic philosopher and consequently a faithful disciple of Ibn Sinâ. Others however see him as an Ishrâqî, illuminationist and a philosopher who is well skilled in mystical as well as philosophical approaches. The debate can be resolved through a close analysis of his mystical - philosophical ode that contains much revelatory evidence. However, it would take more than this work to consider all these views and evaluate each one singularly. Thus I will present the whole *Qaṣīdah*, verse by verse, Persian text, transliteration and translation, with a short analysis following each verse or group of verses. Finally, a study of Mîr Findiriskî's epistemological thought will be presented in an autonomous chapter.

The Celestial Archetypes (Platonic Ideas) and their Earthly Reflections

Mîr Findiriskî wastes no time in going straight to an extremely controversial subject right at the beginning of this work. It might, in fact, be said that³⁷⁸ the first

³⁷⁸ I am not alone in this understanding. Murtaḍā Muṭahharî in his footnotes on *Uṣûl-i Falsafah wa rawish-i Realism*, [written by S. M. H. Ṭabâṭabâ'î, vol., 1-3 (Tehran: Shirkat-i Ufsit, 1980), p. 43] asserts this point.

three lines of the *Qaṣīdah* raise the issue of epistemology and the theory of knowledge expressed in Platonic ideas (*al-muthul al-Aflâḩîniya*). I would therefore like to quote the verses in transliteration followed by a literal translation and then explain and comment upon them briefly as a preliminary to my discussion of Mîr Findiriskî's theory of knowledge. I shall follow this approach in the next chapter as well.

Persian Text

1. چرخ با این اختران نغز و خوش و زیباستی صورتی در زیر دارد آنچه در بالاستی

Transliteration

1. Charkh bâ 'în 'akhtarân naghz wa khush wa zîbâstî,
Şûratî dar zîr dârad 'ânc̣h-i dar bâlâstî.

Translation

1. Heaven with these stars is excellent, happy and beautiful,
Whatever is there above has a form below.

Persian Text

2. صورت زیرین اگر با نردبان معرفت بر رود بالا همان با اصل خود یکتاستی

Transliteration

2. Şûrat-i zîrîn 'agar bâ nardibân-i ma`rifat,
Bar rawad bâlâ hamân bâ 'aṣl-i khud yiktâstî.

Translation

2. The form below, if the ladder of inner knowledge
is trodden upward, will be the same as its origin (principle).

Persian Text

3. این سخنها را در نیابد هیچ ظاهری گر ابو نصرستی گر بوعلی سیناستی

Transliteration

3. 'În sukhanhâ râ dar nayâbad hich fahm-i zâhirî,

Gar 'Abûnaşrastî, gar Bû 'Alî Sînâstî.

Translation

3. No exterior understanding can understand these sayings,

Whether it be that of an Abû Naşr (al-Fârâbî) or of an Abû 'Alî (Ibn) Sînâ.

Mîr Findiriskî in the above verses seems to be reflecting upon Platonic ideas. According to him, cognition is the result of a remembrance of previous ideas and representations. This appears to be implicit in his declaration at the beginning of the ode that the universe's beauty, happiness, and excellence lie in the fact that its lower aspect (*şûrat-i zîrîn*) is exactly the same as that which exists in the higher world, and in his explanation in the second line that the higher form is the origin of man's representations. The word *aşl* (in verse 2) means the base, the origin, the root, the source, while the word *yiktâstî* (in the same line) means the same, or united. However, Mîr Findiriskî goes even further in the third line and declares that this theory is of such a nature that it remained unknown even to such great philosophers as Fârâbî and Ibn Sînâ. He states moreover that the latter two thinkers did not apprehend this theory because their knowledge was not profound enough. In other words, they were trained to think superficially or literally (*fahm-i zâhirî*). If they had thought with inner sight (i.e., with their hearts, as was the case with Plato) as well as with their wisdom, they could have understood Platonic ideas.

Additional Demonstrations

Persian Text

4. جان اگر نه عارضستی زیر این چرخ کبود این بدنها نیز دایم زنده و برجاستی

Transliteration

4. Jân 'agar na `ârizastî zîr-i 'în charkh-i kabûd,
 'în badanhâ nîz dâ'im zindah wa barpâstî.

Translation

4. If souls were not an accident under this azure heaven,
 These bodies would be forever alive and upright.

5. هرچه باشد عارض اورا جوهری باید نخست عقل بر این دعوی ما شاهی گویاستی

Transliteration

5. Har chi bâshad `âriḍ 'û râ jowharî bâyad nakhust,
 `Aql bar 'în da`wây-i mâ shâhidî gûyâstî.

Translation

5. But whatever is an accident must first have a substance,
 The intellect is our expressive evidence for this claim.

In the above verses Mîr Findiriskî reasserts the argument given in the initial verses. In verses one and two he maintains two philosophically important principles: that there exists a higher rational universe (*`âlam al-'aqlî al-'asmâ*) which contains both the souls of men and incorporeal realities (Platonic ideas), and that these upper ideas and representations in the higher world are the source and origin of man's representations (*taṣawwurat*) in this world. In verses four and five Mîr Findiriskî substantiates this by declaring that if the souls were not accidental (in connecting to bodies) then they would have to be essential and consequently bodies would also be everlasting. But since we see that men's bodies vanish and are neither eternal nor essential, inevitably, therefore, men's souls must approach human bodies as an accident. The source of man's soul or its substance is incorporeal, universal intellect (*`aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*). Mîr Findiriskî maintains that human's souls are like forms (*ṣuwar* pl. of *ṣûrah*) and that incorporeal, universal intellect is that substance.

Incorporeal, Universal, Rational Forms and Incorporeal, Universal Intellect

To convey more clearly the above process of reasoning, I shall explain his proof in other words. A comparison with Muslim beliefs explains this theory more clearly. According to Muslim philosophers,³⁷⁹ the incorporeal, universal, rational forms (*suwar-i 'aqlî-i kullî-i mujarrad*) are comprehended by incorporeal, universal intellect (*'aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*). The incorporeal, universal intellect (*'aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*) equips human soul with incorporeal, universal, rational forms (*suwar-i 'aqlî-i kullî-i mujarrad*). These forms are incorporeal knowledge, and being universals they are common (*mushtarak*) to all people. Since a material thing, which penetrates into matter, is entirely personal and cannot be shared, rational forms are therefore immaterial and their agent likewise incorporeal. Evidently, a weak material being cannot create an existence stronger than itself.

The human soul appears to be the agent of incorporeal, universal, rational forms. However, this assumption is rejected by the fact that the relation (*nisbah*) of man's soul to incorporeal, universal, rational forms is in potency (*bi al-quwwah*), not in actuality (*bi al-fi'l*). And a thing in potency cannot of its own accord transform itself from a state of potency to one of actuality. It is also impossible that the agent (*fâ'il*) of incorporeal, universal, rational forms should be identical to man's soul because this would require the agent (*fâ'il*) (of incorporeal, universal, rational forms) to be the same as the recipient (*qâbil*) (of incorporeal, universal, rational forms).³⁸⁰ Consequently the agent of incorporeal, universal, rational forms is an incorporeal substance containing all incorporeal, universal, rational forms.

³⁷⁹ S. M. H. Tabâtabâ'i, *Aghâz-i Falsafah* (Qum: Intishârât-i Tabâtabâ'i, 1990), pp. 257-8.

³⁸⁰ S. M. H. Tabâtabâ'i, *Nihâyat al-Hikmah* (Qum: Markaz al-Tibâ'at-i wa al-Nashr, 1975), pp. 221-2.

Persian Text

6. می توانی گر ز خورشید این صفتها کسب کرد
روشن است و بر همه تابان و خود یکتاستی

Transliteration

6. Mîṭawânî gar zi khurshîd 'în şifathâ kasb kard,
Rawshan 'ast wa bar hama tâbân wa khud yiktâstî.³⁸¹

Translation

If you can obtain these qualities from the sun,
The sun is bright and shines upon all things while keeping its unity.

In this verse Mîr Findiriskî likens the relationship between incorporeal, universal, rational forms, and incorporeal, universal intellect to the sun and its rays. As the sun is the source of light, the incorporeal, universal intellect generates the soul. Like the sun, which initiates and terminates the rays, incorporeal, universal intellect breeds and culminates the soul. Just as the rays are entirely dependent on the sun and do not have an independent existence, human soul is also related to the incorporeal, universal intellect. As rays are accidental and consequently require a substance, the soul and the incorporeal, universal, rational forms too are accidental and in need of a substance. This substance is the incorporeal, universal intellect. Finally, just as rays are a kind of shadow and manifestation of the sun, likewise the soul and incorporeal, universal, rational forms are a kind of shadow and manifestation of the incorporeal, universal intellect.³⁸²

³⁸¹ Khalkhâlî, *tanhâstî*. (*tanhâ* means alone, lone, lonely while *yiktâstî* means one, unique). See Muḥammad Ḥusayn Akbarî Sâvî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd; Sharḥ-i Qasidah-i Mîr Findiriskî bi-Ḍamîmah Sharḥ-i Khalkhâlî va Gilânî*, Muqaddamah: Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî (Tehran: Intishârât al-Zahrâ, 1372, solar). Same verse.

³⁸² See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd*, (Sharḥ-i Dârâbî), p. 67.

Mîr Findiriskî on Substance, Accidence and Body-Soul Relation

7. جوهر عقلی که بی پایان و جاویدان بود با همه، هم بی همه مجموع و یکتاستی

Transliteration

7. Jawhar-i³⁸³ `aqlî kih bî pâyân wa jâwîdân buwad,

Bâ hama ham bî hama majmû` wa yiktâstî.

Translation

7. The rational substance, which is perpetual and eternal,

With and without all things is a totality and unity.

8. جان عالم گوییش گر ربط جان دانی به تن در دل هر ذره، هم پنهان و هم پیداستی

Transliteration

8. Jân-i `âlam gûyamash gar rabṭ-i jân dâni bi tan,

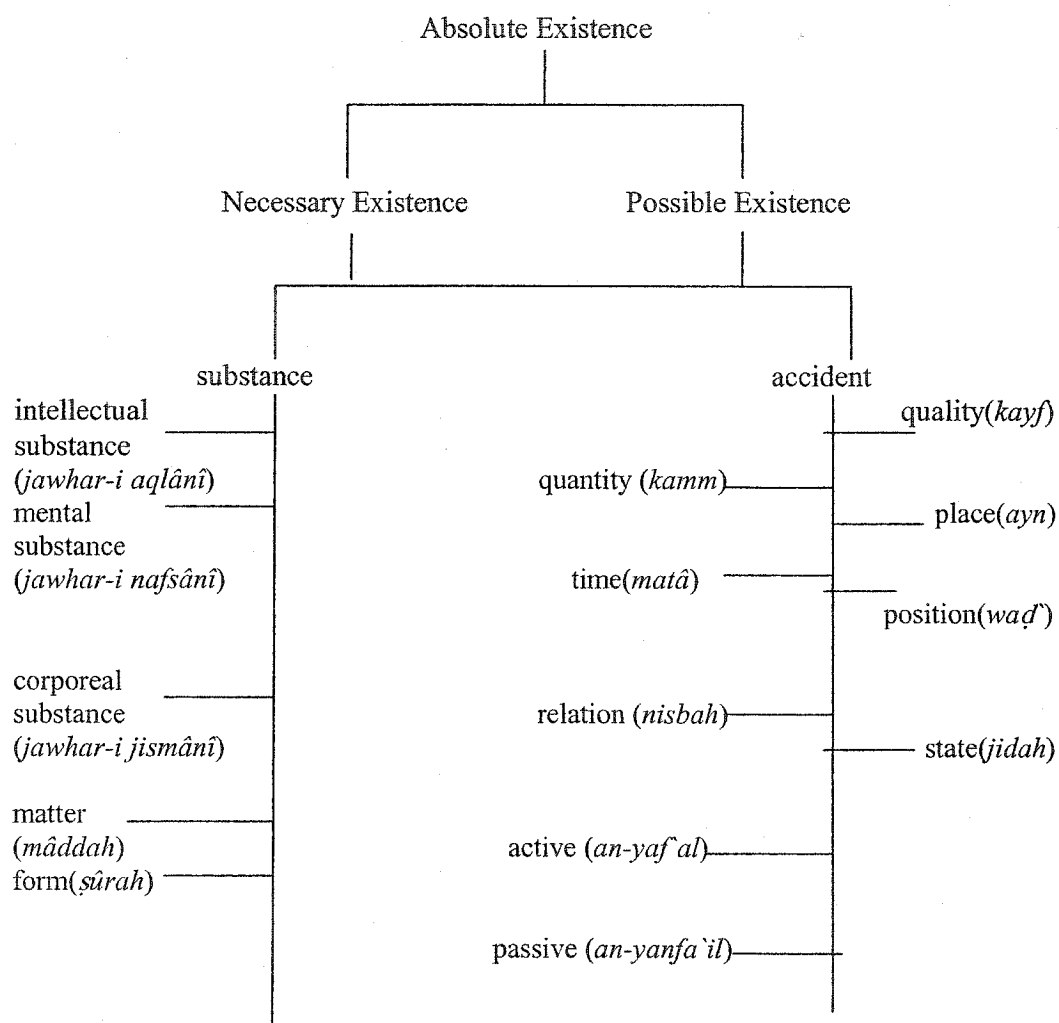
Dar dil-i har dharrah ham pinhân wa ham paydâstî.

Translation

8. I call it the soul of universe, if you believe in the body- soul connection,

In the heart of every atom it is both hidden and visible.

³⁸³ Khalkhâlî, Dârâbî. *Sûrat-i. (jawhar-i `aqlî means rational substance while sûrat-i `aqlî means rational form both of which are subdivisions of universal substance).*



Philosophers divide absolute existence by a preliminary division into necessary and possible existence. Since this division considers the relation of quiddity and existence it is more appropriate with fundamental reality of quiddity (*işâlat al-mâhîyah*). Based on the fundamental reality of existence (*işâlat al-wujûd*), existence is divided into necessary and possible (copulative) existence. Possible existence is

further divided into substance and accident. Substance is a possible quiddity, which does not require a subject in order to exist. However, accident, which is also a possible quiddity, needs a subject for existence. Peripatetic philosophers generally acknowledge that accidental quiddities constitute nine high genera. They reason that these nine genera of accidents plus substance comprise ten categories. Philosophers, however, also argue over the number of substances. Peripatetic philosophers believe that substance consists of five species: rational substance (*jawhar-i 'aqlânî*), mental substance (*jawhar-i nafsânî*), corporeal (carnal) substance (*jawhar-i jismânî*) and matter and form (*mâddah wa şûrah*). They insist that the rational substance is both essentially and actually (i.e., in action) incorporeal. Nevertheless, mental substance, being essentially incorporeal, still needs the body in order to function. Corporeal substance has furthermore three dimensions: length, width and depth. Most of the philosophers assert that corporeal substance is constituted of two other substances: matter and form. Berkeley deviated from the mainstream and denied corporeal substance. Hume went further and denied both corporeal and mental substances. Suhrawardî also did not accept matter as an independent substance.³⁸⁴

In the verse quoted above Mîr Findiriskî enumerates and describes in detail the qualities of rational substance. He believes rational substance has six qualities. It is perpetual and eternal. Being independent of all things it is also inherent in everything. He points out that in the heart of every atom it is both hidden and visible. Since it is incorporeal, it is endless and since it contains neither the potentiality of annihilation nor annihilation itself, it is everlasting. Thus the rational substance is everlasting because the essence of necessary existence is its cause, and necessary existence is everlasting. For it is impossible to violate the caused by the cause (*takhalluf al-ma'lûl*

³⁸⁴ M. T. Meşbâh, *Âmuzish-i Falsafah*, vol.2, pp. 152-3.

an *'illat-i-h muḥâlun*). Since rational substance is the cause of everything beneath it, it is with everything and since it is the cause of everything it should be essentially without all those things. The Qur'ân alludes to this fact in Sûrah five, verse fifty-seven (57/5): "God is with you everywhere you are." According to a famous philosophic dictum "one does not cause but one." If the rational substance had not been one, the first cause would have been different and more than one. Thus, cause is the full definition of the caused and the caused an incomplete definition of the cause. And since the heart of everything contains this, rational substance is both hidden and visible. Originating from self-existence (*qiyyûmiyyat*) it is visible, and yet since it is also hidden because it is essentially caused by necessary cause. This metaphysical notion is beautifully phrased by Maḥmûd Shabastarî in his *Gulshan-i Râz*. In a combination of contradictory terms, he describes the "bright night amidst the dark daylight" (*shab-i rawshan mîyân-i rûz-i târîk*).³⁸⁵ The "bright light" in this narration designates the singular structure of reality as it confesses itself at the stage of the subjective and objective *fanâ'*, at which stage one testifies to the annihilation of all external manifestations of Reality. It is "night," because nothing can be perceived at this stage. All things have lost their proper colors and forms and have been degraded into the oblivion of the original undistinguished forms. This metaphysical "night," is also described as a "bright" one because absolute Reality illuminates both of its own self and others.³⁸⁶ In the second half of the above expression Shabastarî states that absolute Unity reveals itself amidst multiplicity. It is evident in the form of determined things where the absolute Reality is as clearly visible in the external world, as everything is in the daylight. However, when these facts are unveiled to our

³⁸⁵ Muḥammad Lâhijî, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Râz* (Tehran, 1337 A.H.), pp. 94-97. (Quoted in T. Izutsu, "The Basic Structure of Metaphysical Thinking in Islam" in *Collected Papers*, p. 57).

³⁸⁶ T. Izutsu, "The Basic Structure of Metaphysical Thinking in Islam" in *Collected Papers*, p. 58.

eyes, the daylight proves merely phenomenal. Things that become visible in daylight originate from nature of darkness and are non-existent. This is why the "daylight" is said to be "dark."³⁸⁷

One of the most fundamental philosophical controversies is the relation of soul and body. In the verses quoted above Mîr Findiriskî draws a comparison between the relation of the first intellect to the universe and the relation of the body with the soul. He explains that, just as body with all its different elements needs soul for its survival, all matters in the universe also need a constant access to the first cause or first intellect. Mîr Findiriskî in this verse also indicates that, like Plato, he also believes in the duality of soul and body. Plato believed that soul and body are two separate substances. Accordingly the soul-body relation is accidental. Though we clearly see no substantial connection between a bird and its pigeonhole or between a rider and his mount, he likens the soul-body relation to a bird and its pigeonhole or to a rider (*râkib*) and his mount (*markûb*).³⁸⁸ This notion was later rejected by Aristotle and Ibn Sînâ. They considered the soul-body relation to be much stronger than Plato had envisaged it. They said that the soul-body relation is like the relation of form (*şûrah*) and matter (*mâddah*). Therefore the soul is with the body, not in the body. Soul is not eternal and has no prior knowledge. It acquires all its knowledge in this world. This theory was developed in the following centuries. Philosophers attempted to establish a closer connection between soul and body.

Unlike Mîr Findiriskî, who concentrated on the Platonic doctrine of ideas, his supposed pupil, Mullâ Şadrâ said that both soul and body are the result of motion. In fact, Mullâ Şadrâ said that matter has the potentiality to improve in itself something immaterial. On one hand Mullâ Şadrâ disagreed with Plato, by saying that the soul

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ See J. D. Kaplan, editor, *Dialogues of Plato* (U.S.A.: Pocket Books, Inc., 1950), pp. 79-111.

does not precede the body or its knowledge, and on the other hand he refuted Aristotle, Ibn Sînâ and Mîr Findiriskî over the claim that the relation of soul and body is different from that between form and matter, (*şûrah & mâddah*), but is rather much stronger. Soul is a higher level of body. Soul is a perfect level of body. In other words body, with its four dimensions (length, width, depth and time) will grow a new and fifth dimension. The fifth dimension is called the spiritual dimension, which exists and develops simultaneously with the body.³⁸⁹

Declaration of the Relation between Human

Beings and Incorporeal Universal Intellect

Persian Text

9. هفت ره از آسمان بر فرق ما بگشود حق هفت در از سوی دنیا جانب عقباستی

Transliteration

9. Haft rah az âsimân bar farq-i³⁹⁰ mâ bigshûd Ḥaqq,

Haft dar³⁹¹ az sūy-i³⁹² dunyâ jânb-i³⁹³ `uqbâstî.

Translation

9. God has opened (created) seven ways (heavens) above us,

Seven others (doors) from the world toward the hereafter are opened.

In this verse Mîr Findiriskî refers to the Qur'ânic verse: "And We created above you seven ways and We were not heedless of creatures (23/18)" in which God informs us of seven "ways" that were created above human beings. A careful reading of the verse and the application of the word *fawqakum* (above you) prove that seven ways must be a reference to the seven heavens. However, the term "seven ways" or

³⁸⁹ *Asfâr*, vol. 9 (1981), pp. 5-123.

³⁹⁰ Khalkhâlî, *fawq-i mâ farmûdih ḥaqq*.

³⁹¹ Gilânî, *rah*.

³⁹² Khalkhâlî, *az sūy-i*.

³⁹³ Khalkhâlî, *jânb-i*.

heavens needs a definition. One explanation is that the heavens are the source whence God's commands descend. The holy Qur'ân (65/12) verifies: "It is God who created seven heavens, and of earth their like, between them the command descending...." At another point (32/5): "He directs the affair from heaven to earth, and then it goes up to Him.... Apparently all our good words and righteous actions ascend to these seven heavens." God explains in the following verse (35/10): "To Him good words go up and righteous deeds He uplifts it;" The seven heavens are where angels ascend and descend, as is described in following verse (19/64): "We (angels) come not down, save at the commandment of thy Lord...." Following the Qur'ân Mîr Findiriskî paraphrased the concept of seven heavens as "seven ways." According to S. M. H. Ṭabâṭabâ'î,³⁹⁴ we should connect the object referred to at the end of verse 23/18 ("... and We were not heedless of creatures") to the object mentioned at the beginning of the verse ("And We created above you seven ways"). God declares in this verse that none is detached from Him and that He is constantly supervising them. These seven ways have been provided for God's messengers and His angels to descend bearing holy commands and to ascend bringing back man's deeds the Almighty. Mîr Findiriskî wants to establish this divine guidance in the first hemistich of verse 9.

In the second hemistich of the same verse Mîr Findiriskî establishes the fact that the divine guidance provided through this indirect interaction between mankind and the seven ways (heavens) is the only satisfactory means in this world of attaining the hereafter (the life to come). Accordingly, seven doors in this hemistich mean the same seven heavens provided for man's guidance.³⁹⁵

³⁹⁴ S. M. H. Ṭabâṭabâ'î, *Tafsîr al-Mizân*, trans. Sayyid Muḥammad Bâqir Mûsavî-y-i Hamadânî, vol. 15 (Tehran: Bunyâd-i Ilmî va Fikrî "allamah Ṭabâṭabâ'î", 1991), pp. 29-30.

³⁹⁵ See M. Ḥ. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, Gilânî, p. 274.

Philosophers such as Mîr Findiriskî could have interpreted the phrase as referring to the seven souls of the seven heavens (*falak*). For instance, in the second hemistich Mîr Findiriskî refers to the seven faculties of perception in the human body: vision, touch, smell, hearing, taste, imagination (*takhayyul*) and the faculty of apprehension (*quwwah-i wâhimah*). All these faculties promote understanding of the physical as well as the spiritual world. Thus, Mîr Findiriskî explains that in order to approach incorporeal, universal intellect, man must employ his own seven perceptive faculties that God created in him. Ultimately, the eventual progress toward the seven heavens (seven universal souls), and the incorporeal, universal intellect would take place. Quoting Aristotle, Fârâbî states: everybody who is devoid of a sense lacks a science.³⁹⁶ This reinforces the concept of the seven perspective faculties, being the seven ways, or seven doors of understanding, which God provided for man.

Another interesting aspect of this verse of *Qaṣīdah Hikmiyyah* and the pertinent Quranic verses is the concept of “opening the door of heaven on men.” What does this phrase mean? What implication does it have?

In verse 41: section 7 the Qur’ân verifies that “those that cry lies to Our signs and wax proud against them, the gates of heaven shall not be opened to them, nor shall they enter Paradise until the camel passes through the eye of the needle.” In the phrases, “cry lies to God’s signs” and “wax proud against God’s signs” two reasons are distinctly stated that cause the gates of heaven to remain closed to people. The Qur’ân declares that, just as it is impossible for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, it is also not possible for an unbeliever to have access to heaven. This clearly indicates that unbelievers shall never obtain eternal reward.³⁹⁷ The Qur’ân proclaims:

³⁹⁶ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, Dârâbî, p. 75. (It should be noted that Fârâbî in his *al-Jam’ bayn al-Ra’yayn*, p. 50, has narrated this dictum from Aristotle in his book *al-Burhân*).

³⁹⁷ S. M. H. Ṭabâṭabâ’î, *Tafsîr al-Mizân*, vol. 8, pp. 159-160.

"Even so We recompense the sinners; Gehenna shall be their cradle, above them coverings. Even so We recompense the evildoers." This verse makes it clear that the unbelievers will be plagued with a chastisement descending and ascending from all directions. In another Qur'ânic verse (15/13-15) Allâh warns: "they believe not in it, though the wont of the ancients is already gone. Though we opened to them a gate in heaven, and still they mounted through it, yet would they say, Our eyes have been dazzled; nay, we are a people bewitched."³⁹⁸

Among other criticisms faced by the divine prophets, they were often mocked by the unbelievers for not returning to heaven and bringing a book for them. This objection is logically answered in verse 17/93: "Or there be for thee a house of gold, or ascend thou into the heaven; and never will we believe in thy ascending until thou causeth to be sent down unto us a book that we may read it. "Say thou (O' Our Apostle Muhammad!)" "Glory be to my Lord; am I ought save a man (sent by God as) Apostle."³⁹⁹ Therefore, ascension to heaven, and bringing a book from there might appear to be a truly remarkable feat in the eyes of unbelievers. Yet people sincerely desiring to discover the secrets of the world, the commands of God and the principles of true invitation of prophets, only have to follow them sincerely in order to have constant access to that treasure. This however is not the case with unbelievers who have impure hearts and do not believe in the unseen. Even though God grants them a frequent access to the heavens; they still do not believe in the Apostle and say "Our eyes have been dazzled; nay, we are a people bewitched."⁴⁰⁰

The Ways in which the Human Soul can unify itself with Universal

Souls or Incorporeal, Universal Intellect (*'aql-i, kullî-i mujarrad*).

Persian Text

³⁹⁸ *The Koran Interpreted*, Trans, Arthur J. Arberry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

³⁹⁹ *The Qur'ân*, trans., S. V. Mir Ahmad `Alî (New York: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'ân Inc. 1995).

⁴⁰⁰ S. M. H. Tabâtabâ'î, *Tafsîr al-Mizân*, vol. 12, pp. 195-197.

10. می توانی از ره آسان، شدن بر آسمان راست باش و راست رو، کآنجا نباشد کاستی

Transliteration

10. Mîṭawânî az rah-i âsân, shudan bar âsmân,

Râst bâsh wa râst raw kânjâ nabâshad kâstî.

Translation

10. You can reach heaven simply by their means,

Be true and walk the straight path for there is no falsehood there.

“To be true” and “to walk the straight path” are the two main ways in which one becomes involved in justice. In the given verse Mîr Findiriskî refers to the faculty of justice. *Malakah-i `Idâlah* (the faculty of justice) means to practice moderation in all one’s personal and social activities. Eventually the soul is purged of all sensual desires (*havâhây-i nafsânî*).

Two contradictory forces govern man’s soul. On the one hand being under the constant influence of the divine intellects, the human soul is knowing. On the other hand, man’s soul is also diminated by the lower (lowermost, inferior), i.e., material desires. In other words, man’s soul possesses both speculative (theoretical) (*`aql-i naḍarî*) intellect as well as practical intellect (*`aql-i `amalî*). The levels of speculative intellect are four. The first level is material intellect (*`aql-i hayûlâ*). At this level the soul is like a plain table without any design. Initially, the soul is devoid of any universal forms both self evident (immediate perceptions) and subtle (speculative perceptions) (*naẓarîyât*). The second level is *intellectus in habitu* (*`aql-i bi al-malakah*). At this stage soul possesses immediate perceptions and searches to acquire speculative perceptions (*naẓarîyât*). The third level is *intellectus in actu* (*`aql-i bi al-fi`l*). At this point, although soul already possesses both immediate perceptions (*badîhiyyât*) as well as speculative perceptions (*naẓarîyât*), it is not yet “in actu.”

However they can attain a state of being *in actu* with mere intention. The fourth level is *intellectus adeptus* or *acquisitus* (*'aql-i mustafâd*). At this level, the soul possesses and observes all universal sciences.

The degrees of practical intellect (*'aql-i 'amali*) are also divided into four categories. The first level is adornment (decoration) (*tajlîyah*). At this stage man adapts himself to God's commands and prohibitions and tries to perform only lawful actions (*a 'mâl-i shar'î*). The second step is dissociation (*takhlîyah*). At this level the soul dissociates itself from any mortal problems and destructive sensuality. The third degree is adornment and decoration of the soul with good sensual character (*tahlîyah*). The fourth level is annihilation (*fanâ*). According to Dârâbî,⁴⁰¹ Mîr Findiriskî takes the term admonitory as, "be true," resistance in the speculative intellect (*istiqâmat dar 'aql-i naḍarî*). The phrase "walk the straight path" signifies resistance in the practical intellect (*istiqâmat dar 'aql-i amali*).

Persian Text

11. ره نیابد بر دری از آسمان دنیا پرست در نبگشایند بر وی گر چه درها واستی

Transliteration

11. Rah nayâbad bar darî az âsimân dunyâ parast,

Dar nabugshâyand bar wiy gar ch-i darhâ wâstî.

Translation

11. He who worships the world, the door of heaven will never open to him,

The doors will not open even if he stands before them.

A worshiper of the world cannot improve or purify himself with the universal souls, for there is a disparity between the present world and the world to come. To have a sense of this opposition we have to consider the meaning of the present world

⁴⁰¹ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, Dârâbî, p. 82.

in Mîr Findiriskî's Shî'î doctrinal writings and how he saw this opposition resolving itself. The soul's desires (*hawây-i nafs*) must be considered in order to comprehend the difference between the present world and the hereafter.⁴⁰²

Persian Text

12. هر که فانی شد در او، یابد حیات جاودان
ور به خود افتاد، کارش بی شک از مو تاسقی

Transliteration

12. Har ki fânî shud dar⁴⁰³ 'û, yâbad ḥayât-i jâwidân,
war⁴⁰⁴ bi khud uftâd, kârash bî shak az mû tâstî.

Translation

12. He who's annihilated in Him finds eternal life;

He who is busy with himself, his affair is doubtless a failure.

"Being truthful," "walking the straight path" and "seeking annihilation in God" are the three main ways in which human souls can unite with universal souls or the incorporeal, universal intellect (*'aql-i kullî-i mujarrad*). On the other hand Mîr Findiriskî reminded us in the previous verse that he who is busy with himself and worships the world, would be denied entrance in heaven even if he stands before its door.

The concept of *fanâ'* refers to the aspect in which a thing is contemplated as something resolved, individualized, and essentially delimited. In this aspect every existent thing is properly non-existent. For the "existence" it seems to hold is really a borrowed existence. Therefore, in itself it is unreal (*bâtil*) and subsists on the ground of Nothingness. The concept of *baqâ'* (eternal life), on the contrary, refers to the aspect in which the same thing is investigated as a reality, in the sense of the

⁴⁰² See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuṭṭfat al-Murâd*, Khakhâlî, pp. 193-4.

⁴⁰³ Khakhâlî & Gîlânî, *bi 'û*.

⁴⁰⁴ Gîlânî, *chun*.

determined form of the Absolute, a phenomenal form in which the Absolute manifests itself. Every concretely existent thing is a singular combination of these negative and positive aspects, signifying a point of concurrence between the temporal and the eternal, between the finite and the infinite. The unification of these two aspects emphasizes the concept of a "possible" (*mumkin*) thing. However a possible thing is not a purely relative and finite thing. As a center of divine self-manifestation (*tajallî*), it has another aspect, which directly connects it with absolute Reality. In every single thing, the mystic-philosopher recognizes a determined self-manifestation of the Absolute.⁴⁰⁵ According to Dârâbî,⁴⁰⁶ *fanâ'* (annihilation) is the last step in the progress (*sayr*) toward God. In other words, it is the final level of practical reason (*aql-i 'amali*), whereas *baqâ'* is only the initial step in this progress. *Fanâ'* is a rejection of worldly desire. In other words falsehood should not be evident in man. At this level man should even forget himself. Dârâbî offers a full discussion in this regard.⁴⁰⁷ However, he also divides⁴⁰⁸ *fanâ'* into three levels. The first level is annihilation of actions (*fanâ'-i a'mâl*), called *maḥw* (obliterating or being dead to the self). The second is annihilation of characteristics (*ṣifât*), called *tams*. The third level is annihilation of essences *dhawât*, which is called *maḥq*.

Persian Text

12. این گهر در رمز داناان پیشین سفته اند پی برد بر رمزها آنکس که او داناستی

⁴⁰⁵ T. Izutsu, "The Basic Structure of Metaphysical Thinking in Islam" in *Collected Papers*, p. 57.

⁴⁰⁶ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd*, Dârâbî, p. 91.

⁴⁰⁷ (pages 87-104).

⁴⁰⁸ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd*, Dârâbî, p. 89.

Transliteration

13. Īn guhar⁴⁰⁹ dar ramz-i dānāyān-i pīshīn suftah-and,
pay barad bar ramzhā ānkas⁴¹⁰ ki 'û dānāstī.

Translation

13. The jewel is hidden in the mysteries of the ancient savants,
Only he who is wise can discover the meaning of these mysteries.

Since people are at different intellectual levels and are socially and psychologically divided into various social and psychological categories a wise man is the one who considers the intellectual level of the one he addresses. Thus, prophets have been advised to talk to people according their intellectual levels (*innā ma`āshir al-anbīyā' umirnā an nukallima al-nāsa alā qadri uqūlihim* = verily we, all divine prophets, are obliged and highly recommended to talk with people while moderating their intellectual levels).⁴¹¹ Philosophers and saints bear the same responsibility. A quick review of the life history of mystics and philosophers shows that they were cautious about this problem and tried to speak with their audiences according to the level of their understanding. Whenever they wanted to express some deeper knowledge they were counseled to convey it in an ambiguous and latent manner.⁴¹² In the above verse while comparing knowledge to a jewel, Mīr Findiriskī explains that ancient scholars divulged their knowledge implicitly. Moreover, he says that in order to comprehend the statements of the ancient scholars, the soul must reach the ultimate level where it connects with the universal soul and the First Intellect.⁴¹³

Persian Text

⁴⁰⁹ Gīlānī, *sukhan*.

⁴¹⁰ Khalkhālī & Gīlānī, *har kas*.

⁴¹¹ See *Ṣafīn al-Biḥār*. Section Intellect.

⁴¹² See M. H. A. Sāvī, *Tuḥfat al-Murād*, Dārābī, pp. 105-9.

⁴¹³ See M. H. A. Sāvī, *Tuḥfat al-Murād*, Khalkhālī, pp. 195-6.

14. زین سخن بگذر که او محبوب اهل عالم است راستی را پیشه کن وین ره رو گر راستی

Transliteration

14. Zîn sukhân bugdhar ki 'û mahjûb-i⁴¹⁴ ahl-i 'âlam ast,

Râstî râ pîsh-i⁴¹⁵ kun wîn rah raw gar râstî.

Translation

14. Pass beyond these words for they are renounced by the people of the world,

Find the Truth and tread its path, if thou art righteous.

To understand the given verse, the phrase "the people of the world" must be evaluated closely. What does this expression mean? What implication does it have? In Islamic terms, the present world and the hereafter are closely linked. Thus, man attains perfection by performing all his deeds only for the Almighty and the world to come. The real believers, the people of the Hereafter (*ahl al-Âkhirah*), are those who perform all of their actions considering the world to come. Accordingly "people of the present world are those who do not care for their future, in the hereafter. They seriously look to build up the present world and do nothing for the sake of God and the next world." These people, Mîr Findiriskî says, are not qualified enough to understand the secrets of religion. The people of the world renounce these words. They are simply unable to comprehend these words. The fourteenth verse reinstates the notion given in verse 11 where Mîr Findiriskî explains that a worshipper of the world will never find the door of heaven open to him. The terms "worshiper of the world" (*dunyâ parast*) and "the people of the world" (*ahl al-dunyâ* or *ahl-i-'âlam*) signify the same kind of people. According to Mîr Findiriskî, neither will the door of heaven open to them even if they stand before it, nor will they be enlightened with

⁴¹⁴ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *mahjûr-i*.

⁴¹⁵ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *Paydâ*.

knowledge of religious secrets. However, as he declared before, the way to reach the level of understanding the secrets of the religion and the way to open the door of the heavens is to find the Truth and tread its path and annihilate oneself in God.

Persian Text

15. آنچه بیرون است از ذات نیابد سودمند خویش را کن ساز، اگر امروز اگر فرداستی

Transliteration

15. Ânch-i⁴¹⁶ bîrûn ast az dhâtat nayâbad sûdmand,
khîsh râ kun sâz agar 'imrûz agar fardâstî.

Translation

15. Whatever is outside thy essence is useless,
Make thyself harmonious whether it is today or tomorrow.

Purification of the soul (*tahdhîb al-nafs*) requires two essential elements. First, purging the soul (*takhliyah al-nafs*) from qualities fatal to it (*muhlikât*) such as pride (*kibr*), vanity (self-admiration, *'ujb*), envy (jealousy, *hasad*), and second, adorning the soul (*taḥliyah al-nafs*) with redeeming qualities (*munjiyât*) such as repentance (*tawbah*), asceticism (*zuhd*), patience (*ṣabr*), thanksgiving (*shukr*) and certainty (*yaqîn*). Mîr Findiriskî makes a reference to this when he says “make thyself harmonious” or “purify yourself.” In this verse, he emphasizes the fact that whatever is outside of the human essence does not purify man’s soul. Man can only purify himself by purging the soul of all destructive traits and adorning it with qualities that will redeem it.⁴¹⁷

Persian Text

16. نیست حدی و نشانی کردگار پاک را بیرون از ما و نی بی ما و نی با ماستی

⁴¹⁶ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *har ch-i*.

⁴¹⁷ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, Gîlânî, p. 285.

Transliteration

16. Nîst ḥaddî wa nishânî kirdigâr-i pâk râ,
niy burûn az mâ wa niy bî mâ wa niy bâ mâstî.

Translation

16. The Being that is pure has no limit or description,
It is neither outside of us, nor with us, nor without us.

One of the most common attributes of necessary existence (*wâjib al-wujûd*) is that He has no quiddity. I will discuss this subject later.

Persian Text

17. قول زیبا هست با کردار زیبا سودمند قول با کردار زیبا لایق و زیباست

Transliteration

17. Qawl-i zîbâ hast bâ kirdâr-i zîbâ sûdmand,
Qawl bâ kirdâr-i zîbâ⁴¹⁸ lâyiḡ wa zîbâstî.

Translation

17. A beautiful word is only beneficial when combined with beautiful (virtuous) deeds,

A word with beautiful (virtuous) action is competent and beautiful.

Persian Text

18. گفتن نیکو به نیکویی، نه چون کردن بود نام حلوا بر زبان بردن نه چون حلواستی

Transliteration

18. Guftan-i nîkû bi nîkû'î na chun kardan buwad,
Nâm-i ḥalwâ bar zabân burdan⁴¹⁹ na chun ḥalwâstî.

⁴¹⁸ Khalkhâlî, *nîkû*.

⁴¹⁹ Gîlânî, *rândan*.

Translation

18. To talk of the beneficence of goodness is not like doing good,
To name a sweetmeat by the tongue is not like the sweetmeat itself.

God's Attributes (lines 16 & 19-25)

Verses 16 and 19-25 throw a light on various essential and active attributes of the Almighty. Theologians classify God's characteristics into three types: (i) those belonging to the essence of God, (ii) those related to qualifications of God and (iii) those pertaining to the actions of God. Believing in the first type of God's characteristics leads to the Unity of Divine Essence (*tawḥîd-i dhâtî*) of Allâh. A belief in the second kind grounds the "Unity of Divines Attributes" (*tawḥîd-i şifâtî*) of Allâh. Finally, believing in the third kind engenders the Unity of Divines Acts (*tawḥîd-i şifâtî*) of Allâh. The following discussion explicates the profundity of thought in Mîr Findiriskî's ode.

Persian Text

19. در میاور در میان و بر خوان الصمد از میان برداشتن چیزی، که را یاراستی

Transliteration

19. Dar mayâwar dar mîyân wa bar khân-i al-şamad,
Az mîyân bar dâshtan chîzî, k-i râ yârâstî.

Translation

19. Don't bring in between (yourself and the impenetrable) anything, while you are on his impenetrable tablecloth.

To remove anything from 'in between' (yourself and the impenetrable), who is able?

According to mystics, in the whole universe there is no one except Allâh who affects creation for He is the real existence while creatures are simply a manifestation of Him. In other words, Allâh is the controller of this world and the real agent in this world. Whenever a true mystic makes an achievement he should never forget the Omnipotent

Creator who assists him in all his physical and spiritual activities. When a gnostic attains this spiritual level and sees nothing in this world except Allâh, his heartfelt praise (*dhikr-i qalbî*) will always reiterate "Oh Impenetrable" (*yâ samad*). This means he finds himself a "penetrable" being and understands that he is unable to do anything without the mercy of Allâh and that he is in constant need of Allâh. Jalâad-Dîn Rûmî in his *Mathnavî* relates:⁴²⁰

ما که ایم اندر جهان پیچ پیچ؟ چون الف، کو خود ندارد، هیچ هیچ!

Transliteration

Mâ ki-îm andar jahân-i pîch pîch?

Chun alif kû nadârad hîch hîch!

Translation

Who we are in this meandering (tortuous) world,

Like *alif* "ا", which has nothing of its own? Nothing, nothing!

Mawlavî assumes the same meaning as Mîr Findiriskî did in this verse. He explains that humans in this world are like *alif*. This parallel is extremely significant because *alif*, the first letter of the Persian alphabet, has no meaning, has no independent position and has no effective manifestation without the other letters of Persian language. Let us put our discussion in another way. The possible beings in their very essences are neither necessarily existent nor non-existent. Every possible being is restricted in two "no" i.e. neither existent nor non-existent. Therefore "nothing" cannot do anything nor "can does not exist (*laysa*)" operate anything.

Unity of Divine Acts (*tawhîd-i af'âlî*)

"Unity of Divines Acts" (*tawhîd-i af'âlî*), another crucial aspect of Mîr Findiriskî's philosophical ode, has been skillfully expressed in this verse. In this verse Mîr Findiriskî explains the unity of the divine acts of Allâh. To comprehend the Unity of

⁴²⁰ Mawlânâ Jalâl al-Dîn Rûmî, *Kulliyât-i Mathnavî*, Daftir-i 'Awwal. "Tafsîr-i Âya-hi wa huwa ma'akum aynamâ kuntum. (n.p, n.p, Châp-i Âftâb, 1374 A.H.). p. 41.

⁴²¹ Alif, "ا", first Persian alphabet which has no meaning except with at least one more letter.

God's Acts (*tawḥīd-i af'ālī*), the "Unity of Divine Attributes" (*tawḥīd-i ṣifātī*) of Allāh, and the Unity of Divine Essence (*tawḥīd-i dhātī*) of Allāh need to be explained.

Both philosophers and theologians on one hand and the mystics on the other, have their own particular definition and interpretation of all three expressions. i.e. Unity of Divine Essence, Unity of Divine Attributes and Unity of Divine Acts. The following discourse given by a renowned contemporary philosopher and interpreter of the Qur'ān, M. Taqī Miṣbāḥ, declares that according to philosophers and theologians (A) the "Unity of Divine Essence" (*tawḥīd-i dhātī*) signifies a belief that the essence of God is one and He does not have a partner. There is no composition in his essence and there is no other God out of His essence. God is a simple essence without a composition of any parts. He is single and does not have a partner. (B) The philosophers and theologians believe that the term "Unity of Divine Attributes" (*tawḥīd-i ṣifātī*), means that all the attributes we ascribe to God are nothing except the essence of God. Although the *Ash'arites* believe attributes to be something outside of God's essence, theologians and philosophers define attributes as the very essence of God. Human intellect is the means, which induces these divine attributes of the creator. The knowledge of self leads man to a realization of the divine wisdom. Therefore, God himself is the real source from which these attributes are drawn. (C) According to the philosophers and theologians, the "Unity of Divine Acts" (*tawḥīd-i af'ālī*) means that in all His actions God has no collaborator, companion or assistant. Being Almighty, He is independent in whatever He is performing, achieving and affecting.⁴²²

Philosophers and theologians begin by defining the "Unity of Divine Essence." Afterwards they describe the Unity of Divine Attributes and conclude by defining the Unity of Divines acts. They insist that we must initially believe in the unity of God. Next they explain "Unity of Divines Attributes" and that the God's attribute are not divided

⁴²² Muhammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ, *Ma'ārif-i Qur'ān*, vol. 1-3 (Qum: Salmān-i Fārsī Publication, 1988), pp. 78-83.

from His essence. Finally they elucidate the "Unity of Divine Acts" and the fact that God does not need a collaborator.

Unlike the philosophers and theologians, the mystics begin by explaining in the opposite order. They first explain "Unity of Divine Act" because they believe we should begin with the spiritual journey of man. Therefore, in his spiritual journey, man should first realize "Unity of Divine Act" and that the only real agent in this world is God. All other agents are mere instruments and equipments in His hand, like a writer who is writing with a pen. A pen in the hand of writer is only an instrument. The real writer is not a pen but the person who writes. A pen is just an instrument to facilitate the action of writing for the writer. Thus, according to mystics the "Unity of Divine Acts" (*tawḥīd-i af'ālī*) means to fully realize the fact that all actions in this world are performed only by God. Other agents are not really acting. The mystic says when a man accomplishes this spiritual level, he eventually discovers that every attribute in this world has the same position. According to mystics when man improves spiritually, he soon apprehends that all acts and every perfect attribute belongs to Allāh. All knowledge in this world is unreal except God's knowledge. All powers in this world are unreal except God's power. All knowledge and powers in this world are only the shadows of Allāh's knowledge and power. Thus, according to mystics, the "Unity of Divine Attributes" (*tawḥīd-i ṣifātī*) means that a gnostic comprehends that perfect attributes belong only to God and man derivatively assigns them to other agents. However, a philosopher's view of the "Unity of Divine Attributes" differs from that of a mystic. The philosophers see "Unity of Divine Attributes" as not being divided from God's essence. However, mystics see "Unity of Divine Attributes" as a realization that no perfection (*kamāl*) exists except for God and all attributes and perfections are unreal and are really derived from Him. The ultimate stage, according to mystics, is "Unity of Divine Essence" (*tawḥīd-i dhātī*). Mystics say that in his spiritual journey, man will realize that real existence belongs only to God. At this

spiritual level a mystic will discover that everything in this world is a shadow of God, and everything in this world mirrors the Creator.

Having discussed the views of philosophers and mystics, it is worthwhile to reconsider the analysis done by a contemporary mystic-philosopher Mullâ Şadrâ.

Mullâ Şadrâ's View ⁴²³

Mullâ Şadrâ in his reply to the mystical view about unity of existence repeatedly declares that what has been revealed by an authentic and direct intuition can never be contradicted by true reason and that if contradiction occurs, then reason has not been used correctly.⁴²⁴ Indeed it is Şadrâ's central theme, which may be said to be the main purpose of his whole system of philosophy. He reasons that in the realm of diversity and multiplicity, a real unity exists while; conversely, in the realm of absolute unity, multiplicity exists in an "eminent", or "ideal" manner. This is the doctrine of unity-in-multiplicity and multiplicity-in-unity (*waḥdah fi' l-kathrah wa' l-kathrah fi' l-waḥdah*). Although in this doctrine, Mullâ Şadrâ rationalized mystical beliefs, he contradicted the views of those mystics, who in the realm of contingent multiplicity only see a unity and deny the existence of diversity, where every existence is unique.⁴²⁵

He blames those "ignorant şûfis", who think that God exists only in His manifestations or modes -in multiplicity- and that He has no transcendental existence in Himself as an absolute existence.⁴²⁶ Şadrâ criticizes those philosophers, who presume that God is so transcendent that, in His pure and simple existence, there is no room for the world even in an "eminent" and simple manner. Criticizing the philosophical doctrine of abstraction he says that the higher neither abstracts itself from nor does it negate them. Rather, it includes and transcends them and they exist in it in a simple manner. Based on

⁴²³ Mahmoud Namazi, "Causality and its Relation to the Unity of Existence According to Mullâ Şadrâ's View (1571-1640). MA Thesis, Montreal: McGill University, Institute of Islamic Studies, 1994, pp. 52-6.

⁴²⁴ *Asfâr*, 1958. I: 2., p. 313 & 315 & 345.

⁴²⁵ *Asfâr*, 1958. I: 2., p. 318.

⁴²⁶ *Asfâr*, 1958., I: 2, p. 345.

the principle of *basîṭ al-ḥaqîqa kull al-ashyâ'* Mullâ Şadrâ, declares that God includes and transcends all things.⁴²⁷ According to a principle (*basîṭ al-ḥaqîqah kull al-ashyâ'*, i.e., Truth in its state of simplicity contains all things) the divine essence in its state of simplicity and contraction contains all realities within itself. Şadrâ says:

All that which is simple in its essential Reality is, by virtue of Its (absolute) Unity, all things. It is deprived of none of those things, except for that is on the order of imperfections, privations, and contingencies.⁴²⁸

In this passage Mullâ Şadrâ has said that everything which is simple in Its essential Reality, can have nothing negated of It; otherwise, it would not be simple in Its essential Reality. So, simple being is all existent things with respect to their being and perfection not with respect to their losses and imperfections and their presence in Him is simple in its essential Reality. This is indeed a direct result of the principle of the unity of existence; if there is but one existence and the whole universe is nothing but existence, the universe and all its realities are included in a state of "contraction" in that one existence.⁴²⁹

According to Izutsu⁴³⁰ Sabzawârî explains this extraordinary position through a metaphor. He says that if a man stands in front of many mirrors, in each of the mirrors this man and the same humanity (the quiddity of man) would be observable. Evidently both man and humanity are diversified. There would be as many men and humanities as there are mirrors. Nevertheless, in their very multiplicity and diversity they are but one single reality, in so far as they are only reflections having no reality of their own. For, reflection of something, taken in itself *qua* reflection, is nothing. If the reflection is considered in itself and independent from the real object, it does not reflect the object. Thus all the mirrors reflect one and the same object in different forms, each according to

⁴²⁷ F. al-Rahmân, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Şadrâ*, p. 91.

⁴²⁸ Şadr al-Dîn Muḥammad Shîrâzî, *al-Ḥikmah al-Lâhiyah fî al-Asfâr al-Aqliyah al-Arba'ah*, vol. 6 (Bayrût: Dâr al-Turâth al-'Arabî, 1981) pp. 100-4.

⁴²⁹ S. H. Naşr, "Şadr al-Dîn Shîrâzî (Mullâ Şadrâ)" *History of Muslim Philosophy*, ed. M. M. Sharîf, (Karachi: Royal Bank Company, 1983), p. 947.

⁴³⁰ Sabzawârî, *Sharḥ-i Ghurar al-Frâ'id*, ed. M. M. & T. Izutsu, p. 131.

its shape, size, color, or glassiness. If only the disparate individual reflections were considered in their very diversity, their real status could never be known. Similarly if we look at a particular existence in its relation to the Absolute Existence in terms of illuminated relation, we will understand that the latter itself appears in the very appearance of these individuals. On the other hand, if we view individual existences as independent existences without any relation to their source, their real beings disappear, because their beings are completely related to the Absolute Existence. This does not indicate that particular existences are totally devoid of reality. They are real, but their reality consists in their being "pure relations" (*rawâbiṭ-i maḥḍah*) not in their being independent entities having relations to their sources. This is the thesis of *waḥdat al-wujūd* according to Mullâ Şadrâ's view, which holds that existence is one single reality possessing a variety of grades and stages in terms of intensity and weakness, perfection and deficiency, priority and posteriority. The significant point in Mullâ Şadrâ's view is that these differences do not compromise the principal unity of the reality of existence because the thing that by which they differ from one another is precisely that by which they are unified.

Existences as Pure Relation

Through the idea of *waḥdat al-wujūd* Mullâ Şadrâ attempts to prove all phenomenal things as pure relative existences, which have no real existence except with respect to the Necessary Existence. He divides existence into two kinds: (i) Necessary Existence as a pure light (ii) Shadowy (*zillî*) or dark, existence. In a verse, in his *Asfâr*, he philosophizes, "everything in the world is illusion (*wahm*), imagination (*khîyâl*), or are reflections ('*ukûs* pl. of '*aks*') in a mirror or shadows (*zîlâl* pl. of *zill*)" (*kullu mâ fî al-kawn-i wahmun aw khîyâlun --- aw 'ukûsun fî al-marâyâ aw zîlâlun*)⁴³¹ which means the world is a representation of the Reality. The world itself does not have a real existence

⁴³¹ *Asfâr*, I: 1, p. 47.

and it is merely an imagination (*khayâl*). It is falsely imagined to be a reality with no possible relation to the absolute Reality. Elsewhere he says: "our ratification of various levels of multiple existence and concessions we make, applying the diversity and multiplicity of existence, do not contradict what we really wish to prove, God willing, that both existence and existent are but one and unitary."⁴³² The concept of God being the reality and all phenomenal things appearances of Him, is constantly reiterated in Sadrâ's works. In another part of *Asfâr*, he remarks, "in the home of Existence, there is no other inhabitant save God".⁴³³ (*laysa fî dâr al-wujûd ghayruhu dayyâr*)

This trend of thought suggests that one can perfectly analyze existence into the above-mentioned division, and implies strongly that all contingent beings and relational entities are mere appearances and modes of the Necessary Existence. They have no existence in themselves. Their reality consists in pure poverty and dependence not in their being independent entities having relations to their sources. They have no reality of their own except their being relations of dependence to a single reality. According to Fazlur Rahmân, one will need Sadrâ's intuition to perceive in Ibn Sînâ's statement the view that contingents are not things related to God by a dependence relationship but are mere relations! Sadrâ believes that God alone is real and contingents are only appearances of God.⁴³⁴ The most relevant question in the whole argument is how to unite this Reality-Appearance, pure relational existence with that of absolute existence.

Persian Text

20. سلب و ایجاب این دویند و جمله اندر زیر اوست از میان سلب و ایجاب این جهان برپاستی

Transliteration

20. Salb wa ijâb in dawyand wa jumlah andar zîr-i 'ûst,
Az mîyân-i salb wa ijâb in jahân barpâstî.

⁴³² *Asfâr*, I: 1, p. 71.

⁴³³ *Asfâr*.I: 2, p. 292.

⁴³⁴ F. al-Rahmân, *The Philosophy of Mullâ Sadrâ*, p. 38.

Literal Translation

20. "Negation" and "confirmation" are two (opposing forces) and everything is under them,

This universe is upheld through "negation" and "affirmation."

In this verse Mîr Findiriskî describes the real essence of the world. Negation and affirmation could be interpreted in two different ways. The first meaning might be existence and non-existence (*wujûd wa 'adam*), which is inherent in all contingencies. Aristotle defines⁴³⁵ contingency as a combination pair (*al-mumkinu zawjun tarkîbî*). By the term pair (*zawj*) he means existence and non-existence. Unlike the necessary existence it is only contingency, which comprises the two aspects of existence and non-existence. Therefore, according to Mîr Findiriskî, the world is composed of negation and affirmation, which requires a cause in order to exist. In other words, the world is not like God whose existence is necessary. It is a possible existence. According to this meaning "This universe is upheld through "negation" and "affirmation" means the main character of this world is "its being possible" and therefore requires a cause. The second interpretation of the terms negation and affirmation in Mîr Findiriskî's work could also be a reference to the philosophical problem of the principality of existence or quiddity. Some philosophers and theologians uphold the principality of quiddity while a majority of mystics; peripatetic philosophers and certain theologians sustain the principality of the existence. However according to those who believe in principality of existence, as Dârâbî ascribes this position to Mîr Findiriskî,⁴³⁶ negation and the affirmation mean quiddity. Only quiddity is ascribed to these two opposite characters. These two aspects, i.e. negation and affirmation, are the crucial attitudes of contingencies (*mumkinât*). Therefore

⁴³⁵ Khalkhâlî, p. 202. (quoted in Fârâbî, *al-Jam' Bayn al-Ra'yayn*, p. 50 châp-i sangî)

⁴³⁶ Dârâbî, p. 134.

the meaning of this verse will be the same as the first meaning, which indicates that the whole universe is contingent and contingency is apparently in need of a cause.⁴³⁷

Persian Text

21. در هویت نیست نه نفی و نه ایجاب و نه سلب زآنکه از اینها هم آن بیگمان بالاسستی

Transliteration

21. Dar huwâyyat nîst na nafy wa na îjâb⁴³⁸ wa na salb,

Zânki az înhâ hamah ân⁴³⁹ bîgamân bâlâstî

Literal Translation

21. There is no “denial” and no “affirmation” and no “negation” in His He-ness (Essence),

For He is doubtlessly above all these things.

A well-known philosophical discussion, recorded in almost all medieval philosophical texts, is the discussion of denial of essence of quiddity of necessary existence (*wâjib al-wujûd*). Philosophers gave various reasons and demonstrations. The simplest of these is that in the core essence of quiddity there is neither existence nor non-existence. Such a thing cannot be attributed to the divine essence of God. In other words quiddity and possibility are together. Just as there is no way for possibility to go to the essence of God there is also no way for quiddity to go in the divine essence. Considering the transcendental philosophy of Mullâ Şadrâ, described earlier, this discussion would take a different turn. According to him we abstract quiddity from limited existents. Quiddity is a conceptual mold (*qâlib*) where limited existents coincide. Since God has no limitation, He has no quiddity at all. In other words intellect can only analyze limited existents into quiddity and existence. Every possible existence is constituted of a unity of quiddity and existence. But God is a pure simple existence. And intellect cannot attribute

⁴³⁷ Dârâbî, pp. 133-4.

⁴³⁸ Khalkhâlî, ithbât.

⁴³⁹ Khalkhâlî, ‘û.

to him any quiddity or limit Him in any aspect of quiddity by means of negation or affirmation.

Persian Text

22. نیست اینجا زیر و بالا و نه ایجاب و نه سلب
این چنین هم گر بگویی کی بود ناراستی

Transliteration

22. Nîst înjâ zîr wa bâlâ wa na îjâb wa na salb,

În⁴⁴⁰ chunîn ham gar bigû'î kiy buwad nârâstî.

Literal Translation

There (in absolute Being) is neither "below" nor "above" and also neither "affirmation" nor "negation,"

Though it won't be false if you say that. (For He is all-together below, above, affirmation and negation, existing and non-existing in conceptual mold).

The "below," the "above," the "up" and "down" are attributes of body and substance. The incorporeal has no material to have a size and therefore cannot be detected respect to any direction. The negation and affirmation also, as mentioned earlier, belong to contingencies, not to the necessary existence (*wâjib al-wujûd*). The relation of the Creator with His creatures is the same. Everything before Him in regard to place and time is equivalent and alike. No one has a particular position (regarding lastingness and location) before Him. Dârâbî quotes the following verse from Rûmî⁴⁴¹ to elaborate Mîr Findiriskî's idea more clearly.

Persian Text

زیر و بالا، پیش و پس وصف تن است
بی جهت، آن جان پاک روشن است

Transliteration

⁴⁴⁰ Khalkhâlî, wîn.

⁴⁴¹ Mawlânâ Jalâl al-Dîn Rûmî, *Kulliyât-i Mathnavî*, Daftar-i 'Awwal. "Dar Ma'nî-yi Ḥadîth-I 'Inn li rabbikum fî Ayyam-I dahrikum Nafahât alâ fata'araḏû." (n.p, Châp-i Âftâb, 1374 A.H.). p. 53.

Zîr wa bâlâ, pîsh wa pas waşf-i tan ast,

Bî jihat ân jân-i pâk rowshan ast.

Translation

Down and up, front and behind are descriptions of the body,

Without any cardinal point, that pure (absolute) soul (God) is luminous.

Rûmî's view complies with Mîr Findiriskî's argument that, since God has no body, He has no direction and is not related to anything.

Persian Text

23. آن جهان و این جهان، با جهان و بی جهان هم توان گفتن مر او را، هم از آن بالاستی

Transliteration

23. Ân jahân wa ân⁴⁴² jahân bâ jahân⁴⁴³ wa bî jahân,

Ham tawân guftan mar 'û râ ham az ân⁴⁴⁴ bâlâstî.

Translation

23. That world and this world, with the world and without the world,

We can say all of these of Him, even though He is above all that.

The most significant attitudes of God are that He is the Inward and the Outward, the Latent and the Patent, the Interior and the Exterior. According to Khalkhâlî "*în jahân*" (this world) means the Outward, Patent and the Exterior attitude of Allâh and "*ân jahân*" (that world) means the Inward, Latent and the Interior attitude of Allâh. The term "*bâ jahân*" (with the world) means simultaneity of God with everything in this world. Various verses of the Qur'an explain this very clearly. In verse 5, chapter 57 (Iron): "He is with you wherever you are," and verse 17, chapter 50 (Qaf) "... We are nearer to him than the jugular vein." "*bî jahân*" (without this world) is a term that indicates that Allâh in His essence is apart from everything. He shares nothing with anything. Verse 42:12

⁴⁴² Khalkhâlî, *în jahân wa ân jahân*.

⁴⁴³ The phrase "*bâ jahân*" is missing in Gilânî's version.

⁴⁴⁴ Khalkhâlî, *în*.

proclaims, "nothing resembles Him" in anything.⁴⁴⁵ A real monotheist is one who attains spiritual positions without assimilating (*tashbîh* - anthropomorphism) God with anything. Although the Qur'ân says "He is the Hearing, the Knowing" a monotheist would never interpret this verse as God having an ear to listen with. He would simply praise and glorify (*tanzîh*) the Almighty. (The Qur'ân 42/12 confirms: nothing resembles Him).⁴⁴⁶

Therefore God cannot be identified, described, and designated by our limited knowledge. We may say that the only way to discern Him is to describe Him through some negation and affirmation as we do this in sacred word "*lâ ilâha ill al-Allâh*" which means there are no gods but Allâh. As we see in this famous sentence we use negation and affirmation to describe Him. Thus only limited manifestations of the Creator are evident in this world. Human intellect only perceives His presence.

Persian Text

24. عقل کشتی، آرزو گردباد و دانش بادبان
حق تعالی ساحل و عالم همه دریاستی

Transliteration

24. `Aql kishtî, ârizû girdâb wa dânish bâdbân,
Ḥaqq ta`âlâ sâhil wa `âlam ham-ih daryâstî.

Translation

24. The intellect is a ship, desire is a maelstrom and knowledge is the sail,
God, exalted, is the shore and the whole universe is the sea.

Persian Text

25. ساحل آمد بی گمانی بحر امکان را وجوب
گفته دانا بر این گفتار ما گویاستی

Transliteration

⁴⁴⁵ Khalkhâlî, p. 204.

⁴⁴⁶ Dârâbî, pp. 141-2.

25. Sâhil âmad bî gamânî⁴⁴⁷ baḥr-i imkân râ wujûb,

Guftah-i dânâ bar in guftâr-i⁴⁴⁸ mâ gûyâstî.

Translation

The shore advances (cause, bring to existence), doubtlessly, the sea of the possible (to become) necessary,

The Savant's saying is expressive (evidence) for our saying.

Intellect is a means by which men meditate, demonstrate and distinguish between good and evil. The role of intellect in man's life is exactly as the role of a ship in the sea. Human desires play a significant role in preventing man from understanding the purpose of this mortal life. This just misleads him towards different pleasures and consequently Allâh is forgotten unless he employs and exercises his intellect. Normally uncontrolled desires lead men to the maelstrom of nature (worldly desires), which involves and embodies deluded and erratic positions and situations. However man's knowledge and experience and above all the main environmental factors are like a sail (*bâdbân*) on which the intellect can rely and guide man to pass through these deceptive maelstroms of nature. Riddance from worldly and erratic desires is not possible except through knowledge and religious experience. Allâh is the shore at which not only all waves and storms of possible existents should be broken but also the ships of man's desires, satanic wills should anchor and be treated. The world and all the possible existents are compared to the sea, which requires a shore. Seas without shore do not hold up. The world and the possible existents desperately need God as the shore of deliverance. In verse 25 it has been expressed that the shore (Allâh) doubtlessly takes the necessity to the sea of possible existents. In other words God created the world of possible existents. The best proof and an expressive evidence for our saying are the savant's sayings.

⁴⁴⁷ Gilânî, dar ḥaqîqat. It also should be noted that the phrase "bî gamânî" does not occur in Khalkhâlî's version.

⁴⁴⁸ Gilânî, 'Aql-i dânâ râ mar in taqrîr-i.

The term *dânâ* means savant, a religious educated man on whom people rely and whom they trust. On the top of this group of people are prophets, saints and perfect men. Mîr Findiriskî states that prophets, saints, religious scholars and learned men should guide and direct men to the correct pass which is God's absolute reality. Mahmoud Shabestari in his *Gulshan-i Râz* relates:⁴⁴⁹

Persian Text

در این ره، انبیاء چون ساریباندند دلیل و رهنمائی کاروانند

Transliteration

Dar 'în rah, anbîyâ' chun sâribânand,

Dalîl wa rahnimâ-yi kârawânand.

Translation

In this way (God's way), the prophets are like camel drivers,

(They are) the guide, director and leader of the caravan.

Persian Text

26. نفس را چون بندها بگسیخت یابد نام عقل چون به بی بندی رسی بند دگر بر جاستی

Transliteration

26. Nafs râ chun bandhâ bugsîkht yâbad nâm-i 'aql,

Chun b-i bîbandî rasî band-i digar barjâstî.

Translation

26. When the soul's bonds (passion and desires) are cut (stopped), it will be nominated as intellect,

(However) even when he cuts all bonds (passions and desires), there will be another bond (belonging) (that is, the soul's possibility and its dependence upon the Necessary Existence).

⁴⁴⁹ Dârâbî, p. 145. See Also Ilâhî 'Ardibîlî, *Sharḥ-i Gulshan-i Râz* (Tehran: Markaz-i Nashr-i Dânishgâhî, 2000), p.33.

The Soul essentially is intellect and accidentally is passion (*ashwâq*) and aspirations (*ârizûhâ*). Aspirations are indeed soul's bonds as they imprison the soul at its natural level. However, the soul becomes intellect only when bands are eliminated from the soul. In the verse quoted above Mîr Findiriskî asserts that Allâh is the shore. In this verse Mîr Findiriskî explains that although an ascetic (a mystic) who emancipates himself from the worlds of possible existents will definitely get to the shore and a righteous God, nevertheless there still exists other band of possibility. When soul passes through the worlds of possible existents it shall arrive at the intellect (intellectual world). However, that still does not guarantee the acquisition of necessary existence. It is still a possible existent.⁴⁵⁰ Dârâbî⁴⁵¹ put the same meaning in another words. He says, intellect (*'aql*) in its philosophical expression is an incorporeal substance both essentially (*bi-dhât*) and in actuality (*bil-fi'l*), while the soul is an incorporeal substance essentially and not in actuality. Soul at its actual level is in need of both the body and its equipment. However if the soul in its ultimate level frees itself from want of body and the body's equipment, it evidently becomes the intellect.

Soul Problem

Verses 27-34 are arguing about the soul and its scope. In these verses Mîr Findiriskî considers different schools of thought on the problem of the soul. To have a clear idea of what Mîr Findiriskî says let us look at this problem more closely and then interpret the soul problem verses.

The existence and nature of man's soul are matters of interest for both philosophers and mystics. "What is the reality and the origin of human life and thought?" "Has a human being only a body with a physical existence or does he have a soul or a spirit, too?" "What is soul if man has one?" "Is it essential or accidental?" "Does the human soul have any relation to his body?" "Who is the creator and the cause of human

⁴⁵⁰ Khalkhâlî, p. 209.

⁴⁵¹ Dârâbî, p. 148.

soul?" "Is it Active Intellect (as the peripatetic philosophers, or Mashshâ'ûn believe) or is it universal soul (as the illuminationists, or Ishrâqîyûn would have it)?"

However, since knowledge of the soul is sometimes considered the basis for knowledge of the Creator and His creatures, and since scholars consider it as key to understanding the truth and perfection of life, it is a subject that has long exercised the greatest minds. Eastern scholars, including Islamic thinkers, believed in the immortality and incorporeality of the soul. They endlessly discussed the means toward its purification and perfection. Certain Greek philosophers also believed in the existence of the soul or spirit and discussed its essence, signs and effects, leading to the emergence of different opinions and schools. Socrates for instance believed in the existence of a soul and insisted that knowledge of other creatures amounted to knowledge of their souls. Plato believed in the incorporeality and immortality of the soul and strongly believed in the substantive and perfect motion of the soul (*ḥarakat-i jawharî wa kamâlî-i nafs*)⁴⁵². Aristotle believed⁴⁵³ that soul is originated (*ḥādith*) and that it is the perfection or form of the natural substance. Plotinus, also considered the problem of the soul in his "*Enneads*,"⁴⁵⁴ where he expressed his belief in the descent of the soul from the incorporeal world and its desire to return to its home once again.

In Islam the question of the human soul has been addressed in various philosophical, mystical, ethical and theological contexts. It is hardly possible to give a complete picture of what was debated among Muslim philosophers and theologians concerning the origin and the nature of the soul. Since the details of the various schools are not directly related to the present chapter they are not being evaluated. Mîr Findiriskî exclusively considers different schools of thought in regard to the existence and the

⁴⁵² A. Badâwî, *Platon en pays d'islam*, p. 312. See also E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, (Phaedo), pp. 70-71 & 85.

⁴⁵³ Aristotle, *Introductory Readings*, (De Anima), pp. 412a-414b.

⁴⁵⁴ Plotinus, *Uthûlûjîyâ*, ed. S. J. Âshtiyânî, pp. 38-43.

nature of the soul. It is worth mentioning at the outset that the word *dânâ* in the following verses means “knower,” the most eminent scholar's view in this regard.

Persian Text

27. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما حشر است و نشر
هر عمل که امروز کرد او را جزا فرداستی

Transliteration

27. Guft dâna nafs-i mâ râ ba`d-i mâ ḥashr ast wa nashr,

Har `amal ki-`imrûz kard `û râ jazâ fardâstî.

Translation

27. The sage (savant) has said our soul will have resurrection,

Every action a human performed today he'll be recompensed for tomorrow.

Muslim Jurists believe in both physical as well as spiritual resurrection of the soul. The verse pronounce the belief of the followers of the *sharî`ah* who insist that when soul separates the body will be resurrected again in a physical form depending on the deeds. If the deeds were righteous in the mortal life, the soul will emerge in a good form. However, if the deeds are evil in the present world it shall appear in a bad form. According to a prophetic tradition the present world is considered to be a farm for the hereafter (*al-duniyâ mazra`at al-âkhirah*). It means whatever men sow in his present world, whether good or bad, they shall receive accordingly hereafter.⁴⁵⁵ A farmer cannot acquire any more or less than whatever he cultivates and plants.

Persian Text

28. نفس را نتوان ستود، او را ستودن مشکل است
نفس بنده، عاشق و معشوق، او مولاستی

Transliteration

28. Nafs râ natawân sutûd, `û râ sutûdan mushkil ast,

Nafs-i bandih, `âshiq wa ma`shûq, `û mawlâstî.

⁴⁵⁵ Khalkhâlî, pp. 210, 211.

Translation

28. Soul (self) should not be praised, (for) to command the soul is problematic

The lord and master of every slave, whether he is lover or beloved, is God.

Some ancient scholars believe that souls are essentially pre-eternal (*qadīm-i bi-dhât*). A number of these philosophers are certain of only one pre-eternal that is the essentially necessary existent soul. Others belonging to the same group who were called Ḥarrânîyûn believe that there are five pre-eternals; soul (*nafs*), necessary existence (*wâjib al-wujûd*), time (*zamân*), place (*makân*), prime matter (*hayûlâ*). Mîr Findiriskî addresses Ḥarrânîyûn's notion in the first hemistich of this verse. In the second hemistich of this verse he rejects this idea, stating that soul should not be praised, for soul in its first origination appears imperfect and wants perfection. It eventually ascends towards the anticipated perfection. Every moved article needs a mover. Every seeker of perfection needs a perfected agent to move him from a potential position to the actuality and a perfect position. Intellect is the creator of souls and the originator of intellects is necessary existence.⁴⁵⁶ Thus soul cannot be an originator and cannot be praised. Accordingly it is Allâh, the lord and master of every lover or beloved, who is praiseworthy.

Persian Text

29. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما باشد وجود در جزا و در عمل، آزاد و بیهمتاسی

Transliteration

29. Guft dâna, nafs-i mâ râ ba`d-i mâ bâshad wujûd,

Dar jazâ wa dar `amal, âzâd wa bî hamtâstî.

Translation

29. The sage said that after we have died we will still exist,

(No matter) whether in sanction or action we will be free (of any charge) and unique.

⁴⁵⁶ Dârâbî, p. 155.

Some of the peripatetic philosophers believe in spiritual resurrection. According to Khalkhâlî,⁴⁵⁷ although they believe that man's soul will survive, after death, they do not give credence to the revivification and resurrection of bodies, as they do not accept compensation and retribution. However this idea was strongly rejected by all Divine laws, Muslim jurists, mystics, and intellectuals.⁴⁵⁸

Persian Text

30. گفت دانا، نفس ما را آغاز و انجامی بود گفت دانا، نفس بی انجام و بی مبداستی

Transliteration

30. Guft dâna nafs râ âghâz wa anjâmî buwad,
guft dâna nafs bî anjâm wa bî mabdâstî.

Translation

30. The sage said that soul has beginning and ending,
The sage said soul is beginningless and endless.

The first hemistich refers to those who consider *nafs* as *mizâj* (a mixture, or common quality which results in all physical elements performed by different parts of the body). In this case *nafs* emerges and vanishes with body. The second hemistich considers the belief of those who contemplate soul to be essentially eternal without a beginning or an end.⁴⁵⁹

Dârâbî⁴⁶⁰ in his interpretation of this verse goes further and designates those who have voiced these ideas. According to him the first hemistich refers to Aristotle's view that allocates the simultaneous originating (*Ḥudûth*) of the soul with body and the second hemistich designates Plato's view that insists on the eternity of the soul. Rejecting the Platonic philosophy, Dârâbî⁴⁶¹ advocates that the righteous idea is that *nafs* emerges with

⁴⁵⁷ Khalkhâlî, p. 211.

⁴⁵⁸ Dârâbî, p. 157.

⁴⁵⁹ Khalkhâlî, P. 212.

⁴⁶⁰ Dârâbî, p. 158.

⁴⁶¹ Khalkhâlî, P. 212.

the body. According to him Plato's view concerning the eternity of soul back to an incisive point. Plato does not intend to say that the soul itself is eternal; rather the inner essence of the soul, the intellect, is eternal.

Let us look at Plato's idea more specifically. Concerning the proof of man's soul Plato argues that men perform actions and show capacities, which are not bodily. Such action and capacities should accordingly belong to the soul. In *Phaedo*, he states "Is there or is there not an absolute justice? Assuredly there is. Is there or is there not an absolute beauty and absolute good? Of course there is. But did you ever behold any of them with your eyes? Certainly not. Or did you ever reach them with any other bodily sense? And I speak not of these alone, but of absolute greatness, and health and strength, and in short of the reality or true nature of everything. In general, understanding is not a function or capacity of the body, hence it must be a function or capacity of some other thing."⁴⁶² Plato identifying the nature of the soul thought of the soul as, on one hand, something which infuses life in the body when occupying it, and, on the other hand, as something related to life itself, or something identical with life. Being self-moving is also a sign of life. In *Phaedrus* he says "...what is the nature of the soul.... the soul is identical with the self-moving." In *Phaedo* he says: "whatever the soul occupies, to that it comes bearing life."⁴⁶³ Since Plato sometimes defines the soul as "the pure thought," and sometimes considers it as the source of life and movement of the body we may not arrive at exact meaning and definition which Plato give us.⁴⁶⁴ It is remarkable that Plato is probably the first philosopher to make a sharp distinction between the soul and the body, holding that the

⁴⁶² J. Teichman, *The Mind and the Soul*, pp. 16-17. See also J. D. Kaplan, editor, *Dialogues of Plato* (Pocket Books, 1950), pp. 98-103.

⁴⁶³ J. Teichman, *The Mind and the Soul*, p. 22. See also E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, pp. 553-563 (Phaedrus).

⁴⁶⁴ Abû Naşr Fârâbî, *Kitâb al-Jam` Baina Ra'yayn al-Hakîmain*, 4th ed., (Beirût: Dâr al-Mashriq, 1985), p. 12.

soul could exist both before and after its residence in the body and rule the body during that residence.⁴⁶⁵

Contrary to Plato, Aristotle reasons that the soul relates to the body like form to matter. The body is the very instrument of the soul, for matter is merely potency and exists only as long as it is necessary for the realization of a form, whereas, the soul is inevitably bound up with the body, and can have no life apart from it.⁴⁶⁶ Considering the Platonic and Aristotelian points of view, one may arrive at totally different views about man. Plato sees soul absolutely separate from the body. He thought of soul as something, which exists before joining the body. Aristotle, rejecting the idea of a duality between the soul and the body, believes that these two things are both elements of a single substance.

Persian Text

31. گفت دانا، نفس را ماضی و حالست و سپس
آتش و آب و هوا و اسفل و اعلاستی

Transliteration

31. Guft dâna, nafs râ mâḡî wa ḥâlast wa sipas,
Âtash wa âb wa hawâ wa asfal wa a`lâstî.

Translation

31. The sage said, soul has "past" and "present", and "after",
It is "fire" and "water" and "air" and "lower" and "upper."

The first hemistich points to some scholars who believe in the materiality (*jismîyat*) of the soul. According to Dârâbî some theologians believe that soul is a fine substance (*jism-i laḡf*) flowing (running) in the body.⁴⁶⁷ The second hemistich points to another ancient school of thought which believed that soul consists of four elements; fire, water, soil and air.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁵ Shaffer, "Mind-Body Problem," *Encyclopedia of philosophy*, vol. 5, op. Cit., p. 336.

⁴⁶⁶ John Burnet, "Soul," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. 11, op. Cit., p. 741.

⁴⁶⁷ Dârâbî, p. 160.

⁴⁶⁸ Khalkhâlî. P. 212.

It is impossible to give a complete picture of the debates among Muslim philosophers and theologians concerning the nature of the soul during the past centuries. However Al-Abîwardî (d. 966. AD) in his *Rawḍât al-Jannât* declares that there are several understandings of what is meant by "*anâ*" (I), namely *nafs*. Here are some of its meanings:

1. The majority of theologians believe that *nafs* (soul) is precisely the observable structure we referred to as *badan* (body).
2. *Nafs* is identical to the fleshy heart located inside our body.
3. *Nafs* is our brain.
4. Al-Nazzâm believed that *nafs* is a collection of some indivisible elements located in the heart.
5. *Nafs* consists of the fundamental parts (al-'aḍâ' al-'aṣṣḥiyah), which are produced from sperm.
6. *Nafs* is *mizâj* (a common quality which comes out of the combination of all elements).
7. *Nafs* is a fine body (*jism-i laṭîf*), which runs through the body like water through the rose.
8. *Nafs* is just the same as water.
9. *Nafs* is identical to fire or instinctive heat (al-ḥarârah al-gharîzîyyah).
10. *Nafs* is the breath (*al-nafas*).
11. *Nafs* is the Creator (*bârî*)- but He is exalted of what cruel people claim.
12. *Nafs* consists of four elements namely, water, soil, fire and air.
13. *Nafs* is a species form (*sûraht al-naw'îyyah*), which subsists in the body and is united with it.
14. *Nafs* is an incorporeal substance, which cannot be equated with the body and does not have any corporeal characteristic [such as quantity (*miqdâr*), shape (*shakl*), direction (*jihat*), place (*ain*), position (*waḍ'*)]. Still, it is related to the coarse body (*jism-i kathîf*) in

such a way as to allow it to govern that body and to utilize it much like the governor does a city or the one who loves the beloved. This is the belief of a majority of Muslim philosophers, illuminationists, gnostics and theologians particularly Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, al-Rāzī and al-Ghazālī.⁴⁶⁹ Considering all these doctrines about the nature of the soul and soul-body relation, one can hardly find a commonly accepted doctrine among Muslim philosophers and theologians.

It is worth mentioning that in regard to the origination of the soul four classifications could be made: (i) The majority of philosophers: soul is spiritual both in temporal origination and in continuance (*rawḥānīat al-ḥudūth wa al-baqā*). (ii) Galen: soul is material both in temporal origination and in continuance (*jismānīat al-ḥudūth wa al-baqā*). (iii) A few believers in reincarnation: soul is spiritual in temporal origination and material in continuance. (*rawḥānīat al-ḥudūth wa jismānīat al-baqā*). (iv) Mullā Ṣadrā: soul is material in temporal origination and spiritual in continuance. (*jismānīat al-ḥudūth wa rawḥānīat al-baqā*).⁴⁷⁰

Persian Text

32. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما نبود وجود می نماند بعد ما نفسی که او ما راستی

Transliteration

32. Guft dānā, nafs-i mā rā ba`d-i mā nabwad⁴⁷¹ wujūd,

Miy namānad⁴⁷² ba`d-i mā nafsī ki `ū mā rāstī.

Translation

32. The scholar said, there would be no life after the present,

There will be no soul (self) that fits us.

⁴⁶⁹ Ḥasanẓādah Āmulī, *ʿUyūn Masā'il al-Nafs* (Tehran: Mu'assasah Intishārāt-i Amīr Kabīr, 1982), pp. 122-23.

⁴⁷⁰ Dārābī, p. 161.

⁴⁷¹ Khalkhālī & Gīlānī, *nīst ba`d az mā*.

⁴⁷² Khalkhālī, *mīnamāyad*.

Galen's school believes that soul is *mizâj* (an accident = *'araḍ*) (a mixture or common quality which results in all physical elements performed by different parts of the body) and therefore is material both in temporal origination and in continuance (*jismâniyat al-ḥudûth wa al-baqâ*). Accordingly *mizâj* will not endure after the body terminates. The soul will also cease to exist.⁴⁷³

Persian Text

33. گفت دانا، نفس هم با جا و هم بی جا بود گفت دانا، نفس نی بی جا و نی با جا ستی

Transliteration

33. Guft dânâ, nafs ham bâ jâ wa ham bî jâ buwad,

Guft dânâ, nafs niy bî jâ wa niy bâ jâstî.

Translation

33. The knower said, soul is both with physical location (place) and without location in space (place),

The knower said, soul neither is without physical location (place) nor is it with location in space (place).

The second hemistich of this verse echoes the first one. Mîr Findiriskî in this verse points to the idea of those philosophers (like Mullâ Şadrâ and Mullâ Hâdî Sabzawârî) who recognize soul to be a unique reality subsisting from different virtuous (*mutafâḍḍil*) levels.⁴⁷⁴ Mullâ Şadrâ's doctrine of the physical origin of the soul, which is discussed in detail in natural philosophy, is a position that our philosophers believed that *'ilm al-nafs* is a preliminary step toward knowing God and being aware of the consequences hereafter when individual souls and bodies are gathered together at the Resurrection (*ḥashr*). These goals would be attainable if we considered the soul as a being, which survives and leads us to God both in its generation (*ḥudûth*) and its survival

⁴⁷³ Dârâbî, p. 161.

⁴⁷⁴ Dârâbî, p. 163.

(*baqâ*). Between its physical generation and its survival in the hereafter there might exist many virtuous levels for different men.

Persian Text

34. گفت دانا، نفس را وصفی نیارم هیچ، گفت
نه به شرط شی باشد، نه به شرط لاسقی

Transliteration

34. Guft dâna, nafs râ waṣṣfi nayâram hîch guft,

Na bi shart-i shay' bâshad, na bi shart-i lâstî.

Translation

34. The knower said, I do not describe (qualify) the soul (self) with anything, (the knower) said,

It is neither conditioned by-something, nor neglectively-conditioned.

Description or qualification here, in the poet's words, means definition. The poet proclaims that since *nafs* has no quiddity, it has no definition. For definition for quiddity is with quiddity. Whatever has no quiddity has no definition and therefore it is neither conditioned by-something (*bi sharṭ-i shay'*), nor negatively-conditioned (*lâ bi sharṭ*). The majority of philosophers acknowledge the Necessary Existence (*wajib al-wujûd*) only as the pure reality without quiddity. They maintain everything to be a composition-pair of existence and quiddity. Contrary to the preponderance of philosophers, Shihâb al-Dîn Suhrawardî believes that not only the Necessary Existence, but, also the soul and the intellect are pure realities (*wujûd-i ṣîrf*) having no quiddity. They have no definition and therefore they are neither conditioned by-something, nor neglectively-conditioned.⁴⁷⁵ Khakhâlî⁴⁷⁶ who agrees upon the pure reality of the existence of *nafs* with Suhrawardî explains for us why he believes that *nafs* is like God and it is pure reality. He maintains that *nafs* neither has genus nature (*al-ṭabî'at al-jinsîyah*) nor has specific nature (*al-*

⁴⁷⁵ Dârâbî, p. 164.

⁴⁷⁶ Khakhâlî, p. 214.

ṭabīʿat al-nawʿiyyah). *Nafs* also has no individual nature (*al-ṭabīʿat al-shakhṣiyyah*). It is rather a kind of existence. Its unity is also like the unity of Necessary Existence; out of threefold natures; i.e. genus nature, specific nature and individual nature.

Consequently, it is clear through the different definitions provided by Mīr Findiriskī in his philosophical ode that it is quite difficult to give a fair definition or a complete picture of what was debated among Muslim philosophers and theologians concerning the nature and definition of the soul. Examining Mīr Findiriskī's writing concerning the soul, one is hard put to his exact idea. However his Aristotelian approach might lead us to the idea that soul is a perfection of the body, which keeps it alive. The Platonic idea is also evident in Mīr Findiriskī's doctrine. I think regarding the soul-body relation problem, he believes that soul needs the body as tool. Being substantially apart from the body, the soul continues its life after the death. Preferring the Platonic idea because of its spirituality and closeness to the spirit of Islamic thought, Mīr Findiriskī appears to be more Platonic in his approach while describing the soul. It could be said that Mīr Findiriskī neither agrees with the Platonic notion that the soul existed before its connection with the body nor complied with the idea of transformation of the soul into another body - as believers in metempsychosis (*aṣḥāb al-tanāsukh*) believed. Trying to show the nature of the soul and its spiritual activities, Mīr Findiriskī arrives at an esoteric conclusion. As he states in the next verse, although many people may consider these words cryptic, the real meaning of these words are still mysterious. According to Mīr Findiriskī the only way to solve these problems and come to a fair understanding of the true nature of the soul is through the spiritual purification by following the teachings of the Infallible Imams.

Persian Text

35. گفت دانا، این سخنها هر کسی از وهم خویش در نیابد گفته را، کین گفته معماستی

Transliteration

35. Guft dânâ, în sukhanhâ⁴⁷⁷ har kasî az wahm-i khîsh,

Dar nayâbad guft-i râ, kîn guft-i mu`ammâstî.

Translation

35. The knower said, everybody, based on his imagination, said these words,

The words were not understood, for these words are a riddle (mysterious).

Many people may call these words mysterious and many others may not even understand what the real meanings are. However, these words have always been misunderstood and misinterpreted by many ignorant and illiterate people.

Persian Text

36. هر یکی بر دیگری دارد دلیل از گفته ها جمله در بحث و نزاع و شورش و غوغاستی

Transliteration

36. Har yikî bar dîgarî dârad dalîl az guft-ihâ,⁴⁷⁸

Jumli dar⁴⁷⁹ baḥṭh wa nizâ` wa shûrish wa ghawghâstî.

Translation

36. Everybody brings his own argument in support of his words (to prove his words),

All were in discussion (argument) and dispute (quarrel) and revolt and uproar.

Since illiterate people understood these words incompletely, they try to justify, excuse, quarrel, dispute until finally they go against the grain.

Persian Text

37. بیتکی از بو معین آرم در استشهد خویش گر چه آن در باب دگر لایق اینجاستی

Transliteration

37. Baytakî az Bû Mu`în âram dar istishhâd-i khîsh,

Gar ch-i ân dar bâb-i dîgar lâyiḡ-i înjâstî.

⁴⁷⁷ Khalkhâlî, în sukhanhâ guft dânâ.

⁴⁷⁸ Khalkhâlî & Dârâbî, Guft-i.

⁴⁷⁹ Khalkhâlî, dar mîyân-i.

Translation

37. I bring a verse from Abû Mu'în (Nâsir Khusru) to illustrate my argument,

Although that verse is mor fitting in an other section.

Nâsir Khusru Sayyid al-Ḥusaynî, a contemporary philosopher with Ibn Sînâ, held discussions with him and met Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Khirqânî. He grew up in Khurâsân, 'Irâq and Egypt and died in Badakhshân. When he met Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Khirqânî, he requested his assistance in avoiding disputes and quarrels in studies and guidance for his spiritual condition. The Shaykh referred to a poem that Nâsir Khusru had versified only the night before and which was not known to anyone. Shaykh explained to Nâsir Khusru that you have wrongly stated in your poem that the most superior, preferable and distinguished existents in this world are the universal intellect and universal soul. This, said the Shaykh, is incorrect because it is not *'aql* (intellect) which is most superior, preferable and distinguished in this world; it is love, passion and commitment. When Nâsir Khusru witnessed this generosity, and exceptional knowledge, his gratitude and admiration for the Skaykh were intensified.⁴⁸⁰

However in this verse Mîr Findiriskî furthers his argument by referring to a poem from Nâsir Khusru. Nâsir Khusru acknowledges the meaning given by Mîr Findiriskî in verses 35 and 36.

Persian Text

38. هر کسی چیزی همی گوید به تیره رای خویش تا گمان آید که او قستای ابن لوقاستی

Transliteration

38. Har kasî chîzî hamî gûyad bi târih ra'y-i khîsh,

Tâ gamân âyad ki 'û⁴⁸¹ Qustâ ibn Lûqâstî.

Translation

⁴⁸⁰ Dârâbî, pp. 170-1.

⁴⁸¹ Dârâbî & Gîlânî, ân.

38. Everybody say something with his own vague (indefinite) view,

Until it seems that he is Qustâ ibn Lûqâ.⁴⁸²

Qustâ ibn Lûqâ, d. 300 A.H., a Christian philosopher from Ba'labak and Syria, Ya'qûb Kinidî's contemporary, traveled to Rome and studied there. He returned to Syria and translated many Latin books into Arabic. He was well versed in astronomy, geometry, logic, theology, natural science and physiology.⁴⁸³ Mîr Findiriskî in this verse, which is quoted from Nâsir Khusru, announces that some ignorant people, who failed even to comprehend the real meanings of the statements made by the intellectuals, put up a front of being learned and wise like Qustâ ibn Lûqâ.

Persian Text

39. کاش دانایان پیشین می بگفتندی تمام
تا خلاف نا تمامان از میان برداشتی

Transliteration

39. Kâsh dânyân-i pîshîn miy biguftandî tamâm,

Tâ khilâf-i nâtamâmân az mîyân bardâshtî.

Translation

39. How good it would be if the knowers before us had said everything completely,

So that the quarrel (dispute) of those who are imperfect would be eliminated.

People differ from one another in their physical ability and intellectual capacities. Accordingly their physical as well as spiritual capacity, potentiality and workability are different. The wise men always considered the prophetic tradition, "talk with people moderately (in a required manner or according to their intellectual capacity)" and try to talk, write and communicate with people secretly. The sages do not reveal and disclose righteous truths to everybody.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸² Qustâ ibn Lûqâ (d. 300 A.H.) is the first one who wrote a treatise on the difference between soul (*al-rûh*) and the spirit (*al-nafs*). See J. W. "Qustâ Ibn Lûqâ's psychophysiological treatise on the difference between the soul and the spirit..." *Scripta Mediterranea*, vol. 2. (1981) pp. 53-77.

⁴⁸³ Dârâbî, p. 172, and Khalkhâlî, p. 219.

⁴⁸⁴ Dârâbî, p. 172, and Khalkhâlî, pp. 218-219.

Persian Text

40. نفس را، این آرزو در بند دارد، دایما تا به بند آرزویی، بند اندر پاسقی

Transliteration

40. Nafs râ în ârizû dar band dêrad dê'imân,

Tâ bi band-i⁴⁸⁵ ârizû'î, band andar pâstî.

Translation

40. Desire keeps the soul in bondage in this world,

While thou hast desire, thy feet are tied.

The most important factors, which predominate the soul and prevent it from ascending and purging itself, are the temporal desires, wills and decisions. Human intellect increases as the soul sheds worldly desires while intellect declines with a growth in the materialistic desires of the soul. In other words desires and aspirations are the essence of soul. If they were to be removed from the soul, soul would be modified to intellect and eventually shift to intellect. Therefore, in the next verse the poet emphasized the fact that each wish in this world is followed by another wish. Accordingly there exist endless wishes. Therefore we must think of a type of wish (i.e. theoretical, ideological, ideational wish) beyond the worldly kind, which bear no similarity to any other desire. According to Dârâbî the word *taṣawwuf* (mysticism) consists of four letters. Each letter points to three mystical and spiritual positions and sums up twelve positions. The first letter "t" points to renunciation (*al-tark*) (of the world and/or abandonment of pleasure), repentance (*al-tawbah*) and piety (*al-tuqâ*). The second letter "ṣ" points to patience (*al-ṣabr*), truthfulness (*al-ṣidq*) and inner purity (*al-ṣafâ*). The third one "w" points to love; friendship (*al-wudd*), invocation; litany (*al-wird*) and faithfulness; fidelity; loyalty (*al-wafâ*). The fourth one "f" points to The One (*al-fard*), meditation; thought (*al-fikr*) and

⁴⁸⁵ Dârâbî & Gîlânî, bibînad.

annihilation (*al-fanâ'*).⁴⁸⁶ Annihilation is the last position (objective) in which all eleven preceding levels are actualized.

Persian Text

41. خواهشی اندر جهان هر خواهشی را در پی است خواهشی باید که بعد از آن نباشد خواستی

Transliteration

41. Khâhishî andar jahân har khâhishî râ dar pay ast,
khâhishî bâyard ki ba'd az ân nabâshad khâstî.

Translation

41. Each wish in this world is followed by another wish,
The wish must be sought beyond which there is no other.

The last wish, which is the most crucial of all desires, is the intellectual level in which all man's perfections are realized. The ultimate goal for men is to obtain the complete intellect. The only way to acquire this intellectual and spiritual level is purification of the soul from any worldly desires, wills and aspirations.⁴⁸⁷ The poet in this verse addresses us to one of the most significant and clearly the ultimate position of sages, mystics and ascetics, which is⁴⁸⁸ satisfaction, gratification and humbleness before Allâh. Thus mystic's wills, wishes and decisions will be amortized in those of Allâh.

⁴⁸⁶ Dârâbî, p. 174.

⁴⁸⁷ Khalkhâlî, p. 219.

⁴⁸⁸ Dârâbî, pp. 177-8.

Chapter 9

Mîr Findiriskî

On

**Epistemological Problems
(Platonic Ideas)**

Mîr Findiriskî on Epistemological Problem

It might be said that the first three lines of the *Qaṣīdah* raise basic epistemological issues, especially ones conveyed by Platonic ideas. I would therefore like to quote the verses in transliteration and literal translation and then explain the four theories of knowledge to which they refer as well as the interpretation that Mîr Findiriskî himself may have intended to convey. I shall follow this approach throughout the present chapter.

Persian Text (Lines 1-3)

1. چرخ با این اختران نغز و خوش و زیبایستی صورتی در زیر دارد آنچه در بالاستی
2. صورت زیرین اگر با نردبان معرفت بر رود بالا همان با اصل خود یکناستی
3. این سخنها را در نیابد هیچ فهم ظاهری گر ابونصرستی گر بوعلی سیناستی

Literal Translation:

1. Heaven with these stars is excellent, happy and beautiful;

Whatever there is above has a form below as well.

2. The lower form - if the ladder of inner knowledge,

be climbed – is one in origin with the higher.

3. No exterior understanding can discover this word,

Whether it be that of an Abû Nasr (al-Fârâbî) or of an Abû `Alî (Ibn) Sînâ.⁴⁸⁹

Introduction

Philosophy basically consists in the attempt to answer the most fundamental questions of existence. The notion of 'fundamental' however is relative: question A is more fundamental than question B if and only if the answer to question B takes for granted or presupposes the answer to question A. For example, the question 'what is a human being?' a relatively fundamental question, may not be an important question to everyone. By the same token the question 'does my lover truly love me?', which is not a fundamental question, may nevertheless be an important question to someone who does not find the fundamental question 'what is a human being?' at all important. A philosopher is a person who thinks that the fundamental questions are important questions and who seriously tries to provide answers to them. Philosophy is both epistemology and ontology. Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the most fundamental questions about knowledge, while ontology is the branch of philosophy that deals with the most important questions about what exists or may exist. Since one regularly presupposes that the objects of knowledge exist, it is, in practice, very difficult to disengage epistemological from ontological concerns. Indeed, this is one of the chief lessons in the history of modern philosophy. In order to

⁴⁸⁹ A part translation is given by S. H. Nasr in his article *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, pp. 923.

appreciate better Mîr Findiriskî's position, we must try to understand the conceptual foundation of epistemology.

What is epistemology? What is theory of knowledge? Every human being is confronted with different questions and enigmas. Each and every one of these questions addresses a different aspect of life. These questions however are not, in respect of value or significance, of the same level and therefore cannot be evaluated at one level. Only some of these questions are so fundamental that, if they remain unresolved, other problems will never be addressed. Epistemological questions are of this nature. If the problems of this branch of philosophy prove insoluble, we will be unable to arrive at solutions to other branches of philosophy. If the issue of value of intellectual knowledge is not affirmed any claims presented as actual solution to such problems will be irrelevant and inapplicable. For there will always remain some questions concerning how the intellect can provide a correct solution to these problems.

Although epistemology as a branch of philosophy does not have a long history, it may be said that the problem of the value of knowledge, which forms the central pivot, has been raised in some form or another since the most ancient periods of scientific inquiry. It was not until the time of John Locke (1632-1704) and Leibniz (1716-1646) that epistemology began to be discussed independently of other discussions and problems. Berkeley and Hume are two other major philosophers who have discussed these same questions.

The Importance of Epistemology

That "man is able to know" is one of the most fundamental and central axioms in the whole debate concerning the "theory of knowledge" or epistemology. It is most evident that unless this axiom is acknowledged, no other question or scientific

problem can be solved. In other words, questions of epistemology are prior to any philosophical or scientific problem, including that of ontology. For until we do not recognize the value of intellectual knowledge and concur that we are not able to understand, no solution that we may suggest for any other problem – whether philosophical, psychological, economic or scientific in nature – can be proposed with any confidence. The question of the value of human knowledge is one of the oldest ones facing us and has been considered by philosophers in many different lands and from many different perspectives.

Before we attempt any definition of epistemology, it would be useful to examine how it impacts on the most fundamental questions of ethics, theology and mathematics. Take the following groups of propositions for example:

- A) 1. Ethical commands and propositions are absolute.
- 2. God is only one.
- 3. The center of every triangle meet at just one point.
- B) 1. Ethical commands and propositions are relative and not absolute.
- 2. God is not one.
- 3. The centers of every triangle do not meet at just one point.

Which group of the above statements does one accept? Can one accept either groups together, i.e., A and B, or neither of them, or just the "A group" or just the "B group"? Of the four options, it is clear that we may not consider both groups to be true and valid, just as we cannot reject both groups as false and invalid. We must therefore make a choice, and most of us would choose to reject the propositions in the "B group" and accept those in the "A group." However, it is right to ask by what criteria one would choose the "A group" and reject the other three options? What is the way in which we recognize that some of these statements are true and authentic and others

false and erroneous? Is there any way to distinguish real from unreal, correct from incorrect and actual from false? Indeed, we may go further and ask the basic question: How are we able to know facts and realities? The question of the capability of man to know what is fact or what is true and to distinguish between the truth and deception is one of the major problems in the history of philosophy.⁴⁹⁰

The question of epistemology can also be put in the following way: What is the way in which we know the world outside? In other words, in which authentic way may we know the world outside? Is this way a sensual/experimental way, an intellectual way, or an intuitive way, or it is a combination of two of these or a joining together of all of them? It seems that the positivist and experimental philosophers have chosen the first way, peripatetic and realist philosophers the second, illuminationist philosophers and mystics the third, and followers of transcendental philosophy the last. In my opinion at least we should not restrict our knowledge to the experimental way. It is sharply clear that every person realizes some sort of knowledge inside of himself, which is not experimental. That leaves us with the second and third ways of knowing. To judge between these two ways is not easy. Although the followers of transcendental philosophy were able to combine peripatetic and illuminationist philosophy and the mystical elements, nevertheless there still remains a great deal of research to be done in this regard. In other words, although in Islamic philosophy there is still little independent treatise or chapter that discusses the "theory of knowledge or epistemology," nevertheless most of the discussion, debate and argument on this issue has been disputed in isolated writings, such as in chapters on science and perception, intellect, mental existence, soul and its modes.⁴⁹¹ In order to elucidate the real significance of this problem and the position of Mîr Findiriskî, I

⁴⁹⁰ Muhammad Husain Zâdah, *Ma'rifat Shinâsî* (Qum: Intishârât-i Mu'assasah-i Âmûzishî Pazhûhishî Imâm Khumainî, 1998), pp. 17-18.

⁴⁹¹ Murtaḍā Muṭahharî, *Mas'alah-i Shinâkht* (Tehran: Intishârât-I Şadrâ, 1990), pp. 16-17.

must explain briefly the definition of epistemology, the possibility of having knowledge, the instruments or the tools of epistemology, the sources of knowledge, the levels of knowledge, the types of knowledge, and the criteria by which we may recognize true knowledge from false.

The Definition of Epistemology or "The Theory of Knowledge."

Some philosophers define "knowledge" as a reflection of the external world in man's mind. Since a definition is intended to make known or to introduce, while epistemology or knowledge also means to know, it would seem that the concept of knowledge is self-evident. However, epistemology or the "theory of knowledge" as a branch of science can be defined as a science in which man's knowledge, its value, its types and the criteria for its correctness and incorrectness are all areas that need to be discussed.⁴⁹² The very first problem therefore that needs to be examined is whether knowledge is possible or not.

The Possibility of Having Knowledge: Pyrrho's Enigma

Many scholars have struggled with skepticism, agnosticism, and sophism in their own minds over the last three millennia. Skepticism especially has grown as a philosophical view and as a set of arguments directed against traditional philosophies, theologies, and beliefs, and as a critical view countering various positive intellectual positions. Though modern skepticism entered the intellectual playing field in the sixteenth century, earlier forms of philosophical skepticism had appeared in ancient Greece, and had been systematized during the Hellenistic period into a series of controversial positions invading various forms of dogmatic philosophy.⁴⁹³ The first enigma that skeptics in all eras have addressed regarding the "theory of Knowledge"

⁴⁹² Muhsin-i Gharaviyân, *Darâmâdî bar Âmûzish-i Falsafah* (Qum: Intishârât-i Shafaq, 1998), pp. 81-82.

⁴⁹³ Richard H. Popkin, "Skepticism in Modern Thought," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, vol. IV (editor in chief Philip P. Wiener, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1973), pp.240-1.

is this: is knowledge possible? Subsidiary questions include: can anything actually be known in metaphysics or ethics? And can we know the world outside? Some philosophers would say that ability to know anything outside ourselves is impossible. "Doubt" and "I don't know" are the inevitable destiny of man. Popkin tells us that "[t]he Pyrrhonians developed a series of 'tropes' that is, skeptical reasoning, leading to a mental state of neutrality and suspension of judgment about all matters that are not immediately evident."⁴⁹⁴ The reason for this, Pyrrhonians say, is that our tools to know things are either sense or intellect, and both are prone to making mistakes. Since our senses and intellect are so capable of misleading us, we cannot trust them. Accordingly, "doubt" and "skepticism" are the indispensable destiny of human beings.⁴⁹⁵

The Answer to Pyrrho and His Followers

The fundamental question that may be posed to the Pyrrhonians, however, is that if they doubt everything, can they not also have doubts about their doubt? In other words, would Pyrrho, who doubted the sense that led him to believe that a stick in a glass of water is curved when in fact it is not, acknowledge whether he doubts also the doubt itself? This is a very important point for Descartes, who once said "I think, therefore I am." For Descartes, the proof that there exists a soul totally independent of the body constitutes a by-product of his revolutionary approach to the problem of the criterion of certainty. In his *Discourse* (Part IV) he describes how he arrived at the rock-bottom certainty of his dictum *cogito ergo sum*- (I think, therefore I am): "I saw that I could conceive that I had no body, and that there was no world nor place where

⁴⁹⁴ R. H. Popkin, "Skepticism in Modern Thought," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. IV, p. 241.

⁴⁹⁵ The arguments of the Pyrrhonians were collected by one of their last leaders, Sextus Empiricus (second or third century A.D.) in his Pyrrhonian *Hypotyposes* and *Adversus Mathematicos*.

I might be; but yet that I could not for all that conceive that I was not. Thus he concluded that he was."⁴⁹⁶

In the Muslim world as well certain anti-rational theologians have made use of skepticism to challenge the metaphysical views of the Islamic philosophers. Al-Ghazali attacked the claims of his contemporaries to knowledge of the necessary conditions of the universe by offering arguments that employed skepticism to lead people to accept his religious mystical views. However, al-Ghazali soon realized that whatever doubts he might have, he had never doubted that he had thoughts, or a pen in his hand, or certain sounds that he had heard. Consequently he, like Descartes, accepts a certain foundation for his thought and builds up his entire philosophical system on that foundation.⁴⁹⁷ Knowledge of doubting is therefore knowledge in itself. Hence, we can say that a man can be mistaken in some of his perceptions while perfectly correct in others. What is really needed in such a case is a yardstick or criterion that will allow us to distinguish between correct and incorrect statements. Logic plays an important role in this regard. Before we go on to discuss this problem, let us look at the respective views of the Qur'ân and the Old Testament with regard to the possibility of knowledge.

The Qur'ân and the Problem of "The Theory of Knowledge or Epistemology"

Does the Qur'ân acknowledge the possibility of having knowledge? This can be seen from a careful look at the following verses of the Qur'ân: "And He taught Adam the names, all of them; then He presented them unto the angels and said, Now tell me the names of these if you speak truly" (2/31). In the next verse God explicitly makes it clear that God has taught the Qur'ân to man. "Has taught the Qur'ân" (55/2).

⁴⁹⁶ Jacques Choron, "Death and Immortality," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, vol. I (Edited in chief Philip P. Wiener, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1973), p. 640.

⁴⁹⁷ R. H. Popkin, "Skepticism in Modern Thought," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. IV, p. 241. See also M. Muṭahharī, *Mas'alah-i Shinākht*, pp. 20-22.

Furthermore in the following verse the Qur'ân calls man's attention to the fact that God has taught man literacy, that He has given him the ability to write: "Who taught by the pen" (96/4), "taught man that he knew not" (96/5). These verses of the Qur'ân clearly indicate that Allâh taught mankind, and that mankind can in fact be taught.

In other verses, the Qur'ân asks man to look at the heavens to realize and find out what is in the heavens and earth. "Say: Behold what is in the heavens and in the earth! But neither signs nor warnings avail a people who do not believe" (10/101). When the Qur'ân invites us to know the world, heavens, earth and whatever is in this world, it means that knowledge is certainly possible. In the following verse the Qur'ân asks man to study and care for his own soul in order to find out about himself: "O believers, look after your own souls. He who is astray cannot hurt you, if you are rightly guided, unto God shall you return, all together, and He will tell you what you were doing" (5/105).

The above underlines the fact that the Qur'ân constantly reminds man to seek to know everything, including himself, the heavens and the earth showing that knowledge is not impossible.

The Tools of Knowledge

What are the tools by which we apprehend? One of the main ones of course is our sensory system. There exist however many different views concerning the tools of knowledge, chief among them that of Plato and his school.⁴⁹⁸ Plato believed that the only real tool of knowledge is intellect. According to him, the subject of knowledge is universal, not particular. He did not consider anything particular to be a real thing, thus making it ineligible as an object of knowledge. For him, only intellectual knowledge counted. Aristotle on the other hand believed that the subject

⁴⁹⁸ We will explain his ideas later in detail.

of knowledge is both universal and particular. According to him, the universal and the particular are both real. The tool of particular knowledge is sense, while that of universal knowledge is intellect. European philosophers, like Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and David Hume, believed that the only tool of knowledge are senses. They downplayed the role of intellect, by which I mean analysis, assimilation, classification abstraction, separation and privation (*tajrîd*).⁴⁹⁹ Some modern Western philosophers such as Henri Bergson, Alexis Carrel, William James and Blaise Pascal⁵⁰⁰ considered the heart to be a tool of knowledge. Bergson⁵⁰¹ in particular says that as sense is a tool of living, intellect is also a tool of living. The only tool of knowledge is heart and mystical sense. Descartes like Plato believes that the only means of acquiring knowledge is via the intellect and that sense is good only for action and living.⁵⁰² Many scholars considered nature to be one of the sources of knowledge, and man's senses one of the tools of acquiring it. Man has several different senses: seeing, hearing, tasting, touching and smelling. Deprived of one of these, he is certainly deprived of one kind of knowledge (*man faqada hissân faqada `ilman*). If someone is born blind, for instance, he will never understand colors. No matter how much one tries to convey to him the quality of the colors, he will never be able to understand what you mean.

In addition to sense, however, man needs to exercise analysis (*tajzîyah*) and assimilation (*tarkîb*) of all kinds. Analysis and assimilation are acts of the intellect. We know nothing if we do not label, classify and sort things into different categories.

⁴⁹⁹ One of the most important problems here is that European philosophers did not differentiate between experience (*tajrubi-h*) and induction (*istiqrâ`*). Induction has dubious credit (*I'tibâr-I zanî*) but experience has assuredly credit (*I'tibâr-I yaqînî*). See M Muṭṭaharî, *Shinâkht*, p. 48.

⁵⁰⁰ Philip P. Wiener, "Pragmatism," , " *Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, vol. III (Edited in chief Philip P. Wiener, Charles Scriber's Sons, New York, 1973), p. 565.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid.

⁵⁰² M. Muṭṭaharî, *Shinâkht*, p. 50.

All philosophical schools of thought accepted some system of categories, one group for instance proposing ten categories, another five, and so on. Intellectual analysis, assimilation and classification of things in different categories are acts of the intellect. We become aware of things by our senses, but only partially (*juz'ī*); it is only by means of our intellect that we fully understand by generalizing (*ta'mīm*) them. Abstraction, separation and privation (*tajrīd*) are other tasks discharged by our intellect, which in doing so shows itself capable of dividing an individual external thing into two or more parts. For example, we never encounter the pure quantity of five (*panj-i mujarrad*) outside ourselves; whatever exists in the external world must be five "somethings", such as for example five "fingers," or five "apples." Accordingly, although we need the senses to know what is beyond ourselves, nevertheless it is a necessary condition, not a sufficient one. The sufficient condition on the other hand is fulfilled when we employ another tool, that is, the intellect, which we use to analyze, assimilate and abstract.⁵⁰³

Furthermore, there is another way of understanding, which has been suggested not only by Muslim philosophers and mystics, but also we may attributed to some Western scholars such as William James.⁵⁰⁴ This understanding is achieved via the purification and edification of the soul, providing us with a sort of knowledge which is inaccessible either through the senses or the intellect. This knowledge is called knowledge by presence or mystical experience.

We may summarize the sources and tools of knowledge as follows: Nature is a source of knowledge and man's senses the tool of acquiring it,⁵⁰⁵ the intellect is

⁵⁰³ M. Muṭahharī, *Shinākht*. pp. 38-42.

⁵⁰⁴ P. P. Wiener, "Pragmatism," *Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. III, p. 568.

⁵⁰⁵ Plato did not recognize nature as a source of knowledge for he did not recognize particular (*juz'ī*) as a truth (*ḥaqīqat*). Since man's relation to nature is through his feeling and whatever we receive and understand through feeling is particular accordingly we receive, Plato says, no knowledge from the nature. And therefore nature is not a source of our knowledge. The only way to know, Plato says, is

another source of knowledge whose tool of acquisition is reason, and the heart the third source of knowledge, accessible via the tool of purification of the soul.

The View of the Qur'ân in Regard of the Tools of Knowledge

What tools does the Qur'ân accept? Does the Qur'ân recognize the senses as a tool of knowledge? Does the Qur'ân recognize intellect as a tool of knowledge? Or does it accept both, or even add further tools for acquiring knowledge? Look carefully at this verse: "And it is God who brought you forth from your mothers, you know nothing, He appointed for you hearing, and sight, and hearts, that haply so you will be thankful" (16/78). This verse clearly indicates that, as well as our senses, the Qur'ân recognizes another source of knowledge, i.e., hearts (*af'idah* pl. of *fu'âd*).⁵⁰⁶ However, it is not in keeping with the nature of the present chapter to explain and elucidate that this verse obviously rejects Platonic ideas. For this Qur'ânic verse says that man, when created, knows nothing, while the theory of knowledge advanced by Plato says that man knows everything before even coming into this world. According to Plato, man's soul can exist independently of his body (in fact, before the body even exists) in a higher world. While in contact with the incorporeal realities (*muthul*) the soul understands them, but loses or forgets this knowledge on coming into this world. However, when man forms a connection in his mind (through his senses) to particular meanings, he remembers the higher ideas.

The Sources of the Theory of Knowledge

The question of the sources of human knowledge has long been one of the most controversial problems in philosophy, both in the Islamic world and in the West.

dialectic using intellect and logical arguments (dialectic: art of discovering and testing truth by discussion and logical arguments). Descartes and Bayken two more naturalist philosophers did not recognize nature as a source of knowledge. They declare that although we study the nature through our feelings, nevertheless the result is not scientifically important. We may say that the result practically is useful not scientifically because we are not sure about the result of our feelings. M. Muṭṭaharî, *Shinâkht*, pp. 61-2.

⁵⁰⁶ Fakhr-i Râzî, *al-Tafsîr al-Kabîr*, vol. 5, under the interpretation of the verse 78 chapter 16.

The epistemological question seeks to discover the essential elements constituting human knowledge while trying to determine the broader nature of human intellectual life and even how thought is itself constructed.

Each person knows different things and acquires diverse facts. It is clear that in the case of most of mankind knowledge is produced through other knowledge. In order to produce and discover more knowledge one must benefit from previous knowledge. This is achieved through perception (*idrâk*), which is of two types: first, representation (*taṣawwur*) which is a simple and single perception, like the perception of light (*nûr*) or of sound (*sawt*); and second, affirmation (*taṣḍiq*), such as when we say, "the sun is brighter than the moon."

Furthermore, representation is itself of two kinds: first, simple representation (*al-taṣawwur al-basîf*) as in the perception of existence or unity and second, compound representation (*al-taṣawwur al-murakkab*) which is made up of two or more single representations, like "golden mountain" or "orange juice." However the essential question goes back to the origin and the sources of simple representation (*al-taṣawwur al-basîf*).⁵⁰⁷

Simple Representation and its Origin

There are four theories, which attempt to explain the nature of simple representation as a mode of perception:

1. Rational Theory
2. Sensory Theory
3. Extraction (or Abstraction) Theory
4. Remembrance/ Platonic Theory (Recollective Theory)

⁵⁰⁷ Muḥammad Bâqir Ṣadr, *Falsafatunâ* (Bayrût: Dâr al-Ta'âruf lil-Maṭbû'ât, 1980), pp.57-8.

As it is beyond the limits of this chapter to cover all these theories in detail, I would like to deal only briefly with the rational, sensory and extraction theories and pay more attention to Remembrance/Platonic Theory, where Mîr Findiriskî's ideas will be further developed.

1. Rational Theory

Many European philosophers, such as John Locke,⁵⁰⁸ René Descartes and Immanuel Kant, basically insist that there are two fundamental sources for man's representations (*taṣawwurât*): feeling (sensation, *'iḥsâs*) and nature (*fiṭrah*). We represent in our mind heat (*ḥarârah*), light (*nûr*), taste (*ta'm*) and sound (*ṣawt*) because we feel them with our sensory organs. We also represent some other concepts such as God, soul, length, and motion, which clearly are not represented through our sensory organs; rather we represent them by our nature, they are ever restored in the essence of our nature. Accordingly the basic sources of man's representations, Descartes and Kant say, are sensation (*'iḥsâs*) and nature (*fiṭrah*). The reason why these philosophers recognize two sources for man's representations is that they did not find sensory sources for some types of representation, such as soul or length.⁵⁰⁹

The Annulment of Rational Theory

Various responses can be offered to Descartes' theory. First, if we could reduce all representations to just the senses, as Locke, Hume and Berkeley (the prime exponents of sensory theory) advocate, there would be no justification for rational theory. Second, there is the philosophical principle that it is impossible to create out of the simple (*basîṭ*) innumerable and multifarious effects, works and signs. Since soul is simple, therefore, it cannot by its nature create more than one effect.

⁵⁰⁸ John Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Knowledge, Collated and Annotated, with Prolegomena, Critical, and Historical* by Alexander Campbell Fraser, vol. 1 (New York: Dover Publications, Inc. 1959), pp. 121-2.

⁵⁰⁹ M. B. Şadr, *Falsafatunâ*, pp. 61-2

Accordingly the existence of so many representations in our soul or mind must be caused by something extraneous to the soul, such as our senses and feelings.⁵¹⁰

Moreover we may say to advocates of rational theory that when man is born, he finds not even a single representation in his nature. This fact is echoed in the Qur'anic verse "And it is God who brought you forth from your mothers, you know nothing, He appointed for you hearing, and sight, and hearts, that haply so you will be thankful" (16/78). Here it is clearly indicated that man knows nothing when he enters this world.

My Solution

We may however defend rational theory by saying that, although we do not have any representation when we are born, nevertheless we will have them by virtue of time and during the time to come. In other words, although natural representations are not with the soul in actuality (*bi al-fi'l*), nevertheless the soul will have them in potency (*bi al-quwwah*) and during a future time. Therefore natural representations are not caused and created by the feelings, rather, they are in the soul indirectly and in potency they will show themselves little by little.

2. Sensory Theory

In contrast to philosophers of the latter school, John Locke⁵¹¹ strongly believed that we should consider sensation as the only source of our representations. According to him, all other representations (*taṣawwurât*) are made of changes to the representations which come from our sensory organs. To the view of this group there is no meaning for essential natural representations (*taṣawwurât-i dhâtî-yi fîrî*). At first our mind is like a white, colorless tablet, without inscription, but which eventually accepts representations through external (whiteness, blackness, heat,

⁵¹⁰ M. B. Şadr, *Falsafatônâ*, pp. 62-3.

⁵¹¹ J. Locke, *An Essay concerning Human Knowledge*, vol. 1, pp. 121-145.

coldness, softness, coarseness,) and internal (pleasure, pain, eagerness, will, doubt, deciding) senses. Our intellect assimilates, classifies, abstracts, separates, and excludes whatever it receives through one of our senses. John Locke says: "there is nothing in our intellect, which is not existing before in our sense."⁵¹² Therefore, according to this view, even the earliest elements of man's intellect are restricted to what he obtains through one of his external or internal senses.

The Annulment of Sensory Theory

It is therefore difficult to believe that the only sources for man's representations are the senses. For while the loss of a sense means the loss of the ability to make representations on the basis of that sense, this does not obviate the power of man's mind to produce and consider subjectively new meanings from sensual representations, which he received through his senses. Therefore mentally posited concepts (*i'tibârât-i 'aqlî*) such as causality or causal relationship, substance and accident, possibility and necessity, unity and multiplicity, existence and non-existence, are merely products of our mind. Consequently sensory theory is also unacceptable.⁵¹³

3. Remembrance, Platonic Theory (Anamnesis)⁵¹⁴

The concept known as "Remembrance Theory" is based upon two essential principles:⁵¹⁵ first, the existence of man's eternal soul and the existence of ideas

⁵¹² Sayyid Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Uṣūl-i Falsafah va Ravish-i Realism; introduced and noted by Murtaḍā Muṭaḥhari* vol. 2 (Qum: Intishārât-i Ṣadrâ, n.d), p.18.

⁵¹³ M. B. Ṣadr, *Falsafatunâ*, pp. 67-8.

⁵¹⁴ E. Hamilton and H. Cairns, eds., *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, pp. 55-60 (Phaedo), and pp. 857-871 (Theaetetus).

⁵¹⁵ Both of which are not accepted by Aristotelians. Soul in its philosophical and intellectual concept does not exist independently of his body (or in fact, before the body even exists) in a higher world. Soul is a result of substantial motion in matter. Soul begins with matter; accepts its characters, like a baby lives in his mother's stomach. The difference between the growth and development of a flower and a baby is that a flower does not change from its vegetal case (*ḥâlat-i nabâtî*) while a baby moves forward gradually and changes dramatically. In his month of four, he develop from vegetal case to animal level, feels pain and senses happiness. However a baby does not remain like an animal. He progresses, wishes, thinks during coming years. Consequently, Aristotelians explain, the soul is the

(*muthul*; incorporeal realities). According to Plato, man's soul can exist independently of his body (in fact, before the body even exists) in a higher world. Man's soul, which is capable of dwelling freely in an eternal and higher world, is able to come into contact there with the incorporeal realities (*muthul*) and understand them. Then, when man's soul is compelled to descend from the incorporeal world and approach his body, he loses all his knowledge. However, when he forms a connection in his mind, through his feelings, to particular meanings, he remembers the higher ideas. In fact, worldly meanings are nothing except reflections and shadows of higher, eternal, Platonic ideas. When man perceives a meaning in this world, he immediately remembers higher, eternal, Platonic ideas. Consequently man's representations (*tasawwurât*) precede his feelings, which in turn, are nothing more than a memory of knowledge learned in a past existence.

Mîr Findiriskî and the Theory of Knowledge

Mîr Findiriskî's philosophical ode appears to reflect similar ideas. According to him, cognition is a result of remembrance of previous ideas and representations. He declares for instance at the beginning of the work that the universe's beauty, happiness, and excellence lie in the fact that its lower aspect (*şîrat-i zîrîn*) is exactly the same as its counterpart in the higher world. He clearly explains, in the second line, that the higher form is the origin of man's representations. The word *aşl* (in verse 2) means the basis, the origin, the root, the source, while the word *yiktâsî* (in the same line) means "the same," or "united." In the third line, however, Mîr Findiriskî, goes further and declares that this theory is of such a nature that it had remained unknown

result of substantial motion in matter and does not exist before the body exists. As it is the case with perception, understanding, and ideas. According to Aristotle ideas are made through our sensations. According to him all representations (*taşawwurât*) are made of changes to the representations which come from our sensory organs. Then our intellect assimilates, classifies, abstracts, separates, and privates whatever he receives through one of our senses. Therefore ideas are the same sensory concepts, which are assimilated, abstracted and classified. M. B. Şadr, *Falsafatunâ*, pp. 60-1.

even to such great philosophers as Fârâbi and Ibn Sînâ. He states moreover that the latter two thinkers did not apprehend this theory because they lacked inner or esoteric understanding. In other words, if such brilliant thinkers were unable to understand the theory on the basis of outward knowledge, how could anyone else hope to?⁵¹⁶ Yet if they had developed their inner sight, this understanding would have been granted to them, just as it would be to anyone else. However, Muslim philosophers did not as a rule adopt Mîr Findiriskî's position, but supported instead abstraction theory.

4. Abstraction Theory

Muslim philosophers by and large divide man's representations into primary and secondary. Primary representations, they say, come directly from man's feelings. Man then uses his creativity and his innovative spirit to abstract secondary representations from the primary ones. According to them primary representations are the main representations of the mind. These representations are produced by direct connection with the world outside. For example, we represent color because we perceive it by our eyes, just as we represent heat by our touching it, sweetness by our tasting it and odors by our olfactory sense. In all these situations, sensation is the only means of representation. Then on the basis of these representations our mind begins to innovate and come up with new concepts. Therefore mentally posited concepts such as causality or a causal relationship, substance and accident, possibility and necessity, unity and multiplicity, existence and non-existence are produced by our mind on the basis of primary representations.⁵¹⁷

The Groundwork (Basis) (*milâk*) and Criterion (*mi'yâr*) of Knowledge

The difference between the base (*milâk*) and the criterion (*mi'yâr*) of knowledge is that in the case of the first we are speaking of a defined reality, i.e.,

⁵¹⁶ See M. H. A. Sâvî, *Tuḥfat al-Murâd*, p. 55.

⁵¹⁷ M. B. al-Ṣadr, *Falsafatunâ*, pp. 68-9.

what that reality truly is, while in that of the second we are speaking of the means to achieve this knowledge. For some involved in this debate, real knowledge is what accords with reality, while for some reality is relative and for yet others what is real is whatever scholars unanimously agree on at a given time. There is a similar debate over the criterion of knowledge, i.e., how we can understand that our knowledge is real. Therefore, for instance, "what is real gold" is one question, and the query "is this real gold or unreal" is something else. In first question we are looking to know the real gold, and in the second to see the way in which we are able to recognize the real gold from the false one.

Therefore, it is essential to look for the real bases and foundation of the true and real knowledge, and how we can distinguish between true and fault knowledge. As we mentioned earlier, however, we have at least some kinds of knowledge, which are completely indubitable. Even those skeptics and sophists who absolutely deny the possibility of knowledge, the reasoning they employ conveys, embodies and necessitates several instances of knowledge. On the other hand, we do know that not all of our knowledge is certain. Much of our knowledge is untrue and far from being in accord with reality. The only solution is to determine the criteria or find a yardstick that will enable us to differentiate among the varieties of man's perceptions, such that we can tell which are infallible and indubitable and which others fallible and doubtful, and how we might distinguish between them.

As we saw earlier, Descartes tried to build an indubitable philosophy in order to fight skepticism. He used the indubitably of doubt itself as the basis of his philosophy and founded the existence of the doubter and thinker on that foundation. Furthermore, he introduced explicitness/distinctness as the criterion of indubitably and chose this as the standard for differentiating between correct from incorrect ideas.

A Comment on Descartes' Groundwork (Basis) (*milâk*) and Criterion (*mi'yâr*) of Knowledge

Although doubt can be a good and reasonable starting point to argue with skeptics, nevertheless, to think that nothing is quite so clear as this point (doubt) would not be valid. For example the existence of the thinker is at least as clear and indubitable as the existence of the doubt itself. Thus explicitness/distinctiveness cannot be the major criterion for differentiating correct from incorrect ideas, for this criterion by itself is not sufficiently clear and free of ambiguity and cannot be the secret of the infallibility of certain kinds of perceptions.⁵¹⁸ The important question, however, is what Muslim philosophers really intended to convey and elucidate in regard to this problem. In order to elucidate the real significance of this idea I must next explain the concept of knowledge by presence.

Muslim Philosophers on the Groundwork (Basis) (*milâk*) and Criterion (*mi'yâr*) of Knowledge: Knowledge by Presence (*ilm al-ḥuḍûrî*)

Since knowledge by presence is one of the most significant features of Islamic philosophy and the groundwork (basis) (*milâk*) and criterion (*mi'yâr*) of knowledge, I would like to explain it in brief. This theory of knowledge attracted more and more attention and became more influential after the emergence of the Ishrâqî School, which taught *'Irfân*-based philosophy. Nevertheless, the idea of knowledge by presence is not necessarily based on the latter, for one can find a similar notion in the writings of Muslim peripatetics who never adopted an *'Irfân*-based approach to philosophical problems. Among the problems related to knowledge by presence, the most important and contentious are its varieties, its value, and its hierarchy (*mârtabah-i tashkîkî*), none of which have received much discussion, especially when

⁵¹⁸ M. T. Mesbah, *Âmûzish-i Falasafah*, vol. 1, pp. 153-4.

it comes to the hierarchy of existence. Nevertheless, these questions are of vital importance to any analysis of *sulūk* in *ʿIrḡān* and its impact on the *sālik*'s cognitive development. To evaluate knowledge by presence, its types and its hierarchy one must attempt to understand its definition, the relation between acquired knowledge and knowledge by presence, its epistemological value, its hierarchy, and the relation between its stages and stages of existence.

Definition

The concept of knowledge is considered self-evident; its definition is not only unnecessary but also impossible, mainly because there is no plainer concept to serve this task. Therefore, all that is stated in logic or philosophy in this regard is nothing more than description, or determination of a typical instance for a specific field; or it is a reference to the idea of the modifier himself.⁵¹⁹ The descriptions differ one from another; here are some examples:

- a. Knowledge occurs in the essence of the knower as a result of his relation to the known.⁵²⁰
- b. Knowledge is the occurrence of the acquisition of the form of an object in mind.
- c. Knowledge is a thing to be differentiated from the others.⁵²¹

The above three descriptions represent only acquired knowledge.

- d. Knowledge is the presence of an abstract before another abstract one.
- e. Knowledge is the presence of a thing before an abstract one.
- f. Knowledge is the presence of an object by itself, by its particular form, or by its universal concept before an abstract one.⁵²²

⁵¹⁹ Muḥammad Taqī Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadīd fī Taʿlīm al-Falsafah*, vol. 1, trans. Muḥammad ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-Khāqānī (Qum: Muʾassasat al-Naṣr al-Islāmī, 1989), P. 153.

⁵²⁰ Nṣīr al-Dīn Tūsī, *Sharh-i Masʾalat al-ʿIlm*, ed. ʿAbd Allāh Nūrānī (Mashhad: Maktabah al-Jāmiʿah, 1966), p. 26.

⁵²¹ S. D. M. Shīrāzī, *al-Asfār*, vol. 9, p. 78.

⁵²² M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj*, vol. 1, p. 153.

The Types of Knowledge

We may consider different divisions for knowledge.⁵²³ The most important one is its division into acquired knowledge and intuitive knowledge. The first of these categories implies an intermediary between the person who knows and the essence of the known object, by means of which the awareness is obtained, and for this reason is called acquired knowledge. Where such an intermediary does not exist, and the knowledge is known directly of the essence of the known object, is intuitive knowledge, and therefore knowledge by presence. The distinction is defined thus by Muḥammad Taqī Miṣbāḥ, who inverts the order: "(1) the knowledge which is known directly of the essence of the known object, in which the real and the genuine existence of the object of knowledge is disclosed to knowing subject or percipient, and (2) the knowledge in which the external existence of its object is not observed and witnessed by the knower; rather he becomes aware of it by the mediation of something which presents, which is termed its form (*ṣūrah*) or 'mental concept' (*mafhūm dhihnī*). The first kind is called 'knowledge by presence' (*'ilm-i ḥuḍūrī*) and the second kind is called 'acquired knowledge' (*'ilm ḥuṣūlī*)."⁵²⁴ This is a rational bilateral division; therefore, it is impossible to find a third type beside these two, for either there is an intermediary -which makes knowledge possible- between knower and the essence of the known, or there is no such intermediary. The first type is called *acquired knowledge* and the second one *knowledge by presence*.

The knowledge that everyone has of himself as a perceiving existent is incontrovertible knowledge even for sophists. This means that man as a perceiver and thinker by internal witnessing (*shuhūd*) is aware of himself neither by means of

⁵²³ Philosophers divided knowledge into notional and attestational (*taṣṣawwuri wa taṣdiqī*). They also divided knowledge into partial and universal (*juz'ī wa kullī*). See M. Gharaviyān, *Darāmad*, p. 82.

⁵²⁴ M. T. Mesbah, *Āmūzish-i Falasafah*, vol 1, p 153.

sensation or experience nor by forms of mental concepts. In other words, in this knowledge and awareness, the knowledge, the knower and the known object are one. By contrast, man's knowledge of colors, shapes and other physical characteristics are acquired in a different way, i.e., by sight, touch, and the other senses and by means of mental forms. Also there exist different internal organs in our body of which we are not aware, unless we come to know them by means of their effect or we became aware of them by biological sciences. Our knowledge of our psychological states, sentiments and passions are cases of direct knowledge by presence. For example when we became frightened we became directly aware of this psychological state without any intermediary of any form or mental concept. When we make a decision to do something, we are aware of our decision, and this is by knowledge by presence. It makes no sense to say I am unaware of my own doubt or my own fear or my decision or my own suppositions.

The Relation Between Acquired Knowledge and Knowledge by Presence

A. Differences:

The first difference between acquired knowledge and knowledge by presence is that, being perceived through an intellectual form, acquired knowledge differs from knowledge by presence, which is an immediate knowledge. The second difference is that acquired knowledge is in need of a special faculty, namely the faculty of mind or comprehension whose task is taking pictures and forms. By contrast, knowledge by presence has no need of such a medium; rather,⁵²⁵ the knower by his essence and his reality finds the reality of the object of knowledge. In other words, for a form to occur to the knower via acquired knowledge, it is essential for the knower to be a

⁵²⁵ S. D. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 9, p. 80.

substratum for the form, whereas there is no such condition for one to apprehend himself or his effect, which are understood through knowledge by presence.

B. Priority and Posteriority

Nafs at the outset of its existence has no acquired knowledge. The newborn human infant has no conception of himself, his actions or his reactions, for he has no mind. At the same time he finds himself, his willing, his hunger, his fear and his love through knowledge by presence.⁵²⁶ In addition to being prior, knowledge by presence functions as a corner stone and a source for all kinds of acquired knowledge.

C. Accompaniment

On an automatic basis the human mind takes pictures of the objects of knowledge by presence, acquires intellectual forms and concepts, and then analyses and interprets them. For example, when someone experiences fear, his mind first takes its picture and stores it in the memory so he will be able to be reminded of it in its absence. Second, the mind comprehends the universal concept of fear and adds some other concepts to it in order to produce a sentence like, "I am afraid" or "there is a feeling of fear in me." Third, the mind interprets and analyzes this feeling on the basis of its previous experiences and data in order to figure out what has caused its emergence. All these processes are different kinds of acquired knowledge, following knowledge by presence.

The Reason for the Ineffability of Knowledge by Presence

The basic difference between knowledge by presence and acquired knowledge is that whereas knowledge of the self and knowledge of the states of the self are infallible (for in these cases it is the reality itself which is observed), in cases of acquired knowledge, there may not be in complete accord with external things and

⁵²⁶ S. D. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 2, p. 36.

persons (since forms and mental concepts play an intermediate role). The main point is that error in perception is imaginable when there is an intermediary between the perceiving thing or person and the perceived entity. Hence, it is quite reasonable to ask whether the forms or concepts, which arbitrate between the perceiving subject and the perceived object and which play the role of reflecting the perceived object, represent the perceived object precisely and correspond to it perfectly or not. There is no need to ask the same question however in cases where the thing or person perceived is present before the perceiver without any intermediary, for no interference can be assumed. Furthermore, based on the above analysis of the difference between knowledge by presence and acquired knowledge, we may conclude that the meaning of truth and error in perception is that truth is the perception, which accords with reality and error the perception, which does not accord with reality.⁵²⁷

Types of Knowledge by Presence

There are several types of knowledge by presence, some of which are agreed upon by Muslim philosophers while some others remain the object of debate. Here is a brief survey of the various kinds:

(i) One's awareness and knowledge of his/her essence, as a comprehending individual, which is a matter of consensus; even the Sophists who considered the human being as the criterion for everything denied neither a human being's existence, nor his knowledge of himself.⁵²⁸ In this kind of knowledge by presence, there is no duality between knower and the known;⁵²⁹ therefore, it deserves to be called the unity

⁵²⁷ M. T. Mesbah, *Âmûzish-i Falasafah*, vol. 1, pp. 155-6.

⁵²⁸ S. D. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 2, p. 80. See also M. T. Mesbah, *Amûzish-i Falsafah*, vol. 1, p. 153 & v. 2, p. 234.

⁵²⁹ Ibid.

of knowledge, knower and the known.⁵³⁰ This is not, however, limited to human beings; rather, it includes all *Nufûs* and completely abstract concepts.⁵³¹

(ii) The knowledge possessed by the *Nafs* of its motor and cognitive faculties, such as the faculties of comprehension, imagination, illusion (*wahm*)⁵³² and the faculty which employs parts of the body. This is why *Nafs* does not make any mistake in putting them to work -- thus, for example, it does not employ comprehension instead of motivation and vice versa.⁵³³

(iii) The knowledge possessed by the *Nafs* of its willing, moods, feelings, and affections is another example of knowledge by presence.⁵³⁴

(iv) Yet another example is its knowledge of the mental forms and concepts,⁵³⁵ for *Nafs* does not acquire knowledge about them through other forms; otherwise, the sequence would continue indefinitely.⁵³⁶ This type can be considered as a cause knowing its effect.

(v) The knowledge of existentiating cause regarding its effect. In this type of knowledge by presence the effect is in the presence of its adequate cause and among its concomitants.

(vi) The effect's knowledge of its existentiating cause. In this type of knowledge by presence each individual cause has a unique existentiating relation with its effect, just as each individual effect has a unique dependential relation with its

⁵³⁰ S. M. H. Ṭabaṭabai, *Usul falsafah*, vol. 1, p. 124; Nicholas Heer, trans., *The Precious Pearl* (New York, State University of New York, 1979), pp. 46-7. See also M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 1, p. 172, vol. 2, pp. 246-7 & 253.

⁵³¹ See M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 2, p. 234.

⁵³² M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 1, p. 154.

⁵³³ M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 1, p. 154; M. Mutahhari, *Usûl-i Falsafah*, comt. vol. 1,2,3 (Qum: Daftar-i Intishârât-i Islami), pp. 173-4.

⁵³⁴ M. Mutahhari, *Usûl-i Falsafah*, (comments) vol. 1,2,3, pp. 191-7. See also M.T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 1, p. 154.

⁵³⁵ N. D. Ṭûsî, *Sharḥ-i Mas'alat al-'Ilm*, p. 28.

⁵³⁶ M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 1, pp. 154-5. See also S. D. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Mabda' wa al-Ma'âd*, ed. S. Jalal al-Din Ashtiyani (Tehran: Intisharat-i Anjuman-i Falsafah-i Iran, 1975), p. 89.

cause. As a result, knowing an effect will lead to knowledge of its cause and vice versa.

Conclusion: The Epistemological Value of Knowledge by Presence

Since there is no intermediary in knowledge by presence, and the objective reality is perceived immediately, there is no room for falsity.⁵³⁷ Falsity is possible only when there is an intermediary between the apprehended and what is apprehended, i.e., when there is a possibility for the intermediary to convey either reality or unreality.⁵³⁸ This is why Ṣadr al-Mut'allihīn considers knowledge by presence as the most complete one among all types of knowledge, even to the point of regarding it as the only real knowledge.⁵³⁹ As was mentioned earlier, there is always a kind of acquired knowledge, which has no guarantee of veracity, existing alongside knowledge by presence. This kind of parallelism leads, sometimes, to ambiguity and misconception. For instance, one sometimes feels hungry and imagines a need for food as the cause of this feeling, when in fact it might only be a false drive. In this case if someone looks closely, he will find out that the pure feeling experienced through knowledge by presence, which has no interpretation and is immune to any falsity, has been supplemented by an unguaranteed element supplied by the mind. False experiences and intuitions are of this nature, and therefore deserve closer observation to distinguish knowledge by presence from its accompanied mental analysis to avoid deviation.⁵⁴⁰

Hierarchy of Knowledge by Presence

Not all kinds of knowledge by presence are of the same level of clarity and strength. Sometimes this knowledge is too weak to affect the consciousness, while

⁵³⁷ S. M. H. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Uṣūl-i Falsafah*, vol. 2, n.d, p. 18. & vol. 1, 204.

⁵³⁸ M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadid*, vol. 1, pp. 250-1.

⁵³⁹ S. D. M. Shīrāzī, *al-Mabda' wa al-Ma'ād*, p. 83.

⁵⁴⁰ M. T. Mesbah, *Āmūzish-i Falasafah*, vol. 1, p. 177.

some other times it occurs semi-consciously, and on yet other occasions its strength makes the knower fully aware of it. Two factors have a major role in this regard, namely, attention and the existential stage of the knower. In the case of attention it may be noted that when someone concentrates on the object of knowledge by presence, the knowledge becomes more and more subtle and more accurate. For instance, apprehending one's own hunger is a matter of knowledge by presence, whereas sometimes it is denied when one is busy with a favorite activity, while the hunger and the need for calorie intake are still present and remain valid. In this case, there is a deficiency regarding the element of "presence."⁵⁴¹ As far as the existential state is concerned, according to Ṣadr al-Muta'allihîn, there is a hierarchy (*tashkîk*) of existence, beginning from the weakest existent up to the strongest and the most perfect one, the necessary existence. There is a cause-and-effect relation between the stages, and there is likewise a relative independence for each stage regarding the lower stages. This kind of hierarchy is called "the special hierarchy" (*al-tashkîk al-khâṣṣî*).⁵⁴² For Shîrâzî, the human being is the only one able to progress through existential stages from the lowest level to the highest one, keeping its individual continuous entity. There are, however, three phases for him, namely natural (*nabâtî*), spiritual (*nafsânî*), and intellectual (*'aqlî*), each of which has infinite stages through which a human being progresses, eventually culminating in perfection.⁵⁴³ These differences between the stages of existence result in different stages of knowledge by presence⁵⁴⁴ because the more abstract and more dominant the *Nafs* is with respect to the body and its faculties, the more complete and more present before it its faculties

⁵⁴¹ M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadîd*, vol. 1, p. 157.

⁵⁴² M. T. Mesbah, *Âmûzish-I Falasafah*, vol. 1, pp. 399-400.

⁵⁴³ S. D. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Asfâr*, vol. 2, pp. 96-100.

⁵⁴⁴ M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadîd*, vol. 1, p. 157.

and its cognitive forms will be.⁵⁴⁵ *Nafs*, as an effect of its creator, has a kind of knowledge by presence regarding Him; nevertheless, as a consequence of the weakness of its existential stage and its concentration on the body and mental affairs, this knowledge remains unconscious. As a result of the perfection of *Nafs* by limiting its attention to corporeal affairs and by increasing its concentration on God, this knowledge flourishes and strengthens.⁵⁴⁶

The differences between the various stages of knowledge by presence have an inevitable impact therefore on the accuracy of their mental interpretation. The stronger and higher the stage of knowledge, the more concrete and more reliable their mental interpretation.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴⁵ S. D. M. Shîrâzî, *al-Mabda' wa al-Ma'âd*, p. 109.

⁵⁴⁶ M. T. Mesbah, *Al-Manhaj al-Jadîd*, vol. 1, p. 158.

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid.

Part IV

Conclusion

■ Chapter 10: Conclusion

Conclusion

The Şafavîd age was an astonishing period in the history of Islam, particularly in regard to Shî'ite and more precisely in *Hikmah*, Islamic philosophy. The victory of the Shî'ite discipline inspired a great generation of scholars and a vast amount of books and material on different topics and subjects. Mullâ Şadrâ, Qâḍî Sa'îd Qummî, Mullâ Muḥammad Taqî Majlisî, Mullâ Muḥammad Baqir Majlisî and others are among the important personalities. Although the philosophers during this era were not granted much freedom of expression, they could refer to the *ḥadîth* of the Imâms in philosophical meditation. The great theme of these scholars was the problem of time, the fundamental reality of existence or the fundamental reality of quiddity, the reality of the imaginal world (*'âlam al-mithâl, barzakh*) and, also, a new gnosiology.⁵⁴⁸ According to H. Corbin, this gnosiology in the writings of Mullâ Şadrâ amounted to a great revolution in the ontological as well as epistemological issues of metaphysics,

⁵⁴⁸ Esoteric knowledge of spiritual truth held by the ancient Gnostics to be essential to salvation.

like the problem of being, a validation of the active imagination, a concept of intrasubstantial motion,⁵⁴⁹ and new approaches to philosophizing a profound mystical or gnostic intuition of Reality. The great thinkers such as Mîr Dâmâd, Mîr Findiriskî and Mullâ Şadrâ as mystics of Islam were able to penetrate into the very depth of Reality. They experienced and observed the secrets of Being with their own spiritual eyes (*başîrah*). This enabled them to formulate their basic metaphysical experience into a well-defined concept and then to put these concepts together in the form of a well-organized systematic Islamic philosophy or theosophy.

Western interest in learning Islamic philosophy has centered upon the historical formation of Christian scholastic philosophy in the Middle Ages. Consequently they viewed the history of Muslim philosophy to have concluded with the death of Averroes. However, what really ended was only the living influence exercised by Muslim philosophy upon the formative process of Western philosophy. With the death of Averroes, Muslim philosophy ceased to be active for the West, but it did not terminate for the East. The latest works on the juridical, philosophical and mystical activity of the Şafavîd period illustrate that philosophical thinking in Islam did not collapse after the Mongol invasion.⁵⁵⁰ After the death of Averroes Islamic philosophy acquired its vital originality. However, it was predominantly the Shî'î culture of Persia, which prepared the background for the doctrines of Ishrâqî gnosis (illuministic wisdom), in the school of Isfahan. The effort of the chain of the thinkers mentioned above, a form of wisdom that we call theosophy or *Hikmah*, developed.⁵⁵¹ This in turn produced a long chain of significant thinkers and numerous works of great value. The chain goes back beyond the Şafavîds to Ibn Sînâ; and it can easily be

⁵⁴⁹ H. Corbin, *History of Islamic Philosophy*, p. 338.

⁵⁵⁰ T. Izutsu in his introduction to H. M. H. Sabzawârî, *Sharḥ-i Ghurar al-Fara'id or Sharḥ-i Maḥdumah*, ed. M. Muḥaqqiq & T. Izutsu (Tehran, 1999), pp. 2-3.

⁵⁵¹ Naşr "The School of Isfahan," p. 906.

traced down to the present century. Along with this chain of philosophers and works stand several remarkable thinkers like Mîr Dâmâd, Mîr Findiriskî and Mullâ Şadrâ in particular. Mîr Dâmâd and Mullâ Şadrâ invigorated all the important philosophical, theological and mystical notions presented by their predecessors. They elucidate these ideas through their original philosophical genius into a great system of theosophy. Mîr Findiriskî's role in developing Islamic philosophy based on mystical and gnostic experience of his own personal experience on the ultimate Reality should not be observed unceremoniously. Thus the uniqueness of the "School of Isfahan" lay in the very fact that it emerged and flourished through a magnificent and eminent Shî'î intellectual disposition. The school of Isfahan can be characterized as an institution, which unites four conflicting trails in Islamic intellectual history – the philosophical, the theological, the mystical and the Shî'î doctrines together.

The Soul-body problem, God's attributes, the theory of knowledge, the sources of man's knowledge, motion, substantial motion, intellectual and imperial vocations, the principality of existence or quiddity, gradation of existence and many other ontological as well as epistemological problems, fundamental in themselves and yet linked on many levels, have been discussed and subjected to many attempts at resolving them, by Muslim philosophers and mystics through the centuries. Şafavîd Muslim scholars and philosophers, particularly Mîr Dâmâd, Mullâ Şadrâ and Mîr Findiriskî have made tremendous contributions in this revolutionary period of developing Islamic philosophical and mystical thought. The least known Muslim philosopher Mîr Findiriskî, the subject of this thesis, played a crucial role by employing his "*İrfânî*"-philosophical methodology, in a very allegorical and highly coded approach.

The thesis elaborates Mîr Findiriskî's role in the development of the philosophical and mystical dimensions of the so called "school of Isfahan." An overview of his doctrines is provided and a major part of the discussion is devoted to his works. The thesis pays close attention to the philosophical and mystical thought of this important thinker and assess the arguments drawn from Mîr Findirisk's own presentations or from his best interpreters such as Sayyid Jalâl al-Dîn Âshtîyânî, Mullâ Muḥammad Şâlih-i Khalkhâlî (1175-1095 A.H.), Muḥsin ibn Muḥammad Gilânî (13th century A.H.) and `Abbâs Sharîf Dârâbî (ca. 1255-1300 A.H.). The thesis observes Mîr Findiriskî's contemporaries such as Sheykh Bahâ'î, Mîr Dâmâd and Mullâ Şadrâ and their main philosophical principles.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Mîr Findiriskî's *Qaṣīdah Ḥikmīyah* (Philosophical Ode): Persian Text (with variants readings), Transliteration, and Literal Translation are as follows:

Persian Text

1. چرخ با این اختران نغز و خوش و زیباستی
صورتی در زیر دارد آنچه در بالاستی

Transliteration

1. Charkh bâ 'în 'akhtarân naghz wa khush wa zîbâstî,
Şûratî dar zîr dârad 'ânch-i dar bâlâstî.

Translation

1. Heaven with these stars is excellent, happy and beautiful,
Whatever is there above has below it a form.

Persian Text

2 صورت زیرین اگر با نردبان معرفت
بر رود بالا همان با اصل خود یکتاستی

Transliteration

2. Şûrat-i zîrîn 'agar bâ nardibân-i ma`rifat,
Bar rawad bâlâ hamân bâ 'aşl-i khud yiktâstî.

Translation

2. The form below, if by the ladder of inner knowledge,

is trodden upward, will be the same as its origin (principle).

Persian Text

3. این سخنها را در نیابد هیچ ظاهری گر ابونصرستی گر بوعلی سیناستی

Transliteration

3. 'În sukhan râ dar nayâbad hich fahm-i zâhirî,

Gar 'Abûnaşrastî, gar Bû 'Alî Sînâstî.⁵⁵²

Translation

3. No superficial understanding can understand this saying,

Whether it be that of an Abû Naşr (al-Fârâbî) or of an Abû 'Alî (Ibn) Sînâ.

Persian Text

4. جان اگر نه عارضستی زیر این چرخ کبود این بدنها نیز دایم زنده و برجاستی

Transliteration

4. Jân 'agar na 'âriḍastî zîr-i 'în charkh-i kabûd,

'în badanhâ nîz dâ'im zindah wa barpâstî.

Translation

4. If souls were not an accident under this azure heaven,

These bodies would be forever alive and upright.

Persian Text

5. هر چه باشد عارض اورا جوهری باید نخست عقل بر این دعوی ما شاهی گویاستی

Transliteration

5. Har chi bâshad 'âriḍ 'uû râ jowharî bâyad nakhust,

'Aql bar 'în da'wîy-i mâ shâhidî gûyâstî.

⁵⁵² A. S. Dârâbî Shîrâzî, *Tuhfat al-Murâd*.

Translation

5. But whatever is an accident must first have a substance,

The intellect is our expressive evidence for this claim.

Persian Text

6. می توانی گر ز خورشید این صفتها کسب کرد روشن است و بر همه تابان و خود یکتاستی

Transliteration

6. Mîtawânî gar zi khurshîd 'în şifathâ kasb kard,

Rawshan 'ast wa bar hama tâbân wa khud yiktâstî.⁵⁵³

Translation

If you can obtain these qualities from the sun,

The sun is bright and shines upon all things while keeping its unity.

Persian Text

7. جوهر عقلی که بی پایان و جاویدان بود با همه، هم بی همه مجموع و یکتاستی

Transliteration

7. Jawhar-i⁵⁵⁴ 'aqlî ki bî pâyan wa jâwîdân buwad,

Bâ hama ham bî hama majmû' wa yiktâstî.

Translation

7. The rational substance, which is endless and eternal,

With and without all things is a totality and unity.

Persian Text

8. جان عالم گویش گر ربط جان دانی به تن در دل هر ذره، هم پنهان و هم پیداستی

Transliteration

⁵⁵³ Khalkhâlî, *tanhâstî*.

⁵⁵⁴ Khalkhâlî, Dârâbî. *Şûrat-i*.

8. Jân-i `âlam gûyamash gar rabṭ-i jân dâni bi tan,

Dar dil-i har dharra ham pinhân wa ham paydâstî.

Translation

8. I call it the soul of universe, if you believe in the body- soul connection,

In the heart of every atom it is both hidden and visible.

Persian Text

9. هفت ره از آسمان بر فرق ما بگشود حق هفت در از سوی دنیا جانب عقباستی

Transliteration

9. Haft rah az âsimân bar farq-i⁵⁵⁵ mâ bigshûd Ḥaqq,

Haft dar⁵⁵⁶ az sūy-i⁵⁵⁷ dunyâ jânb-i⁵⁵⁸ uqbâstî.

Translation

9. God has opened (created) seven ways (heavens) above us,

Seven others (doors) from the world toward the hereafter (the life to come).

Persian Text

10. می توانی از ره آسان، شدن بر آسمان راست باش و راست رو، کآنجا نباشد کاستی

Transliteration

10. Mîtawânî az rah-i âsân, shudan bar âsmân,

Râst bâsh wa râst raw kânjâ nabâshad kâstî.

Translation

10. You can reach heaven simply by their means,

⁵⁵⁵ Khalkhâlî, *fawq-i mâ farmûdih ḥaqq*.

⁵⁵⁶ Gîlânî, *rah*.

⁵⁵⁷ Khalkhâlî, *az sūy-i*.

⁵⁵⁸ Khalkhâlî, *jânb-i*.

Be true and walk the straight path for there is no falsehood there.

Persian Text

11. ره نیابد بر دری از آسمان دنیا پرست در نبکشایند بر وی گر چه درها واستی

Transliteration

11. Rah nayâbad bar darî az âsimân dunyâ parast,

Dar nabugshâyand bar wiy gar ch-i darhâ wâstî.

Translation

11. He who worships the world, the door of heaven will never open to him,

The doors will not open even if he stands before them.

Persian Text

12. هر که فانی شد در او، یابد حیات جاودان ور به خود افتاد، کارش بی شک از مو تاستی

Transliteration

12. Har ki fânî shud dar⁵⁵⁹ 'û, yâbad ḥayât-i jāwdân,

war⁵⁶⁰ bi khud uftâd, kârash bî shak az mû tâstî.

Translation

12. He who's annihilated in Him finds eternal life;

He who is busy with himself, his affair is doubtless a failure.

Persian Text

13. این گهر در رمز دانایان پیشین سفته اند بی برد بر رمزها آنکس که او داناستی

Transliteration

13. Ên guhar⁵⁶¹ dar ramz-i dânyân-i pîshîn suft-iand,

⁵⁵⁹ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *bi 'û*.

⁵⁶⁰ Gîlânî, *chun*.

⁵⁶¹ Gîlânî, *sukhan*.

piy barad bar ramzhâ ânkas⁵⁶² ki 'û dâstî.

Translation

13. The jewel is hidden in the mysteries of the ancient savant,
Only he who is wise can discover the meaning of these mysteries.

Persian Text

14. زین سخن بگذر که او محبوب اهل عالم است راستی را پیشه کن وین ره رو گر راستی

Transliteration

14. Zîn sukhan bugdhar ki 'û mahjûb-i⁵⁶³ ahl-i 'âlam ast,
Râstî râ pîsh-i⁵⁶⁴ kun wîn râh raw gar râstî.

Translation

14. Pass beyond these words for they are renounced by the people of the world,
Find the Truth and tread its path, if thou are righteous.

Persian Text

15. آنچه بیرون است از ذات نیابد سودمند خویش را کن ساز، اگر امروز اگر فرداستی

Transliteration

15. Ânch-i⁵⁶⁵ bîrûn ast az dhâtat nayâbad sûdmand,
khîsh râ kun sâz agar 'imrûz agar fardâstî.

Translation

15. Whatever is outside thy essence will do thee no good,
Make thyself harmonious whether it is today or tomorrow.

Persian Text

⁵⁶² Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *har kas*.

⁵⁶³ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *mahjûr-i*.

⁵⁶⁴ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *Paydâ*.

⁵⁶⁵ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, *har ch-i*.

16. نیست حدی و نشانی کردگار پاک را نی برون از ما و نی بی ما و نی با ماستی

Transliteration

16. Nîst ḥaddî wa nishânî kirdigâr-i pâk râ,
niy burûn az mâ wa niy bî mâ wa niy bâ mâstî.

Translation

16. The Being that is pure has no limit or description,
It is neither outside of us, nor with us, nor without us.

Persian Text

17. قول زیبا هست با کردار زیبا سودمند قول با کردار زیبا لایق و زیباستی

Transliteration

17. Qawl zîbâ hast bâ kirdâr-i zîbâ sûdmand,
Qawl bâ kirdâr-i zîbâ⁵⁶⁶ lâyiğ wa zîbâstî.

Translation

17. A beautiful word is only beneficial when combined with beautiful (virtuous) deeds,
A word with beautiful (virtuous) action is competent and beautiful.

Persian Text

18. گفتن نیکو به نیکویی، نه چون کردن بود نام حلوا بر زبان بردن نه چون حلواستی

Transliteration

18. Guftan-i nîkû bi nîkû'î na chun karadan buwad,
Nâm-i ḥalwâ bar zabân burdan⁵⁶⁷ na chun ḥalwâstî.

⁵⁶⁶ Khalkhâlî, *nîkû*.

⁵⁶⁷ Gîlânî, *rândan*.

Translation

18. To talk of the beneficency of goodness is not like doing good,

To name a sweetmeat by the tongue is not like sweetmeat itself.

Persian Text

19. در میاور در میان و بر خوان الصمد از میان بر داشتن چیزی، که را یاراسق

Transliteration

19. Dar mayâwar dar mîyân wa bar khân-i al-şamad,

Az mîyân bar dâştan chîzî, k-i râ yârâstî.

Translation

19. Don't bring in between (yourself and the impenetrable) anything, while you are on his impenetrable tablecloth.

Who is able to remove anything from 'in between' (yourself and the impenetrable)?!

Persian Text

20. سلب و ایجاب این دویند و جمله اندر زیر اوست از میان سلب و ایجاب این جهان برپاستی

Transliteration

20. Salb wa îjâb îñ dawyand wa jumli andar zîr-i 'ûst,

Az mîyân-i salb wa îjâb îñ jahân barpâstî.

Translation

20. "Negation" and "affirmation" are two (opposites) and everything is under them,

This universe is upheld through "negation" and "affirmation."

Persian Text

21. در هویت نیست نه نفی و نه ایجاب و نه سلب زآنکه از اینها هم آن بیگمان بالاستی

Transliteration

21. Dar huwîyyat nîst na nafy wa na îjâb⁵⁶⁸ wa na salb,

Zânki az înhâ hamah ân⁵⁶⁹ bîgamân bâlâstî

Translation

21. There is no “denial” and no “affirmation” and no “negation” in His He-ness (Essence),

For, He is doubtlessly above all these things.

Persian Text

22. نیست اینجا زیر و بالا و نه ایجاب و نه سلب
این چنین هم گر بگویی کی بود ناراستی

Transliteration

22. Nîst înjâ zîr wa bâlâ wa na îjâb wa na salb,

În⁵⁷⁰ chinîn ham gar bigû’î kiy buwad nârâstî.

Translation

The (absolute) Being has neither “below” nor “above” and has also neither “affirmation” nor “negation,”

Although it won’t be false if you say such a thing (for He is all together below, above, affirmation and negation in conceptual mold).

Persian Text

23. آن جهان و این جهان، با جهان و بی جهان
هم توان گفتن مر او را، هم از آن بالاستی

Transliteration

23. Ân jahân wa ân⁵⁷¹ jahân bâ jahân⁵⁷² wa bî jahân,

Ham tawân guftan mar ‘û râ ham az ân⁵⁷³ bâlâstî.

Translation

⁵⁶⁸ Khalkhâlî, ithbât

⁵⁶⁹ Khalkhâlî, ‘û

⁵⁷⁰ Khalkhâlî, wîn

⁵⁷¹ Khalkhâlî, îh jahân wa ân

⁵⁷² The phrase “bâ jahân” dose not exist in Gilânî’s version.

⁵⁷³ Khalkhâlî, îh.

23. In the world to come and in this world, with the world and without this world,

Both we can say all of these of Him, (to be there) and yet He is above all that.

Persian Text

24. عقل کشتی، آرزو گردباد و دانش بادبان حق تعالی ساحل و عالم همه دریاستی

Transliteration

24. 'Aql kishtî, ârizû girdâb wa dânish bâdbân,

Ḥaqq ta'âlâ sâhil wa 'âlam ham-ih daryâstî.

Translation

24. The intellect is ship, desire is a maelstrom and knowledge is the sail,

God, exalted, is the shore and the whole universe is the sea.

Persian Text

25. ساحل آمد بی گمانی بحر امکان را وجوب گفته دانا بر این گفتار ما گویاستی

Transliteration

25. Sâhil âmad bî gamânî⁵⁷⁴ baḥr-i imkân râ wujûb,

Guftah-i dâna bar in guftâr-i⁵⁷⁵ mâ gûyâstî.

Translation

The shore advances (cause, bring to existence), doubtlessly, the sea of the possible (to become) necessary,

Savant's saying is an expressive (evidence) for our saying.

Persian Text

26. نفس را چون بندها بگسیخت یابد نام عقل چون به بی بندی رسی بند دگر بر جاستی

Transliteration

26. Nafs râ chun bandhâ bugsikht yâbad nâm-i 'aql,

⁵⁷⁴ Gilânî, dar ḥaqîqat. It is also must be noted that the phrase "bî gamânî" dose not exist in Khalkhâlî's version.

⁵⁷⁵ Gilânî, 'Aql-i dâna râ mar in taqrîr-i.

Chun b-i bîbandî rasî band-i digar barjâstî.

Translation

26. When soul's bands (desires and passions) was being cut (stopped), he'll be nominated as intellect,

(However) even when he cuts all bonds (passions and desires), there will be another bond (belonging) (that is *nafs*'s possibility and its being dependent to the necessary existence).

Persian Text

27. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما حشر است و نشر هر عمل که امروز کرد او را جزا فرداستی

Transliteration

27. Guft dâna nafs mâ râ ba'd-i mâ ḥashr ast wa nashr,

Har 'amal kimrûz kard 'û râ jazâ fardâstî.

Translation

27. The sage (savant) has said our soul will have resurrection,

Every action a human being does today; he'll be recompensed tomorrow.

Persian Text

28. نفس را توان ستود، او را ستودن مشکل است نفس بنده، عاشق و معشوق، او مولاستی

Transliteration

28. Nafs râ natwân sutûd, 'û râ sutûdan mushkil ast,

Nafs-i bandih, 'âshiq wa ma'shûq, 'û mawlâstî.

Translation

Soul (self) should not be praised, (for) to command soul is problematic

The lord and master of every slave, whether he is lover or beloved, is God.

Persian Text

29. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما باشد وجود در جزا و در عمل، آزاد و بیهمتاستی

Transliteration

29. Guft dānâ, nafs-i mâ râ ba`d-i mâ bâshad wujûd,

Dar jazâ wa dar `amal, âzâd wa bî hamtâstî.

Translation

The sage has said that after us (i.e. after we die) we will still exist,

(No matter) whether in sanction or action we will be free (of any charge) and unique.

Persian Text

30. گفت دانا، نفس ما را آغاز و انجامی بود گفت دانا، نفس بی انجام و بی مبداستی

Transliteration

30. Guft dānâ nafs râ âghâz wa anjâmî buwad,

guft dānâ nafs bî anjâm wa bî mabdâstî.

Translation

30. The sage has said that soul has beginning and ending,

The sage has said soul is beginningless and endless.

Persian Text

31. گفت دانا، نفس را ماضی و حالست و سپس آتش و آب و هوا و اسفل و اعلاستی

Transliteration

31. Guft dānâ, nafs râ mâdî wa hâlâst wa sipas,

Âtash wa âb wa hawâ wa asfal wa a`lâstî.

Translation

31. The sage said, soul has "pass" and "present", and "after",

It is "fire" and "water" and "weather" and "lower" and "upper."

Persian Text

32. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما نبود وجود می نمایند بعد ما نفسی که او ما راستی

Transliteration

32. Guft dānâ, nafs-i mâ râ ba`d-i mâ nabwad⁵⁷⁶ wujûd,

Miy namânad⁵⁷⁷ ba`d-i mâ nafsî ki `û mâ râstî.

Translation

32. The scholar said, there would be no life after present,

There will be no soul (self) that fits us.

Persian Text

33. گفت دانا، نفس هم با جا و هم بی جا بود گفت دانا، نفس بی جا و بی جا ستی

Transliteration

33. Guft dānâ, nafs ham bâ jâ wa ham bî jâ buwad,

Guft dānâ, nafs niy bî jâ wa niy bâ jâstî.

Translation

33. The knower said, soul is both with room (place) and without room,

The knower said, soul neither is without room nor is it with room.

Persian Text

34. گفت دانا، نفس را وصفی نیارم هیچ، گفت نه به شرط شیئی باشد، نه به شرط لاستی

Transliteration

34. Guft dānâ, nafs râ waṣṣî nayâram hîch guft,

Na bi shart-i shay' bâshad, na bi shart-i lâstî.

Translation

34. The knower said, I do not describe (qualify) the soul (self) with anything, (the knower) said,

It is neither conditioned by-something, nor neglectively-conditioned.

Persian Text

⁵⁷⁶ Khalkhâlî & Gîlânî, nîst ba`d az mâ.

⁵⁷⁷ Khalkhâlî, mînamâyad.

35. گفت دانا، این سخنها هر کسی از وهم خویش در نیابد گفته را، کین گفته معماستی

Transliteration

35. Guft dânâ, in sukhanhâ⁵⁷⁸ har kasî az wahm-i khîsh,

Dar nayâbad guft-i râ, kîn guft-i mu`ammâstî.

Translation

35. The knower said, everybody, based on his imagination, said these words,

The words were not understood, for these words are riddle (mysterious).

Persian Text

36. هر یکی بر دیگری دارد دلیل از گفته ها جمله در بحث و نزاع و شورش و غوغاستی

Transliteration

36. Har yikî bar dîgarî dârad dalîl az guft-ihâ,⁵⁷⁹

Jumli dar⁵⁸⁰ baḥth wa nizâ` wa shûrish wa ghawghâstî.

Translation

36. Everybody brings his own argument in support of his words (to prove his words),

All were in discussion (argument) and dispute (quarrel) and revolt and uproar.

Persian Text

37. بیتکی از بو معین آرم در استشهد خویش گر چه آن در باب دگر لایق اینجاستی

Transliteration

37. Baytakî az Bû Mu`în âram dar istishhâd-i khîsh,

Gar ch-i ân dar bâb-i dîgar lâyiq-i injâstî.

Translation

37. I bring a verse from Abû Mu`în (Nâsir Khusru) evidencing my argument,

Although that verse in another section fits (is merited) here.

⁵⁷⁸ Khalkhâlî, in sukhanhâ guft dânâ.

⁵⁷⁹ Khalkhâlî & Dârâbî, Guft-i.

⁵⁸⁰ Khalkhâlî, dar miyân-i.

Persian Text

38. هر کسی چیزی همی گوید به تیره رای خویش تا گمان آید که او قستای این لوقاستی

Transliteration

38. Har kasî chîzî hamî gûyad bi tîr-ih ra'y-i khîsh,

Tâ gamân âyad ki 'û⁵⁸¹ Qustâ ibn Lûqâstî.

Translation

38. Everybody say something with his own vague (indefinite) view,

Until it seems that he is Qustâ ibn Lûqâ.⁵⁸²

Persian Text

39. کاش دانایان پیشین می بگفتندی تمام تا خلاف نا تمامان از میان برداشتی

Transliteration

39. Kâsh dânâyân-i pîshîn miy biguftandî tamâm,

Tâ khilâf-i nâtamâmân az mîyân bardâshtî.

Translation

39. How good it would be if the knowers before us, had said everything completely,

So that the quarrel (dispute) of those who are imperfect, would be eliminated.

Persian Text

40. نفس را، این آرزو در بند دارد، دایما تا به بند آرزویی، بند اندر پاستی

Transliteration

40. Nafs râ in ârizû dar band dârad dâ'iman,

Tâ bi band-i⁵⁸³ ârizû'î, band andar pâstî.

⁵⁸¹ Dârâbî & Gilânî, ân.

⁵⁸² Qustâ ibn Lûqâ (d. 300 A.H.). is the first one who wrote a treatise on the difference between soul (*al-rûh*) and the spirit (*al-nafs*). See J. W. "Qustâ Ibn Lûqâ's psychophysiological treatise on the difference between the soul and the spiri." *Scripta Mediterranea*, vol. 2. (1981) pp. 53-77. See also Majîd Fakhri, "Greek Philosophy: Impact on Islamic Philosophy," *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Soft Version, 2002).

Translation

40. Desire keeps the soul in bondage in this world,

While thou hast desire, thy feet are tied.

Persian Text

41. خواهشی اندر جهان هر خواهشی را در پی است خواهشی باید که بعد از آن نباشد خواستی

Transliteration

41. Khâhishî andar jahân har khâhishî râ dar piy ast,

khâhishî bâyard ki ba'd az ân nabâshad khâstî.

Translation

41. Each wish in this world is followed by another wish,

The wish must be sought beyond which there is no other.

Appendix 2

قصیده حکمیه میر ابو القاسم فندرسکی

1. چرخ با این اختران نغز و خوش و زیبایستی
صورتی در زیر دارد آنچه در بالاستی
2. صورت زیرین اگر با نردبان معرفت
بر رود بالا همان با اصل خود یکتاستی
3. این سخنها را در نیابد هیچ فهم ظاهری
گر ابونصرستی گر بوعلی سیناستی
4. جان اگر نه عارضستی زیر این چرخ کبود
این بدنها نیز دایم زنده و برجاستی
5. هر چه باشد عارض او را جوهری باید نخست
عقل بر این دعوی ما شاهی گویاستی
6. می توانی گر ز خورشید این صفتها کسب کرد
روشن است و بر همه تابان و خود یکتاستی
7. جوهر عقلی که بی پایان و جاویدان بود
با همه، هم بی همه مجموع و یکتاستی
8. جان عالم گویش گر ربط جان دانی به تن
در دل هر ذره، هم پنهان و هم پیداستی
9. هفت ره از آسمان بر فرق ما بگشود حق
هفت در از سوی دنیا جانب عقباستی
10. می توانی از ره آسان، شدن بر آسمان
راست باش و راست رو، کآنجا نباشد کاستی
11. ره نیابد بر دری از آسمان دنیا پرست
در ننگشایند بر وی گر چه درها و استی
12. هر که فانی شد در او، یابد حیات جاودان
ور به خود افتاد، کارش بی شك از مو تاستی

13. این گهر در رمز دانایان پیشین سفته اند
 14. زین سخن بگذر که او محبوب اهل عالم است
 15. آنچه بیرون است از ذات نیابد سودمند
 16. نیست حدی و نشانی کردگار پاک را
 17. قول زیبا هست با کردار زیبا سودمند
 18. گفتن نیکو به نیکویی، نه چون کردن بود
 19. در میاور در میان و بر خوان الصمد
 20. سلب و ایجاب این دویند و جمله اندر زیر اوست
 21. در هویت نیست نه نفی و نه ایجاب و نه سلب
 22. نیست اینجا زیر و بالا و نه ایجاب و نه سلب
 23. آن جهان و این جهان، با جهان و بی جهان
 24. عقل کشتی، آرزو گردباد و دانش بادبان
 25. ساحل آمد بی گمانی بحر امکان را وجوب
 26. نفس را چون بندها بگسیخت باید نام عقل
 27. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما حشر است و نشر
 28. نفس را نتوان ستود، او را ستودن مشکل است
- پی برد بر رمزها آنکس که او داناستی
- راستی را پیشه کن وین ره رو گر راستی
- خویش را کن ساز، اگر امروز اگر فرداستی
- نی برون از ما و نی بی ما و نی باماستی
- قول با کردار زیبا لایق و زیباستی
- نام حلوا بر زبان بردن نه چون حلواستی
- از میان برداشتن چیزی، که را یاراستی
- از میان سلب و ایجاب این جهان بریاستی
- زانکه از اینها هم آن بیگمان بالاستی
- این چنین هم گر بگویی کی بود ناراستی
- هم توان گفتن مرا و را، هم از آن بالاستی
- حق تعالی ساحل و عالم همه دریاستی
- گفته دانا بر این گفتار ما گویاستی
- چون به بی بندی رسی بنددگر بر جاستی
- هر عمل که امروز کرد او را جزا فرداستی
- نفس بنده، عاشق و معشوق، او مولاستی

29. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما باشد وجود در جزا و در عمل، آزاد و بیهمتاسی
30. گفت دانا، نفس ما را آغاز و انجامی بود گفت دانا، نفس بی انجام و بی مبداسی
31. گفت دانا، نفس را ماضی و حالست و سپس آتش و آب و هوا و اسفل و اعلاستی
32. گفت دانا، نفس ما را بعد ما نبود وجود می نماند بعد ما نفسی که او ما راستی
33. گفت دانا، نفس هم با جا و هم بی جا بود گفت دانا، نفس بی جا و بی با جاستی
34. گفت دانا، نفس را وصفی نیارم هیچ، گفت نه به شرط شی باشد، نه به شرط لاستی
35. گفت دانا، این سخنها هر کسی از وهم خویش در نیابد گفته را، کین گفته معماستی
36. هر یکی بر دیگری دارد دلیل از گفته ها جمله در بحث و نزاع و شورش و غوغاستی
37. بیتکی از بومعین آرم در استشهد خویش گر چه آن در باب دگر لایق اینجاستی
38. هر کسی چیزی می گوید به تیره رای خویش تا گمان آید که او قستای این لوقاستی
39. کاش دانایان پیشین می بگفتندی تمام تا خلاف نا تمامان از میان برداشتی
40. نفس را، این آرزو در بند دارد، دایما تا به بند آرزویی، بند اندر پاستی
41. خواهشی اندر جهان هر خواهشی را در پی است خواهشی باید که بعد از آن نباشد خواستی

والحمد لله رب العالمین