"Reason and Finality in Ibn Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī's Philosophical Works"

by

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Abstract

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Title: "Reason and Finality in Ibn Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī's Philosophical Works"
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In this study, the relationship between medical thought and philosophy is investigated through the works of the famous Islamic thinker, Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī (ca. 250-323/864-935). In one of the texts we shall be examining (attributed to his contemporary, Abū Hātim al-Rāzī), Razi thought that he could resolve the problem of the world's creation through allegory. Razi's interlocuter, the one who transmitted to us the only surviving version of their debates, was concerned to defend the idea of epistemological "revelation." Although Razi agrees that the Intellect was sent by the Creator, he insists that this was done primarily for the benefit of the "self," which had become entangled in "material confusion." Knowledge must have some beneficial effect, both in a soteriological or a practical sense, if it is to be recognized as valid. He is particularly concerned to counter the authoritarian implications of his opponent's epistemological position, which appears to emphasize doctrinal truth at the expense of all other considerations. These considerations are taken up by Razi in another work written in a more discursive style, namely, his longest surviving philosophical treatise, **Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhānī**. There, he draws on the science of medical treatment for application in ethics, but with some interesting implications for the problem of knowledge. Even thought in its most logically impeccable form may turn out to be a subterfuge of the "lower passions." The highest metaphysical truths, just like practical conduct, must therefore be amenable to extralogical "truth verification." The real object must be to bring man to his proper destination, and in this Razi's views coincide with the early mystical tradition in Islam, from al-Hujwīrī to al-Ghazzālī, where the problem essentially consists of existential realization rather than a merely abstract or intellectual process.

Résumé

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Dans cette étude, la relation entre la pensée médicale et la philosophie est examinée à travers les oeuvres du célèbre penseur islamique, Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī (ca. 250-323/864-935). Dans un des textes que nous examinerons, Razi pensait pouvoir résoudre le problème de la "création du monde" au moyen d'une allégorie. Son interlocuteur, qui nous a transmis la seule version encore existante de leurs débats, cherchait à défendre l'idée de la "révélation" épistémologique. Bien qu'admettant que l'Intellect ait été envoyé par le Créateur, Razi insiste sur le fait que ceci a été fait au profit de l'"âme," qui s'est empêtrée dans la "confusion matérielle." La connaissance doit avoir un effet bénéfique, dans un sens pratique ainsi que salvateur, pour qu'elle soit reconnue comme valable. Razi s'est plus particulièrement concentré sur les implications autoritaires de la position de son adversaire, qui semble mettre l'emphase sur la vérité doctrinale au dépens de toutes autres considérations. D'ailleurs ces considerations sont traitées dans une autre oeuvre écrite en un style plus discursif, à savoir le **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**. Il y applique les principes du traitement médical à l'éthique, avec certaines implications intéressantes pour le problème de la connaissance. D'après son argument, même la pensée la plus logique peut servir de subterfuge aux plus basses "passions." Les vérités métaphysiques les plus hautes, tout comme la conduite pratique, doivent donc être soumises à une forme de "vérification" extra-logique. L'objet est d'amener l'homme vers sa propre destination, et en ceci les points de vues de Razi coincident avec ceux de la tradition mystique antérieure de l'Islam, celle d'al-Hujwīrī et d'al-Ghazzālī -- où le problème est essentiellement celui d'une réalisation existentielle plutôt que d'un processus purement abstrait ou intellectuel.

For my dear father and mother

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TRANSLITERATION

Except for commonly known words, like Razi, or certain placenames, we have used the following transliteration system.

Consonants

ء = ' (except when initial)	
ب = b	ط = ṭ
ت = t	ظ = ẓ
ث = th	ع = ʿ
ج = j	غ = gh
ح = ḥ	ف = f
خ = kh	ق = q
د = d	ك = k
ذ = dh	ل = l
ر = r	م = m
ز = z	ن = n
س = s	ه = h
ش = sh	و = w
ص = ṣ	ي = y
ض = ḍ	

Short vowels

◌َ = a, ◌ُ = u, ◌ِ = i

Long vowels

ا = ā, ◌ُو = ū, ◌ِي = ī

INTRODUCTION

Born in the city of Rey, Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī (ca. 251-323 H/865-935 CE)[1] was by far the greatest physician of his time. August Müller once described him as "the most creative genius of medieval medicine,"[2] so great was his influence even in Latin Europe, where his Latin-translated medical works were studied well into modern times. He was also an important philosopher, with the one difference though that his doctrines were harshly assailed by contemporaries and several later figures, and especially by the Ismā'īlīs. Unfortunately, none of the fine details of his philosophy have come down to us, except in one area: ethics. This renders every effort to reconstruct his other doctrines somewhat precarious.[3]

Brief sketches of his life can be found in the records of several Islamic historians and biographers, such as Ibn Khallikān, Ibn al-Nadīm and Ibn al-Uṣaybi'ah, Ibn al-Qiftī, al-Bīrūnī and al-Juljul. As a physician, Razi is described as having been generous, distinguished and upright with people; he was so "kindly compassionate with the poor and the sick that he used to bring them substantial rations and provide nursing for them."[4] He was wholly devoted not only to his patients but also to the numerous medical students he taught, who often came from distant parts of the country. These students were said to have received their practical initiation into the field by having themselves to diagnose the illnesses of people visiting Razi's ward for treatment. Only when they proved unable to give a correct diagnosis did he take up each case himself.[5]

The early part of his career is practically unknown. Some records indicate that his interests lay in lute-playing and writing about music.[6] Indeed, his early research into music led to the writing of a full-length

treatise, his first, entitled **Fī jamāl al-mūsīqī**. His exhaustive treatment of the subject[7] may have helped him later on in his career, as far as we know, to apply musical sounds as a kind of hospital therapy. This early interest is probably not unrelated to his Platonic, possibly even Pythagorean, inclinations. Ismāʿīlī propositions on musical harmonies are testimony to the influence of these ideas, but their apparent surge in popularity later among the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, for example, may be indicative of some role played by Razi.

His young talents also went into the study of chemistry, where he made his mark. Al-Bīrūnī relates, however, that he soon abandoned it for health reasons. True or not, he introduced new rigour to a science which, though susceptible to centuries-old quackery and superstition dating from late classical times, was closely allied to a larger medico-philosophical tradition.

Because of his precocious talents, Razi attracted attention very quickly, especially upon entering the medical field. He became so famous in Rey, his native town, that the task of running the local hospital was soon turned over to him during the governorship of Manṣūr b. Isḥāq b. Aḥmad b. Asad, the man to whom he dedicated the medical book he later became so famous for called **al-Ṭibb al-manṣūrī**. Despite the congenial environment of his native city, Razi journeyed to Baghdād in search of knowledge and, before finally returning to Rey, had travelled widely. During his stay in Baghdad, he headed the main hospital. Tradition has it that he selected the site for a new hospital after having first examined the morsels of raw meat that he commanded to be hung at various locations around the city. The piece that showed the least signs of putrefaction indicated for him a sound location.[8] This typified his creative, methodical devotion to medicine -- medicine, that

is, understood in the widest sense: both bodily and spiritual.

Razi lived in a region which already possessed a long and complex medical tradition thanks to the congregation there of many of the world's most learned scholars, and the Sāmānid rulers continued to encourage learning during most of their reign.[9] Under the Abbasides, the capital Baghdad became the leading intellectual center. The active support given to both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars by a long succession of enlightened Khulafā', from al-Manṣūr (754-75 CE) and Hārūn al-Rashīd (d. 809) to al-Ma'mūn (813 CE) succeeded in attracting to the capital most of Gundīshāpūr's physicians and philosophers, most prominent among whom were the Nestorian physician Jurjīs and his son Bakhtīshū[c]. In this manner, a unique tradition of intercultural exchange and dialogue first established in that ancient southern city was faithfully continued in a new age. By the time of Yezdegird's fall in 642 CE, Iran had already become a repository of sciences originating from virtually every corner of the known world, and scholars continued to come from distant parts of Sassanid Iran, India and the Greek world.

The new community of believers there introduced a number of developments in such areas as jurisprudence, theology and lexicography; the "non-indigenous" disciplines were those not reckoned to be rooted in any prophetic tradition, such as philosophy, geometry, astronomy, music, medicine and alchemy.[10] However, very early on the Muslims made determined efforts to come to terms with the latter sciences. These attempts created deep bonds and led to fertile exchanges with the representatives of classical Greek, Indian and Sassanian thought, giving a measure of continuity both historically and across living traditions. The rich intellectual environment that resulted helped nurture, above all, a whole generation of full-fledged Muslim philosophers, which included al-Kindī, Razi, al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā. Their achievements were of fundamental importance to all subsequent thought.

And, in all this, medical tradition acted as the chief vehicle which carried the vast undertaking of cultural transmission and synthesis to fruition.

Transmission and decline of Greek tradition

Medicine by Razi's time was dominated by the overshadowing figure of Galen, who stood at the very pinnacle of a long tradition extending further back in time even than Hippocrates. This dominance was largely due to Alexandria's medical school where, almost on the eve of the Muslims' momentous march into Egypt, a few medical and philosophical scholars had grouped together to try to reconstitute the old curricula and institutions. They established a medico-pedagogical canon based mainly on Galen's sixteen books, what became known to posterity as the Galenian corpus.[11] The "school of Alexandria" continued to function until 719 CE, when it was transferred to Antioch and other centers, such as Harrān, at the time of ᶜUmar ᶜAbd al-ᶜAzīz's Khilāfah.[12] Its medico-pedagogical features were faithfully duplicated by Nestorians living in far-away Gundīshāpūr and virtually everywhere else that Greek sciences were studied. The effort to recover and to organize medical knowledge, therefore, had the practical result of reinvigorating the Greek element in the cities of the east, where a unique tradition of intercultural dialogue had taken deep root.

This is not to say that the original bastions of classical Greek thought themselves were in any healthy state. A good sign of their decline was the stream of refugees fleeing persecution; it had been steadily making its way eastward, especially in the last two centuries before hijrah. However, a precipitous intellectual decline had set in sometime ago, when the old rationalist foundations of "pagan" Greek philosophy began to crumble. Many outstanding intellects were drawn to the skeptical movement mainly founded by

Sextus Empiricus (ca. 200 CE) -- who, a physician, in turn epitomized the skeptical movement's close ties with medicine.[13] The intellectual climate they helped create paved the way for onslaught by a number of religious currents and, increasingly, a new breed of Christian theologians.

Some of these theologians did not flinch from using rational arguments to advance their own doctrines. In the last phase of these developments and on the eve of Egypt's Islamization, this attitude was most clearly exemplified by Iaones Philoponus (or John "the Grammarian,"[14] as he was known by the Muslims). He wrote an influential refutation of Proclus' argument for the eternity of the world based on rational philosophy's own premises. His aim naturally was to prove the biblically-inspired dogma that the world was created ex nihilo. But he was roundly condemned by his coreligionists for having acceded to the philosophers' rules instead of giving faithful affirmation to Christian revelation -- that is, as promulgated by Church orthodoxy. His arguments later became well known, if rarely acknowledged, by Muslim philosophers from al-Kindī to al-Ghazzālī and probably Razi, who also studied Proclus. They provided something of a balance, within a philosophical framework, between the excesses of rationalism and of religious dogmatism.

Thanks to this debate, it slowly transpired that the abstract demands made by the Greeks on knowledge not only led to a veritable intellectual quagmire -- forcefully demonstrated by the skeptics and later exploited by the Christians -- but proved to be of parochial and passing interest. Greek medicine, on the other hand, with its closer ties with non-Hellenic cultures quietly evolved, providing fertile ground for all manner of scientific inquiry. It persisted through a pedagogical tradition that stretched back to the first centuries of the Christian era, when the first efforts to refurbish the school curricula in Alexandria and in Athens were undertaken. In a

sense, these reforms ultimately bore their finest fruits not in any Greek city but in Sassanid Gundīshāpūr, where the hellenized Christians, persecuted by the Byzantines, had established a thriving community that maintained close, prolonged contact with Sassanians, Indians and even Chinese. Medicine acted as a vehicle for intercultural dialogue, as we earlier mentioned, and Greek medicine survived the general intellectual decline by providing these hellenized communities with relatively stable pedagogical institutions.

Dialogue and increased contacts on a world scale

Medicine in Gundīshāpūr reached its classical maturity under Nushrivan, King Kubad's immediate successor who began his reign in 531 CE and was most responsible for transforming Gundīshāpūr into the great intellectual center for which it was later remembered.[15] However, the city was first established near ancient Susa in the southwestern region of modern-day Iran by the Sassanian monarch, Shāpūr (r. 241-271 CE). It was just an old settlement then, and had to be enlarged in order to accommodate the great number of prisoners of war captured with the defeat of the Romans by Shāpūr. Among these prisoners were not only Emperor Valerian himself but also a sizable detachment of scholars. Shāpūr urged these scholars to settle and to pursue their studies alongside others from various parts of his kingdom and from India. Shāpūr is also remembered especially for his attempt to recover old Avestan texts, most of which had been torched by the conquering army of Alexander the Great. Besides purely devotional matters, the recovered texts concerned astronomy, geography and, finally, medicine, which figured prominently among them.[16] This inevitably placed a rich indigenous culture alongside Greek and Sanskrit. It is not surprising, then, that Shāpūr's positive role in Iranian history has been acknowledged by some mystical schools in Islam. But the benevolent policy toward learning initiated by him

was continued by Shāpūr II (306-80 CE), who extended the city and finally established an intellectual center of considerable standing.[17] When the town of Nisibis was ceded to the Sassanids as part of a humiliating treaty which Emperor Jovian, finally stopped by Shāpūr II, was forced to accept, its scholars sought refuge in the nearby town of Edessa, still under Roman rule. The school there, however, aligned itself with the followers of Nestorius,[18] who was eventually excommunicated at the General Council of Ephesus in 431 CE and his followers chased out of Edessa at the behest of Cyrus, their main rival and the man who rose to become bishop of the town. This expulsion proved significant in the dissemination of Greek medical tradition. The scholars who left Edessa were only part of a much wider demographic movement from the outlying regions of Byzantium, as Sarton has observed;[19] in fact, the movement reached all the way to India and China. The Nestorians in particular acted as a vital cultural link with the east, and managed to save Greek writings from oblivion. Ironically, as the sudden and vigorous resurgence of imperial Christianity under Justinian sounded the Athenian school's death knell, diehard "pagan" Neo-Platonist scholars such as Simplicius, Philoponus' opponent, and the school of seven headed by Damascius were added to their ranks,[20] as the last remaining independent institutions in both Alexandria and Athens were finally being closed down in 517 and 529 CE, respectively.

This is not to say that the same pattern of cultural and intellectual intercourse which endured for so many centuries in Gundīshāpūr -- and had produced one of history's most fascinating intellectual ferments -- did not also exist in other learning centers. Its close proximity to the Byzantine capital notwithstanding, Alexandria, for example, had an intellectual climate that permitted relations between Christians and non-Christians to be much

closer than in Athens. There, Christians often learned under non-Christians, as did Bishop Synesius of Cyrene (370 CE), who had studied under Hypatia; Philoponus himself studied under Ammonius (435/445-517/26); and, in the sixth century, Elias, a Christian, rose to become head of the Neoplatonist school.[21] But where Greek culture was predominant in Alexandria,[22] it commanded respect in Gundīshāpūr. In Iran it had to coexist with other scholarly traditions of comparable if not greater merit. Moreover, the class of scholars that emerged in Gundīshāpūr was imbued with a refined form of medico-philosophy because its roots stretched both east and west.

When the city finally passed into the hands of the Muslims in 636 CE it was at the height of its intellectual prowess. Its contribution to medical science was described by al-Qiftī in the most glowing terms:

> They (the physicians) made rapid progress in the science, developed new methods in the treatment of disease along pharmacological lines, to the point that their therapy was judged superior to that of the Greeks and Hindus. Furthermore these physicians adopted the scientific methods of other people and modified them by their own discoveries. They elaborated medical laws and recorded the work that had been developed.[23]

And Gundīshāpūr was left unmolested by the Muslims. The great Nestorian medical families who flourished there eventually transferred to Baghdad, where their well-honed translation skills were employed on a much larger scale. This activity, as we shall see, proved to be of major consequence because it accelerated the tempo of cultural exchange to a level unprecedented in history. Greek writings up till then had been translated mostly into Syriac, the language of the Nestorians -- for example, by Sergius of Rēsh-ʿAynā (d. 536 CE) and later Job of Edessa (d. after 832) at the time of al-Maʾmūn[24] -- and some into Pahlavi. But where this activity took place mainly through private efforts in the past, the great new demand for Arabic as well as Syriac translations ensured the rise of professional groups with a high level of expertise. Soon, even the famous family of physicians called

Bakhtīshūᶜ, the first to move to Baghdad, was rivalled and eventually overshadowed by others, as the art of translation rapidly reached a qualitatively higher stage, especially with the rise of Ḥunayn.

Of all the Nestorian translators who later acquired fame in Baghdad, Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq was the best known.[25] He, more than anyone else, was responsible for establishing almost the entire corpus of Greek learning. With the demand for accurate Arabic translations by growing numbers of trained Muslim scholars came the realization that many of the existing Syriac renderings of Greek works, and the Arabic ones based on them, were defective. The difficulty necessitated a wide search for original Greek texts to help give the most accurate possible Arabic (and Syriac) translation. These Ḥunayn had to obtain from distant places. However, the methodical use of the collation techniques he developed helped generate a spate of literary contacts with other parts of the world. This gave Alexandria a much more direct influence -- as far as Greek thought was concerned -- on intellectual life than at any time in the past. The unprecedented number of classical writings which it now disgorged, covering practically every discipline, made that city one of the most vital sources of Greek culture in the Islamic world.

The earliest attempt by the Muslims to recover Greek learning directly from Alexandria began in earnest with Khālid b. Yazīd's sponsorship of a translation movement in that ancient city, headed by Astephan. Large numbers of Greek works in medicine and chemistry, as a result, passed into circulation. But it was not until Baghdad's translation movement had reached the necessary technical mastery, permitting authoritative translations to be established, that a much more competent and independent assessment by the Muslims themselves of the Greek sciences could get underway. The disciplines

included in the medical curriculum of the day brought together a whole gamut of medical, physical, mathematical, astronomical and ethical theories. This endowed the rising new generation of Muslim medico-philosophers with the requisite knowledge, helping them lay the groundwork for a fresh new intellectual tradition in Islam. As one of the first major philosophers seriously to refute, assimilate and transcend this knowledge, Razi certainly played a crucial role.

We must emphasize, however, that other living traditions beside the Greek also had great impact on the Muslims. The similarities of Hindu medico-philosophy, important as that tradition was, with Greek medicine makes the task of identifying its specific contributions within the limited scope of this paper rather difficult. What may be asserted about the physicians of the east is that generally they developed their art in a kindred spirit to Galen's maxim that a good physician needed also to be a philosopher. But there is the additional problem of unnamed sources quoted by Muslim scholars. One of the few physicians who took pains to cite his Indian sources was Razi, who probably even had a smattering of some Indian language. This is not surprising, since he, in fact, inherited many characteristic features of early Islam's composite intellectual landscape from his nearest predecessors. One of them was ʿAlī b. Rabban al-Ṭabarī (192 H/808 CE- 240 H/855 CE). Although little is known about his life,[26] this was an influential scholar; indeed, Razi's entry into the medical profession was said by al-Qiftī and Ibn Khallikān to have taken place under his tutorship.[27] Meyerhof has expressed serious doubts concerning this relationship on chronological grounds,[28] although he admitted that al-Ṭabarī may still have exerted his influence through his writings. Razi at any rate must have imbibed the elements of Islamic medico-philosophy from him as it was then still taking shape; there is ample evidence indicating that he studied his works rather thoroughly.[29]

Because of this it is perhaps useful to consider briefly al-Ṭabarī's contributions.

Born in Merv, al-Ṭabarī has written the earliest known Islamic medical compendium, of considerable historical importance today, called **Firdaws al-hikmah**.[30] He managed also to bring together in a single work the major elements of medico-philosophy, both Greek and Indian, including physics, astronomy and metaphysics. The conception of medicine he worked out in **Firdaws al-hikmah** is sometimes regarded by modern scholars as too ponderous and much too "syncretic" to be of genuinely scientific value. The evident apologetic note on this score expressed by Muḥammad Zubayr Ṣiddīqi, who edited this work in 1922, is a case in point. It may be added, though, that if his purpose were merely to elucidate medicine as a science of physical applications, we may be justified in holding this view. But al-Ṭabarī was doing much more than delving in "bodily" medicine, and included "spiritual" health in his undertaking. This naturally brought within the compass of the art of healing all the branches of scientific endeavour; but as the technical means for curing the afflicted were as yet in a dormant state, the emphasis was on the preventive source, namely, moral and intellectual resources. Truth, no less than medicament, was thought to have a salutary effect on life.

Apart from this, al-Ṭabarī's purpose was to provide a ready handbook for aspiring doctors or medico-philosophers where existing ones proved wanting. The best-known until then had been those written by Oreibasios, Paul of Aeqina, Ahrun al-Qus and Jurjīs (father of Bakhtīshūʿ).[31] Interestingly, the **Firdaws al-hikmah** came to provide a concise source of information on Hindu medico-philosophy, in fact the most coherent available at the time, though unfortunately one of the last.[32] Hindu medico-philosophy was still

assiduously studied by Razi's time,[33] and Siddīqī has attributed Razi's "extraordinary interest" in Hindu medicine precisely to his familiarity with this work.[34] **Al-Ḥāwī** is replete with references to Hindu medical ideas, for which the last section of al-Ṭabarī's **Firdaws al-ḥikmah** appears to be a major source. However, Razi probably also consulted an old Indian medical collection called **Carak-Saṃhita** (or **Sharak**, as he refers to it), containing the teachings of Agnivesa. According to Ibn al-Nadīm, this collection had been available in Persian. From this translation came the Arabic version.[35] Generally speaking, works by Canaka, Susruta, Vāgbhata and Mādhavakara were accessible through their Pahlavi or Arabic translations.

The epistemological significance of the medical paradigm

Like its counterpart in the east, Greek medicine from its inception was closely associated with philosophy and religion.[36] It had a pervasive influence on all the sciences, including mathematics, natural science and logic.[37] Philosophical concepts, in turn, proved indispensable to the art of medical treatment,[38] and the good physician needed to be well-acquainted with them. The physician needed to know logic, for example,

> lest he fail to see the advantage of classifying the types of illnesses according to species, or fail to recognize the rightness of him who does what is right, or the error of him who errs, since logic was considered an instrument that protected the mind from error. That is why they made it a propaedeutic to philosophy, and a device in the hands of the scholar.[39]

But it was the Nestorian scholars' attempt to make the scientific disciplines they studied more palatable to religious authorities which perhaps added to medicine's importance. As Rescher has remarked, it "formed a bridge between the sciences and theology, and many of the Syriac Christian theologians were trained as physicians of the body as well as the soul."[40] One consequence of this was that it gave their approach certain taxonomical, if not

epistemological, depth. Training was organized so that the elementary program in the curriculum could lead to higher studies in astronomy, medical science and theology[41]; and this closely reflected the ordering of the sciences as it existed in fifth and sixth century Alexandria.[42] Galen's writings were central to this curriculum, providing a thoughtfully laid out syncretic approach to all learning. In fact, their prominence in institutions run by the Nestorians -- which offered probably the most wide-ranging education at the time -- partly explains Galen's influence in the philosophical tradition of Islam, one he enjoyed nowhere else.[43] His approach to learning was subsequently emulated by famous physicians such as Ibn Ridwān, who self-confidently reiterated to his Christian interlocutor Galen's compact saying that "he is a perfect physician who is at the same time a philosopher."[44] In Ibn Ridwān's view, the **tabīb** was distinguishable from the one who possessed no philosophical education. While the latter was "merely a medical practitioner" (**mutatabbib**), the **tabīb** must be learned in the mathematical, natural, moral, and logical sciences... [he] requires a perfect knowledge in all branches.[45]

Clearly, medicine had pride of place among the sciences, playing -- we would venture to say -- a mediating role among the then known disciplines. Lucien Leclerc, in the last century, was one of the first Western scholars to note its unique capacity to mediate between "Islam (sic)" and science. This remarkable characteristic was put to the test by the early Islamic philosophers as they earnestly tried to assimilate all of the sciences bequeathed to them by various peoples, but as faithfully to the prophetic tradition they continued to uphold as possible. Pedagogical ordering alone, which still rested on a fundamental division between the "rational" and the "revealed" sciences, was insufficient to ensure the acceptance and flowering of these sciences within the community; "rational" knowledge still needed to

be indigenized. The question was how this could be done short of placing the one above the other, a dilemma perhaps best symbolized by Ibn al-Rushd's famous treatise, **Kitāb faṣl al-maqāl fīmā bayn al-sharīᶜah wa al-ḥikmah min al-ittiṣāl.** Nearer to Razi in both spirit as well as geography, and steeped in the medico-philosophical tradition of the Baghdadians, al-Fārābī set out to accomplish what Porphyry had tried many centuries earlier to do: to demonstrate that the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle were in essential harmony.[46] This task, Saliba observes, "n'était... que le prélude de l'accord entre la religion et la philosophie arabe,"[47] the prophetic and the discursive. It encapsulated the same relationship as the one between two basic components of Greek philosophy: namely, a "mystically-" and a literally-oriented program. Al-Fārābī went further than any other philosopher by arguing that these two thinkers had founded philosophy in all its dimensions: they gave it its origin, developed its branches and reached its limits.[48] What was now required was to discover the underlying principle which bound them both. This project inspired him to produce a number of unique works.[49]

The relationship between Plato and Aristotle has always been controversial, and it affected Islamic philosophy a great deal. This was reflected in Razi's occasional allusions to these two thinkers, at times with explicit indication of where his sympathies lay.[50] That they are in fundamental conflict of course has been a matter of orthodoxy in the west for a long time. Recently, though, Hans-Georg Gadamer has rekindled the debate by revalorizing the didactic function of the Platonic allegories. His views on this will help us discern older views which in fact date back to the time of the Alexandrian school. Plato's announcement in the Republic that the goal of the teacher is not to show the object of research to the student, but to help the soul to take cognizance of the truth inside it, is significant

and recapitulates well his position.[51] It also carried certain implications for the relationship between **mythos** and **logos**. Gadamer has noted that even within the same text of the Timaeus -- which concerns us in this paper owing to Razi's interest in it -- there is a marked shift in the creation story, as the allegory is given progressively more precise and literal meaning.[52] Plato himself, it is then fair to say, displayed two modes of discourse, and any attempt to identify in clear-cut fashion a "Platonic" position on the status of the "image," for example (i.e., whether nominalist, realist or conceptualist), seems unwarranted. Instead, Gadamer has pointed up the necessary inclusiveness of the "image" by referring to Plato's understanding of it as being "always simultaneously one and the same thing and two different things" -- that is, the image considered by itself and together with its referent.[53]

Plato's use of allegories (**mythos**) to convey his ideas raises difficult problems of interpretation. But why did Aristotle, a critic of his doctrine of Ideas, assume that he must have been speaking literally in the Timaeus when he recounted the creation story? The onerous task of reconciling these two philosophers fell mostly on the Alexandrians and, indeed, every school which upheld their tradition. They sought this reconciliation more deliberately than later was the case in medieval Europe, for example. As far as the latter was concerned, the transmission and interpretations of logic by Boethius in the fifth-sixth century constituted the pivotal event in its later philosophical development. At the center was Boethius' translation of and commentary on Porphyry's Isagogue, which initiated the contentious debate over "universals." Stoic attempts to rival Aristotelian logic -- perhaps by "find[ing] a place for modal notions while denying the Aristotelian theory of real potentiality,"[54] led to a re-examination of modal problems.[55] By systematizing further the processes of reasoning,[56] they had produced

doctrines that were often flaunted as alternatives to Aristotelian logic. We shall not examine Boethius' place in this debate, but simply point out that it was his commentaries on the opening pages of the Isagogue which helped stimulate interest in the formalization of metaphysical questions,[57] formalization which, in the wider controversy concerning Plato and Aristotle, perhaps also helped to provide a framework within which Plato's mystico-philosophical formulations could be accommodated.

Though his commentaries proved so important to medieval Europe, Boethius himself was unknown to the Muslims. Instead, the study and application of ancient knowledge was avidly taken up early on by figures such as al-Kindī and Razi. In hindsight, therefore, we might wish perhaps to assign to these thinkers a role comparable to his. Yet where he reflected the Aristotelian approach to formalization, openly professing to be inspired by Alexander of Aphrodisias,[58] Razi was closer to Platonism, with its long-standing association with the pedagogical concerns of medical thought. There is however evidence that he more than delved into logic. Al-Nadīm and other compilers attribute to him a respectable library collection of translated Greek works and his own commentaries. According to al-Nadīm, he possessed parts of Aristotle's "**Analytica posteriora,**" "Collection of Meanings of the `**Categoriae**'," "Collections of the Meanings of `**Analytica priora,**' to the Completion of the Categorical Syllogism"; an epistle called "Logic," and the "Introduction to Logic which is Isagoge."[59] The last named is Porphyry's introduction to Aristotle's Categories.

This background does not make Razi, any more than al-Fārābī, a "Greek" either intellectually or culturally. While his writings exhibit considerable continuity with previous traditions, Razi proposed undoubtedly unique applications in practically every field he touched; and this is of central interest to us, because such creativity is an unmistakable sign of

intellectual maturity within the burgeoning scholarly tradition of Islam. It is not far-fetched to say, for example, that he almost singlehandedly transformed the art of healing, placing it on a more solid footing than at any time before. How his particular technical insights were related to his philosophical understanding, however, is unclear, and will remain a fertile area to investigate. One domain in which these applications was carried out was what he called the "spiritual medicine" (**al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**). Though by no means the highest discipline, it connected both religious and scientific aspirations, or knowledge and practice, with certain epistemological repercussions that we shall be seeking to uncover.

Modern studies

Not confined to the Islamic world,[60] Razi's popularity in medicine extended to western Europe, where Latin translations of his works were re-edited several times.[61] Many of his original works, however, remain unpublished in any modern edition, although a reasonably reliable edition of his posthumous medical encyclopaedia, **Kitāb al-ḥāwī fī al-ṭibb**, was published in India. He was a prolific writer, though, and the author of other very famous medical texts and treatises, including **Kitāb al-manṣūrī**, **Kitāb al-fākhir**, **Kitāb al-jadarī wa al-ḥasbah**.

Despite his influence, no comprehensive modern study of his medical thought exists. There are commentaries and articles exposing various aspects of his clinical methods, such as Max Meyerhof's introduction to Razi's translated account of his clinical cases.[62] A more recent exposé of his medical principles is found in Prof. Mūsá's **Minhaj al-baḥth al-ʿilmī ʿind al-ʿarab** (1972), which considers his theories from a "methodological" angle. We have made use of these in our present study.

As we said, Razi's unmatched authority in medicine did not extend to

philosophical matters, which not only meant ostracism by many of his contemporaries but also ensured that a good portion of his works suffered a fate similar to that of numerous other writings that are now lost. Luckily, enough has survived to enable us to formulate certain ideas about his philosophy. The primary sources we have used in the present paper consist of three basic texts. Paul Kraus' annotated collection of Razi's writings, **Rasā'il falsafīyah,** appearing in 1939, includes two of them: **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** and **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah.** These two are the only selections in this otherwise excellent edition of whose authenticity we are relatively sure. Based on three manuscripts and the fragments found in Ḥamīd al-Dīn al-Kirmānī's **al-Aqwāl al-dhahabīyah, Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** remains by far the most important -- although two other folios still in existence were not examined by Kraus.[63] Kraus' collection also contains fragments found in the works of several other Muslim and non-Muslim thinkers.[64]

The third text we shall be referring to is **Aʿlām al-nubūwah.** It contains a valuable account of our thinker's philosophical positions related by Abū Ḥātim Aḥmad Ibn Ḥamdān Ibn Aḥmad al-Rāzī (d. 322/933-4), the famous Ismāʿīlī dāʿī and Razi's contemporary.

Pinès' collaboration with Kraus, on the other hand, led to the publication of his Beiträge zur islamische Atomlehre, recording his findings concerning the roots of Razi's "atomistic" doctrines as far as these could be reconstructed from existing fragments. His book, at the time, was a happy addition to Macdonald's summary of Islamic "atomistic" doctrines.[65] Among the sources he used to analyze how different schools in the early period of Islam dealt with physical concepts and creation was **Aʿlām al-nubūwah,** where Razi recounts an allegory about how the world was brought into being. Pinès pointed out certain parallels between this allegorical account and myths that were once current in the city of Ḥarrān.

This same allegory was the subject of a paper by Goodman (1975), written from a more analytical angle, entitled "Rāzī's Myth of the Fall of Soul: Its Function in his Philosophy."[66] Goodman considered the philosophical motives behind Razi's account, and sheds interesting light on the "ontological" status of the five "principles" posited by Razi, namely, the Creator, the self, matter, time and space. A longtime student of Razi's philosophy, he is also known for his older article, "The Epicurean Ethic of Ar-Râzî."[67] Razi's Greek connections are particularly evident in his **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**, and Goodman relies mainly on this source to show how different strands of Greek philosophy were fused together to produce an original, if somewhat unconventional, defense of morality. He argues that, far from being a heretic, Razi may have been driven by nothing more outlandish than the wish to press Greek doctrines into the service of his community's spiritual goals, perhaps even as defined by "orthodox" authorities. This view contrasts sharply with what most other modern commentators have written about Razi, as we shall see in the course of this paper. For reasons that are not always readily apparent, most writers tend to assume his ideas to be discordant with the main intellectual currents of his time. Bar-Asher's two-part paper in Studia Islamica, for example, the most recent addition to an ever-growing body of published studies, uncritically takes him to be not only "heretical" but outrightly "anti-Islamic" in his views. Yet Razi after all lived and died within a specific community, albeit one that was still embroiled in the struggle to establish a meaningful intellectual tradition; but an intellectual recluse he was not. By no means original, this study fails to illuminate us further than what we already know about the significance of his relationship with Greek thought. For this particular aspect of his philosophical thought, it would perhaps be much more useful to consult older works.

It was in 1974 that Prof. Mohaghegh finally published probably the most authoritative and most comprehensive study to date on the historical roots of his thought, **Fīlsūf-i Rayy: Muḥammad ibn-i Zakarīyā-i Rāzī.** Before this date, Dr. Maḥmūd Najmābādī's **Mu'allafāt-o-musannafāt-i Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn-i Zakarīyā-i Rāzī** served as a most useful bio-bibliography.[68]

There is much ground still to cover in the study of Razi. In the next chapter, we shall analyze his allegory of the self's "fall" transmitted by Abū Ḥātim. While he thought he had resolved the problem of the world's creation, what he most clearly managed to achieve was a theory of knowledge central to which is the premise that the ultimate source of **ᶜaql** was God. The question, however, does not end here, for he was keenly aware also of the authoritarian implications of his interlocutor's epistemological position in defence of prophethood. We shall present a brief consideration of the rich classical backdrop to philosophy in his time in order to clarify the "political" dimension of the problem of knowledge.

Razi seems to have extended his epistemological claims associated with the allegory to a different domain where the science of character reformation (**akhlāq**) constitutes the "foundation" of the "spiritual medicine" (**al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**). Before undertaking to examine this science, we shall review, in Chapter Three, some of the fundamentals of Islamic and Galenic medicine. This will enable us to clarify the relationship between medicine and philosophy that underlies "spiritual medicine," where the preservation of "health" is a paramount objective.

"Health" was basically defined in terms of equilibrium among the humours. The conceptual roots of Greek humoral theory may be traced back to the early Pythagoreans, for whom the idea of four had sacred connotations owing to its supposed perfection.[69] Understood broadly enough to include spiritual as well as physical well-being, this science of "health" gave rise

to a new dynamic in the relationship between knowledge and purposeful human activity. We shall be aiming, in this paper, to see how a new kind of "truth verification," so to speak, based on this "medical" paradigm, becomes possible.

Chapter Four will begin our examination of Razi's ethical treatise, with an analysis of his concept of **ʿaql** in terms of the Platonic tripartite division of the self. On this hierarchal division depends the whole process of "purification" from the "passions" and their call to pleasure, in short, his science of character reformation. In our final chapter, we shall analyze the rest of **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** in detail. This book, together with **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, will help us understand the didactic role played by "analogical thinking."

NOTES

1. This is the date given by al-Bīrūnī. See Epître de Beruni, contenant le repertoire des ouvrages de Muhammad ibn Zakariya ar-Razi, published by Paul Kraus (Paris, 1936), p. 4.

2. Manfred Ullmann, Islamic Medicine (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1978), p. 44.

3. See, for example, Salomon Pinès, "Die Atomlehre ar-Rāzī's," Beiträge zur islamische Atomlehre (Berlin: Friedrich-Wilhelm-Universität, 1936), pp. 34-93. We have used the Arabic translation by Muhammad ᶜAbd al-Hādī Abū Rīdah, **Madhhab al-dhurrah ᶜind al-muslimīn wa ᶜalaqātaha bi-madhāhib al-Yūnā wa al-Hunūd wa maᶜah falsafat Muhammad ibn Zakariya' al-Rāzī** (Cairo: Maktabah al-nahdah al-misrīyah, pref. 1360 H/1947 CE), pp. 35-90.

4. This is the testimony recorded by al-Nadīm of someone called al-Warrāq. Cf. The Fihrist of al-Nadim, edited and translated by Bayard Dodge (New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 702.

5. Ibid., p. 702.

6. Ibn al-Uṣaybiᶜah's claim that he was a banker is based on a note in a book by Razi, allegedly written in his own handwriting, which said "A Compendium of the Mansūrī, written by Muhammad b. Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī." (Cf. Cyril Elgood, A Medical History of Persia (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), p. 196)

7. Elgood, p. 196.

8. Claude Leclerc, Histoire de la médicine arabe I (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1876, new edition Rabat, 1980), pp. 337-8.

9. Ibn Khallikan says it lasted for one hundred and two years, six months and ten days. Cf. Ibn Khallikan's Biographical Dictionary III, translated from Arabic by Bn MacGuckin de Slane (Paris: Oriental Translation Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, 1842), p. 313.

10. Elgood, p. 262.

11. See Leclerc's useful account. Meyerhof makes some interesting observations in his "New light on Hunayn Ibn Ishâq and his Period," Studies in Medieval Arabic Medicine, edited by Penelope Johnstone (London: Variorum, 1984).

12. This is related by Ibn al-Uṣaybiᶜah, **Tabaqāt al-ātibbā'** I, p. 116. Cf. also Meyerhof, "Von Alexandrien nach Baghdad: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des philosophischen und medizinischen Unterrichts bei den Arabern," Sitzungsberichte der Preussisehen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Berlin 1930, pp. 389-429 and "La Fin de l'Ecole d'Alexandrie d'après Quelques Auteurs Arabes," Bulletin de l'Institut d'Egypte, vol. 15 (1932-3), pp. 109-23; also published in Archeion 15 (1933), pp. 1-15.

13. Richard Sorabji, Time, Creation and the Continuum: Theories in antiquity and the early Middle Ages (London: Duckworth, 1983), p. 301.

14. This title was probably given because his chair at Alexandria was in grammar rather than philosophy.

15. It was moreover in this period that Plato, Aristotle and Indian works were translated into Pahlavi. His court physician, the famous Perzoes (or Burzūya in Pahlavi), quoted by Razi in **al-Ḥawī**, travelled all the way to the Ganges. (Cf. Elgood, pp. 52-3)

16. Elgood, p. 39.

17. Michael W. Dols, "Introductory Essay," Medieval Islamic Medicine (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. 5.

18. Nestorius was an Aramaean monk born near Mount Taurus in Syria. He and his disciple Anastasius studied in Antioch under Theodore and Diodorus.

19. George Sarton, Introduction to the History of Science I (Baltimore: Carnegie Institution of Washington, Williams and Wilkins Co., 1927), p. 477.

20. Sorabji, p. 199.

21. Sorabji, p. 191.

22. Greek thought itself naturally stood atop much older traditions rooted in ancient Egypt and witnessed a regular influx of ideas from as far east as India The Greeks themselves have always reckoned that their roots extended to more ancient peoples, such as the Egyptians and the Chaldeans. See, for example, Critias' account of Solon travels in Plato's Timaeus 21-30.

23. Al-Qifṭī, p. 133 (Quoted from Elgood, p. 48).

24. Meyerhof, p. 724.

25. For an interesting analysis of translation techniques that were generally in use and Hunayn's technique in particular, see Abdurrahman Badawi, La transmission de la philosophie grecque au monde arabe (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1987), pp. 15-34.

26. On his life, see Dr. Muhammad Zubayr Siddìqì, Studies in Arabic and Persian Medical Literature (Calcûtta: Calcutta University, 1959), pp. 46-54.

27. Abdurrahman Badawi, "Muhammad Ibn Zakarīya al-Rāzi," A History of Islamic Philosophy I, edited and introduced by M.M. Sharif (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1983), p. 436.

28. P. Kraus and S. Pinès argue the same in "Al-Rāzī, Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Zakarīyā" **EI**^{1}, p. 1136.

29. Siddiqi mentions the chapters in **Kitāb al-Fakhir** and **al-Ḥawī** where al-Tabarī is actually quoted. (Op. cit., pp. 83-4) Some quotations may even have been taken from his father, who was also a reputable (probably Christian) physician.

30. Badawi, "Muhammad Ibn Zakarīya al-Rāzi," op. cit., p. 436.

31. Ṣiddīqī, p. 57.

32. Ibid., p. 57.

33. Translation work was continued from older times thanks to the Barmakids. It was these translations in the first place which allowed al-Tabarī to give a remarkably coherent and comprehensive account of Hindu medicine.

34. Ibid., p. xliii.

35. The Arabic translation is attributed to ᶜAbdallah Ibn ᶜAlī. See Ullmann, p. 19.

36. Cf. Theories and Philosophies of Medicine 2nd edition, compiled by Department of Philosophy aof Medicine and Science (New Delhi: Institute of History of Medicine and Medical Research, 1973), pp. 53-70. This is evident from the Greek myths of Apollo and Aecmon.

37. Jalāl Muhammad Mūsá, Manhaj al-baḥth al-ᶜilmī ᶜind al-ᶜarab fī majāl al-ᶜulūm al-tabīᶜīyah wa al-kawnīyah (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-lubnānī, 1972), p. 147.

38. Ibid., p. 161.

39. Ibid., p. 147.

40. Nicholas Rescher, The Development of Arabic Logic (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964), p. 16. Indeed, it was common even to find Nestorian and Monophysite clergy in Asia possessing medical training but no education in litterae humaniores. See also DeLacy O'Leary, How Greek Science Passed to the Arabs (London, 1949), p. 163.

41. Ibid., p. 17.

42. Ibid., p. 17. See also A.Z. Iskandar, "An Attempted Reconstruction of the late Alexandrian curriculum," Medical HIstory 20 (1976), pp. 235-258.

43. On the impact of Galen's thought, particularly in logic, see Rescher, Galen and the Syllogism (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966), pp. 4-11.

44. Joseph Schacht and Max Meyerhof, The Medico-Philosophical Controversy Between Ibn Butlan of Baghdad and Ibn Ridwan of Cairo (Cairo, 1937), p. 77.

45. Ibid., p. 77.

46. The hope of bringing them together was rekindled among the Muslims probably beginning with al-Kindī, the father of **falsafah.**

47. Djémil Saliba, Etude sur la métaphysique d'Avicenne (Paris: Les Presses Universitaires de France, 1929), p. 17.

48. Ibrahim Madkour, La Place d'al-Fârâbî dans l'école philosophique musulmane (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1934), p. 11.

49. These works include: "The Harmony between Plato and Aristotle," "The Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle," "The interjection between Aristotle and Galen," "The Critique of John Philoponus' criticisms of his Stagirite Master." (Cf. Ibrahim Madkour, p. 18)

50. As we find out from Abū Hātim's **Aʿlām al-nubūwah.** Abū Hātim al-Rāzī, **Aʿlām al-nubūwah,** edited and introduced by Salāh al-Sāwī (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1397/1977), p. 16.

51. Plato, Republic 518 d.

52. "Idea and Reality in Plato's Timaeus," in Georg-Hans Gadamer, Dialogue and Dialectic: Eight Hermeutical Studies on Plato, translated and with an introduction by P. Christopher Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 170-1.

53. Ibid., p. 175.

54. Kneale and Kneale, p. 117.

55. Ibid., p. 114.

56. On the origins of Stoic logic, see William Kneale and Martha Kneale, The Development of Logic (Oxford; Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 113-158. Stoic logic, which was developed by Chrysippus from Megarian teachings, was also considered dialectical. Incidentally, Razi was acquainted with Chrysippus, mentioning him in **Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhani.**

57. "Introduction," Edward W. Warren in Porphyry the Phoenician, Isagogue (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1975), p. 15

58. Ibid. p. 22.

59. Al-Nadīm, p. 703.

60. Within the Islamic world, we include here Christian, Jewish, Sabean, Hindu as well as Muslim thinkers.

61. For a list of his translated works, see Sarton, Introduction, pp. 609-10. An updated study of their history in Europe and an excellent summary of Syriac and Islamic medical history are presented by Danielle Jacquart and Françoise Micheau, La médecine arabe et l'Occident médiéval (Paris: Editions Maisonneuve et Larose, 1990).

62. Here are some of the studies undertaken so far in three basic areas: (1) As far as his medical works are concerned: S. Ammar, "Rhazes (850-923 J.C.) -- a medical psychology, psychosomatic medicine and deontology," Tunis. méd. 47 (1969), pp. 5-13; P. Azeez Pasha, "Biographies of Unani physicians found in al-Hawi of Rhazes," Bulletin of the Indian Institute of the History of Medicine 7 (1977), pp. 38-40 and "Al-Hawi (Liber continens) of ar-Razi, abu Bakr Muhammad bin Zakariya. Synopsis of the fourteenth volume, part II," Bulletin of the Indian Institute of the History of Medicine 7 (1977), pp. 131-137; G. Hoffmeister, "Rasis' Traumlehre. Traumbücher des Spätmittelsalters," Archiv für Kulturgeschichte 51 (1969), pp. 137-159; A.M. Mokhtar, "Die Galenkritik in den ersten zwanzig Büchern des **'Continens'** von

Ibn ar-Rāzī" (Ph.D dissertation), Bonn, 1969; M. Nizamuddin, "Rhazes' magnum opus, 'al-Hawi,' or Continens," Indian Journal of the History of Medicine I (1956), pp. 51-56; G.S.A. Ranking, "The Life and Works of Rhazes." Proceedings of the Seventeenth International Congress of Medicine (London, 1913), pp. 237-68; H.P.J. Renaud, "A propos du millénaire de Rhazes," Bulletin de la société française d'histoire de la médecine (Mars-avril, 1931) 21, pp. 203-207; F. Rosenthal, "Ar-Râzî on the hidden illness," Bulletin of the History of Medicine 52 (1978), pp. 45-60; L.M. Sadi, "The Millenium of ar-Razi (Rhazes) (850-932 A.D.)," Annals of Medical History N.S. 7 (1935), pp. 62-72. Hakim Mohammad Said, "Razi and treatment through nutritive correction," Hamdard 19 (7-12, 1976), pp. 113-120; J. Schönfeld, "Zahntherapie im al-Hawi des ar-Rāzī." Proceedings of the XXIIIth Congress on the History of Medicine, vol. 2 (London, 1974), pp. 962-967; O. Temkin, "A Medieval translation of Rhazes' Clinical Observations," Bull. Hist. Med. (1942) 12, pp. 102-117; Lynn Thorndike, "Latin Manuscripts of works by Rasis at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris," Bulletin of the History of Medicine, 32 (1958), 54-67; M. Villaret and J. Hariz, "Le millénaire de Rhazis (Ar-Razi)," Proceedings of the 3rd International Congress for the History of Medicine (London, 1922), pp. 265-266. **(2)** In chemistry and pharmacology: A. Eisen, "Kimia al-Razi," RAAD, DIB 62/4; G. Heym, "Al-Râzî and alchemy," Ambix I (1938), pp. 184-191; M. Levey, "The al-Rāzī text on drug substitutes as a literary model," Studies in Islam 5 (1968), pp. 212-219 and "A note on embalming proceedures of al-Razi," Pharmacy in history 12(1979), p. 169; J. R. Partington, J.R., "The chemistry of Râzî," Ambix I (1938), pp. 192-196; J. Ruska, "Die Alchemie al-Rāzī's," Der Islam (1935), XXII pp. 283-319, "Pseudepigraphische Razis-Schriften," Osiris (1939) 7, pp. 31-94, "Al-Rāzī als Bahnbrecher einer neuer Chemie," Deutsche Literaturzeitung (1923) 44, pp. 118-24, "Al-Rāzī (Rhases) als Chemiker," Z. Angew. Chemie (1922) 35, pp. 719-721, "Uber den gegenwärtigen Stand der Razi-Forschung," Archivio di stori della scienza (1924) V, pp. 335-47, cf. Der Islam XXV (1938), p. 1 et seq. for comparison between Jabir and Razi; R. Winderlich, "Ruska's researches on the alchemy of Al-Razi," Journal of Chemical Education (1936) 13, pp. 313-315. **(3)** In philosophy: A.S. Bazmee Ansari, "Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Yahya al-Razi: Universal Scholar and Scientist," Islamic Studies 15 (1976), pp. 155-166 and "Philosophical and religious views of Muhammad ibn Zakariyya al-Rāzī," Islamic Studies 16 (1977), pp. 157-177; M. Gaudefroy-Demombynes, "Er Rāzi philosophe d'après des ouvrages récents," RHR 124 (1941), pp. 142-190; Goodman, Lenn Evan, "Philosophical Originality in the Thought of Muhammad Ibn Zakariya' ar-Razi," Proc. MESA (Columbus, 1970) and "Razi's Psychology," Philosophical Forum 41 (1972), pp. 26-48; M. Meyerhof, "The Philosophy of the Physician ar-Razi," Islamic Culture 15 (1941), pp. 45-58; Mahdi Mohaghegh, "The Shukūk of Rāzī against Galen and the problem of the eternity of the world," Proceedings of the 27th International Congress of Orientalists 1967 (1971), pp. 240-242 and "The title of a work of Razi with reference to al-Tī al-Nishaburī," Proceedings of the XXIII Int. Cong. of the History of Medicine vol. 2 (London, 1974), pp. 1073-1076; Salomon Pinès, "Appendice IV: Notes sur Abu Bakr al-Razi," Nouvelles Etudes sur Awhad al-zaman Abu-l-Barakat al-Baghdadi (Paris, 1955), pp. 55-61 and "Razi critique de Galen," Actes du VIIe Congrès International d'Histoire des Sciences (Paris, 1953).

63. D. Gutas, "Notes and Texts from Cairo Mss. I: Addenda to P. Kraus's Edition to Abu Bakr al-Rāzī's **al-Tibb al-ruhani**," Arabica XXIV (February, 1977), pp. 93. Gutas adds however that "the new variants do not offer much that is unquestionably preferable to the text in Kraus." (p. 93)

64. **Rasā'il falsafīyah** (Egypt: Fu'ād University, 1939). Most English passages from this book are henceforth taken from Arthur J. Arberry's translations. For **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, we have used his "Apologia Pro Vita Sua," in Aspects of Islamic Civilization: As Depicted in the Original Texts (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1964). For **Kitab al-tibb al-ruhani**, we have used his The Spiritual Physick of Rhazes (London: John Murray, 1950).

65. Duncan Black Macdonald, "Continuous re-creation and atomic time in Muslim scholastic theology," Isis, vol. 9 (1927), pp. 326-344.

66. In George F. Hourani, Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), pp. 25-46.

67. Studia Islamica XXXIV (1972), pp. 5-26.

68. **Mu'allafāt-o-musannafāt-i Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn-i Zakarīyā- Rāzī: Hakīm wa tabīb buzurg īrānī** (Tehran, 1339).

69. Jalāl Muhammad Mūsá, **Manhaj al-bahth al-ᶜilmī ᶜind al-ᶜarab fī majāl al-ᶜulūm al-ṭabīᶜīyah wa al-kawnīyah** (Beirut: Dār al-kitāb al-lubnānī, 1972), p. 154.

Chapter Two

KNOWLEDGE AND AUTHORITY

Razi's notion of **ʿaql** (reason or intellect) is central to his philosophy. One way in which he conveyed it was through the allegory of the fall of the self (**nafs**) transmitted by Abū Ḥātim in **Aʿlām al-nubūwah.** The ostensive aim of this account was to overcome, through allegory, the old philosophical dilemma of creation. The same theme was taken up by practically all the **falāsifah** and early politico-spiritual movements like al-Ikhwān al-Ṣafā; but it was his version which, at this early juncture in Islamic intellectual history, became a point of contention, especially with the Ismāʿīlīs. The reasons are not hard to find; the issues it deals with are fundamental to philosophy. His account both proves that the world was created -- not eternal -- and emphasizes the (salutary) purpose for which the **ʿaql** was sent down by the Creator. In this act of creation are implicated the five "pre-eternals" (**qudamāʾ**), namely, God, the self, space, time and matter. **ʿAql**, significantly, does not figure among them.[1]

Let us begin by summarizing briefly the basic elements and claims of his narration. First of all, it purports to illustrate how the world comes into being with the activity of the self through a process called **al-ḥarakatu al-faltīyah.**[2] The "self" (**nafs**) was moved by yearning (**shawkah**), a desire for matter. But she did not know the evil which awaited her. This evil was manifested in the form of material (**hayūla**) confusion and disorder, which frustrated her in her worldly pursuits. Thereupon, the Creator helped her in the actual creation of the world, moving her toward His Order, Justice and Mercy. He did this by sending the **ʿaql.** In this sense, the **ʿaql** on which the self must now rely for its salvation occurs both within spatial and temporal dimensions and yet emanates from no known human source. The Creator

sent it out of pity for the self's tribulations in a garden turned hellish as she enchantedly journeyed through it -- for Razi later used also the imagery of the garden and the playful child. In turn, the self needed to foresake her passions and to realize that her true home was not this world of impurity but another, a state of rest.

In Razi's mind, there is no denying that the self "created this world, and without this cause [i.e., the self desiring matter] there would not have been any world."[3] This allegory, he claimed, constituted the only convincing "argument" or **hujjah maqnaᶜah** against the eternity of the world,[4] since the cause of creation cannot be posited through argument or proof.[5] Such a "cause" may only be conveyed allegorically (the way Plato perhaps resorted to allegories) and by analogy. This is the only sense in which the world may be said "to come into being." In this manner, Razi appears to be operating on the principle that, didactically at least, "fictional" accounts can convey useful knowledge about the world. This idiom helps Razi achieve two things: explain the world's creation and delineate the role of **ᶜaql**, which must apprehend it in the first place. In other words, while the allegory purports to offer a counterargument to the claim that the world is eternal, it also seeks to alter our expectations about what constitutes genuine knowledge, since **ᶜaql** is also on the receiving end of this allegorical message. In this sense, it has an interesting self-reflexive character. But, as will become clearer in the course of this paper, this "didactic-theoretical" model is governed by a narrower pedagogical aim, one that is perhaps more evident in his other works. In these works, Razi's profoundly pedagogical and ethical, rather than purely ontological, concerns come clearly into view. The self's journey back from "material confusion" --if we are permitted to use this term in a different context than that of the allegory -- is charted out in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, but this time through ethical argumentation.

We shall see how this is done, and examine the interesting points made by Goodman on this score. In this new context, it is medicine -- taken in its broadest sense -- which mediates the self's return from the world of matter or, if we are speaking discursively, its relationship to the material world.

Kalām and the problem of creation

Although the crucial element in the allegory is **ʿaql**, this did not lead Razi in quite the same direction as, say, Greek rationalism. His singular emphasis on the intellect nevertheless turned out to be the major source of contention which helped brand him as a philosopher beholden to "heretical" ideas, often in spite of his admitted medical abilities. It may also be added that his most outspoken detractors were often themselves far removed from the mainstream of Islamic thought. His critics were likely to belong to conspiratorial sects of the Ismāʿīlī persuasion whose leaders routinely dubbed anyone opposed to their teachings as a **mulḥid** or worse. This treatment, it may be recalled, was reserved even for the famous **mutakallim**, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī.[6] Jettisoning usual niceties, Razi's contemporary and namesake, Abū Ḥātim, could not even bring himself in his book to refer to our philosopher by name, but simply as **al-mulḥid**. A similar opinion was many years later echoed by the eminent poet, Nāṣir-e Khusraw and other, more mainstream figures. While Khusraw belonged to the same movement of initiates, Ibn al-Ḥazm and the famous Jewish physician and philosopher, Ibn Maymūn, did not.

All these attempts to refute Razi have nevertheless had the fortunate result of giving us valuable, if often highly skewed, accounts of his ideas. Where these fragments cannot be evaluated against any of his original texts, they at least give us an idea of the constellation of issues with which he was concerned, ranging from the relationship between the self and matter, to

the problems of space and time, creation and prophethood. We are indebted especially to Kraus and Pinès for having unearthed many valuable quotations which once lay buried in forgotten manuscripts,[7] some of which are alleged to be from his major philosophical work on **al-ᶜilm al-ilāhī**. Apart from a few quotations, this last work is now all but lost.[8] Pinès' separate study, which is based on their findings, was the first philosophical treatment of Razi's physical and metaphysical thought in the West.

Pinès tried to prove that Razi ought to be regarded as a good representative, in the era of Islam, of the Democritean school, which proved significant for the whole **kalām** movement. Although modern scholars are divided on its modality according to Democritus,[9] the notion of the "indivisible part" (**al-juz' al-ladhy lā yatajazza'**), namely, the atom or **atomos** (lit. "uncuttable" in Greek), was heatedly argued over by many of the early **mutakallimīn**. Two of the earliest **kalām** sources for "Islamic atomism" were the Muᶜtazilīs al-Hudhayl -- who denied that atoms had extension, a view later accepted by most[10] -- and al-Balkhī. They were opposed by al-Nazzām, who held a position similar to that of Simplicius that the body contained parts that were infinitely divisible. Pinès observed that a major difference separating **kalam** from Democritean atomism centers on Democritus' assertion that matter (**māddah**) which,

> just like the separate substances (**al-jawāhir al-afrād**) of which it is constituted, has special fundamental particuliarities bringing about its existence which are called 'primary qualities' (**al-safāt al-awwalīyah**) in common usage. Whereas in all probability among the **mutakallimīn**, at least according to the chain of opinions extending from Abū al-Hudhayl, Muᶜammar and Hishām al-Fūtī up to the Ashᶜaris who succeeded the Muᶜtazilis of Baghdad, the attributes -- assuming them to be a kind of existence apart -- differed from the substances that are separate from the totality of qualities up to the primary among them."[11]

Historically speaking, all teaching on atoms and matter alike was, for the most part, frowned upon by religious authorities. The reason is

atomism's close association with Epicurus' and Lucretius' "anti-religious" tendencies. Epicurus' own attitude, however, is perhaps more aptly described as "anti-superstitious," his main concern having been to ensure the "tranquility" (**ataraxia**) of the soul. By giving all the importance to the gods and their whims, popular superstitions were said to disturb internal peace.[12] To dispel people's unfounded fears, he contended that the gods were wholly unconcerned with human afairs. Teachings promising an afterlife of frightful punishments were thus shorn away from the main concerns of the mundane world, which became, in effect, eternal. This aspect of his thought naturally did not endear him to Christian theologians, even if his emphasis on "tranquility" passed on to them anyway, and was reflected in Boethius' idea of the "consolation of philosophy."

In short, atomism proved a useful weapon against the superstitious beliefs that plagued the Graeco-Roman world. Despite its negative reputation, it was wholeheartedly adopted in modified form by the **mutakallimīn**, not in order to renounce but, on the contrary, to reaffirm God's creative power. Razi lived at a time when Mu^{c}tazili[13] doctrines, in particular, were still fairly widespread. A quick glance at the titles of works ascribed to him by al-Nadīm indicates that he carried on an extended debate with this school, refuting the theses of several of its prominent figures and composing general doctrinal critiques, such as his "Criticism and a Frank Statement About the Mu^{c}tazilah."[14] His targets included Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī (d. 319/931), who was head of the Baghdādī Mu^{c}tazilis[15] and alleged critic of his concept of time.[16] The other leading figures he debated from the same school were al-Jāhiz,[17] al-Nashī[18] and al-Misma^{c}ī.[19] Some of these men were associated with an obscure figure known as Abā al-^{c}Abbās al-Iranshahrī (later mentioned by Razi's critic, Nāsir-e Khusraw), who, just like Abū al-Qāsim, may very well have come from Balkh.[20] Khusraw claimed

both Razi and al-Irānshahrī belonged to a school of thought known as **ahl al-hayūlā**.[21] Interestingly, al-Bīrūnī related that, although exceptionally well versed in all scriptural traditions, al-Irānshahrī belonged to no particular religion but, in fact, created his own school of thought.[22]

The Muslims' interest in atomism and the question of the world's creation grew out of the early **mutakallimūn**'s singular theological focus on the nature of the human act and its ancillary themes, such as "freedom" and "determinism." Razi, no less than the **mutakallimūn**, was deeply preoccupied with the question, as will become clear. Unfortunately, aside from generalities, his doctrines are not so easily identifiable. As for the roots of his ideas, Pinès has drawn some interesting thematic parallels between his and the Ḥarrānites' account of creation through the self's attachment to matter. It may be added that the Ḥarrānites inherited a good deal of Hellenic culture, especially what learning was transplanted by Athenian refugees and remnants of the "medical school of Alexandria" that was finally transferred to Antioch in the eighth century CE. What is striking about their doctrines is the claim that being manifested itself only through the self's association with matter. This throws into relief an ethical dimension otherwise easily lost in explanatory cosmological theories. It was thus consonant with the **mutakallimūn**'s own fundamental concern to elucidate the ethical parameters rather than the physical origin of the world, as today conceived perhaps. And the express purpose of Razi's allegory was to place a bulwark against what he called the **dahrīyah** argument for the eternity of the world, because of the latter's unacceptable ethical implications; it was not to propose a literal account of its creation.

The roots of "epistemological revelationism"

Razi's concern to furnish an effective argument against the eternity of the world, a doctrine after all closely associated with the rationalistic orthodoxy of the Greeks, does not quite tally with his alleged "rationalism." This point is almost lost in the account given by Abū Ḥātim of Razi's views. What instead transpires from this text is an equally strong concern to repudiate any position relying on "revelation" to prove its truth claims. Aside from the polemical reasons enumerated by Abū Ḥātim, Razi must have felt that such a position failed adequately to defend against the **dahrīyah.**

The conspicuous role played by the Ismā^{c}īlīs as Razi's critics reflects a common preoccupation with these two traditional poles. In his work, Pinès used, besides Nāṣir-e Khusraw's and al-Bīrūnī's writings, Abū Ḥātim's detailed account of his debates with our philosopher, but fails adequately to address himself to its two principal themes, **nubūwah** and **imāmah.** His study seems more inspired by modern philosophy of science than by any effort to discover the real motives behind Razi's pronouncements on "time" and "space" in the first place. He briefly explains that the Ismā^{c}īlīs tried to defend "prophethood" against Greek philosophy.[23] On Abū Ḥātim's account alone, one does in fact get the impression that Razi represented Greek philosophy in a somewhat new garb, which philosophy Abū Ḥātim devoted long sections of **A^{c}lam al-nuūwah** to prove utterly inconsistent because based on speculation and surmise. But Pinès' assumption is problematic. By reducing everything to two adversarial positions -- that is, Islamic "prophetic" and the Hellenic "philosophical" traditions -- he is simply rehashing a longstanding view about Islam's rapport with the Greek school and, for that matter, other traditions. In order to get a clearer idea, we need to examine the configuration of issues

that have come within the purview of early Islamic thinkers from classical times and to trace the nature of their impact in the areas outlined above.

i) Late antiquity: As we suggested, then, the complex character of this formative period in Islamic intellectual history cannot be accounted for in the simple terms proposed by Pinès. We shall argue that one way in which the early Ismā'īlīs tried to ward off the ineluctable influence of Greek philosophy was, ironically enough, by adopting alternative Greek models rooted in that tradition itself -- or the Neo-Pythagorean and Neo-Platonic models, to be more precise. Neo-Platonism, in general, is especially noted for its conscious effort to express its cosmogony without breaching God's utter transcendence and oneness. However, the other major ingredient of this intellectual "antidote" against Greek "rationalism," neo-pythagoreanism, allowed the early Ismā'īlīs to weave together their arithmetological doctrine of the **imāmah**. In this latter respect, the affinities are very striking indeed. However, in this chapter, we are interested not so much in the philosophy as the authority model propagated. Let us cursorily review some of the conditions which gave rise to this model in late antiquity.

As we mentioned in the introduction, Plato's writings were meticulously examined in the late classical period, leading to a progresive narrowing of focus onto the linguistic side of his cosmogonic arguments, especially those found in the Timaeus, his most controversial work. In this book, Plato served a warning that not only was his account of the physical world merely a "likely story," but that it was possible to speak of the world's "beginning" only metaphorically. He believed that words like "before" and "previously," unavoidable in any account of creation, can be used in non-temporal senses.[24] A certain degree of ambivalence in the language of the Timaeus, nonetheless,

bedevilled generations of commentators. Aristotle demurred, preferring to take him literally; but this interpretation eventually lost ground among the Neo-Platonist and Christian commentators.[25]

Razi's own knowledge of the Timaeus and commentaries on it by Galen and Proclus[26] brought him closer to this controversy. He was probably also acquainted with the intellectual current with which the Christians were associated in the late classical period. Medico-philosophy's universe of discourse to which he was heir, evolved largely on the stimulus of this pervasive interest in cosmogony during this intellectually restless period. In the cosmogonic debate, the Christians had developed a new creationist position, to which Philoponus later gave its final form. But their challenge probably further aggravated an already deepening gulf between traditional rationalism and a growing revelationist bias, although the decline of Greek philosophical "rationalism," having simply devoured itself,[27] had set in long ago. Classicists often point to the levelling effect of the skeptical movement as the major intellectual cause of a spiritual void that led to the unparalleled surge in quasi-religious cults later witnessed. Ironically, Sextus Empiricus' ties with the empirical school of medicine -- one of the three schools probably intended by Ishāq b. Ḥunayn in his short history of medicine[28] -- reflected what was historically perhaps the most fertile aspect of the relationship between philosophy and medicine. One example of the views he shared with that school related to the suspension of judgement on causes (of diseases).[29] Generally speaking, his movement proved of beneficial value in a scientific sense, even if elsewhere its overall effect seemed deleterious.

Many scholars today view the general trend toward mystery devotion which followed as merely symptomatic of a headlong plunge into "irrationalism."[30] Once the intellect is demonstrated, at any rate, to be less than rationally

impeccable, the natural tendency is to opt for some form of epistemological revelationism. The contents of "revelation" thus become more appealing and more readily acceptable on faith alone[31]; and this tended to promote priestcraft. It is not difficult to see how the Pythagorean idea of the Great Sage -- whose role somewhat paralleled Ismā'īlī notions of the imāmah-- became popularized. Revived in the sixth century CE, the Pythagorean mystery cults sought an order in which all discussion ceased with the invocation of their famous formula of "The Master has spoken."[32] "Pythagoras" was a kind of title given to a number of legendary figures, from Apollo the Healer to Hermes' Son; in the Muslim era he was taken for a "monotheistic" sage who hailed from Ḥarrān.[33] The movement also had an elaborate system of beliefs and practices which were taught, for example, by Apollonius of Tyana, who happened to be revered as a "prophet." Their gospel was absolutely impervious to demonstration, and had to be simply accepted. This was their central demand. Among their articles of faith were that all men were evil and the most sacred thing was the purple leaf. Others concerned abstinence from certain nutrients, sacrifice to the gods and the quest to acquire a good **daimon** (that is, a good and virtuous soul) in order to achieve **eidaimonia** (happiness).[34] Every duty was not only precisely defined but guarded as a secret by the initiates. One knew how and what to eat, how to enter a temple, the duties of procreation and the requirements of strict hygiene.

Many of these teachings originated from distant places and cultures, of course. The infiltration of prophetic ideas, especially, and the attempt to accommodate them in a cultural matrix that knew no "prophets," probably created deep-seated tensions. But even the allegories contained in Plato's Timaeus and other dialogues were "pythagoreanized." The Pythagoreans, however, attempted to give a decidedly religious twist to cosmogonic theories which depicted the organization of the world, the nature of the soul and the

body and the myriad natural creations. By granting even those theories to which Plato more prudently had given the taint of probability the force of revealed knowledge, they were prepared to confer the same authority to radically different forms of knowing. The typically Hellenic mould within which the mystery cults of late antiquity had grown often over-intellectualized what may very well have been a perfectly genuine spiritual consciousness.

ii) The source of ᶜaql: It is noteworthy that the quasi-religious doctrines of the Neo-Pythagoreanism were having their greatest impact on the Muslims just when the politico-religious debate on **nubūwah** and the **imāmah** was coming to a head. The translation and gathering activities of **bayt al-ḥikmah** under Hārūn al-Rashīd and al-Ma'mūn by Razi's time had already given way to intellectual synthesis. These developments found their institutional moorings in the more public **dār al-ᶜilm,**[35] as political and epistemological issues affected increasing numbers of people -- certainly more than just a few court scholars or the coterie of Ismāᶜīlī devotees who consciously set out to assimilate foreign learning. Sectarian impulses were only to be expected in times of such profound intellectual transformation. However, the model of revelation with which many Ismāᶜīlīs came to be associated was inherently unstable, and managed to compound the differences. As we said, what is relevant to our purpose in the present discussion is not the philosophical content of their doctrines as such: the Ismāᶜīlīs were impelled by a search for a justification of revelation,[36] the key to which was the Intellect, but we are more interested in the model of authority to which their ideas gave rise. For no matter how authoritative the alleged source of revelation or compelling the mathematical proof, it still provoked severe politico-theological altercations which even the universalistic veneer

of **dār al-ᶜilm** later under the Fāṭimids could not hide for long.

Judging from the repertory of books and treatises to his name, Razi was not one to defer opinion on any important matters.[37] Naturally, he rose to the challenge posed by this doctrine of prophethood. But that his well-known skepticism concerning the version of prophetism propounded by certain of his contemporaries makes him an eccentric thinker in Islam is problematic for several reasons. For one thing, taken in an intellectual sense, the potent doctrine of **ilhām** ("divine inspiration") -- a term to which, incidentally, he tried to impart precise meaning in Abū Ḥātim's **Aᶜlām al-nubūwah** -- did not escape the close scrutiny of many others, including the most mystically-oriented. We learn from the fourth century Ṣūfī shaykh, Abū al-Ḥasan ᶜAlī b. ᶜUthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwīrī, for example, that

> La connaissance fournit un critère pour distinguer la vérité de l'erreur, tandis que ceux qui sont inspirés ne possèdent pas un tel critère. Si quelqu'un dit: "Je sais par inspiration que Dieu est dans l'espace" et qu'un autre dise: "Je sais par inspiration qu'Il n'est pas dans l'espace," l'une de ces affirmations doit être vraie, mais une preuve est nécessaire afin de décider de la vérité. En conséquence, cette opinion qui est soutenue par les brahmanes et ceux qui se fondent sur l'inspiration (**ilhâmiyân**), est fausse.[38]

"**Barāhimah**" was a catch-word which emphasized the foreign -- probably Greek or Sassanian -- character of any doctrine deemed incompatible with the core teachings of Islam. But the task of filtering all of the ideas that were coming into circulation in this early period was also taken up by non-Muslims anxious to defend <u>their</u> religion against the encroachments of Greco-Roman thought. For certain classical currents had found ways to flaunt the "prophetic" origin of their claims. We encountered this in the case of Neo-Pythagoreanism, but other more rationalistic schools also ventured in this direction. The eminent scholar Ibn al-Maymūn (1134 CE) presented an interesting refutation of Galen's curious claim to prophetic knowledge, arguing that his otherwise profound observations "on some utilities of the

organs" pushed his conceit to such excesses that "he pretended to be a prophet and said that an angel came to him from God and taught him such and such (a thing) and ordered him such and such (an action)."[39] Galen, he charged, compared himself to Moses, though he arrogated to himself even higher knowledge.

Al-Maymūn's line of argument carefully distinguished between Galen's own characterization of Moses' knowledge -- imperfect because based on God's totally arbitrary will -- and true prophetic knowledge, which he argued was not conducive to a belief in the eternity of the world; for Galen's conception had led to the conclusion that there are things evidently impossible for God to do or to create.[40] That God may still do what He wills implies for al-Maymūn precisely that the world is not eternal; and the world is not eternal because God can do what he wills, without this ever having the same "possibilistic" connotation ascribed to it by Galen. That prophetic knowledge is incompatible with "possibilism" becomes then a central plank in this epistemology. The alternative is to put the human mind in the place of God.

Knowledge and authority

The fact that Galen's ideas were at all considered philosophically by Islamic scholars only testifies to medicine's commanding position in philosophy. As we just saw, this did not imply acceptance of his ideas by religious scholars any more than by Razi himself. Interestingly, it was Razi's pivotal role as one of Galen's earliest Muslim critics, together with Ibn Ridwān's later response in defence of Galen, which induced al-Maymūn in the first place to propose his views on the inconsistencies in Galen's philosophical musings.[41]

Razi's case nevertheless is less clearcut than that of al-Maymūn.

Unfortunately, what details we have about his philosophy are drawn from secondary, often hostile sources who painted an image of him that stuck into modern times. All in all, a "conventional wisdom" has been built up about him nourished from widely differing sources. But all seem basically to agree on one thing: his supposed adulation of reason at the expense of prophetic knowledge. Ironically, what was once harmful to his reputation seems to recommend him today among certain intellectuals. Yet if there is no doubt that the problem of the intellect figured prominently in his overall philosophy, a closer look at the objections raised by the Ismā^{c}īlī to his version of the creation allegory reveals a complex picture, where two distinct elements appear, namely, knowledge and authority.

The self's journey from the world of impurity to a higher, purer state clearly ties the emergence of ^{c}aql to the journey of self-purification. The main issue between Razi and Abū Ḥātim was neither the legitimacy of using ^{c}aql nor the latter's ultimate source, which was freely admitted by both to be the Creator Himself. We must ask, then, why had Razi's account of the self's attachment to matter and subsequent "fall" aroused the strong criticism of his Ismā^{c}īlī opponents?

Significantly, most of these opponents rejected altogether the very notion of a "fall" of the self, taking him to task for his allegedly pessimistic portrayal of the Soul-Matter relationship. Al-Jurjānī, for one, spoke of the essence of Nature as belonging to the original creation, but manifesting itself in this world of becoming. The materialized part of that substance emanates from the Intellect to the Self.[42] Thanks to this materialization in the form of physical bodies, which collectively comprise Nature, the Self finds a "screen," as Corbin puts it, and its own reflection.[43] The Ismā^{c}īlīs did not generally think that the Self was seduced by Nature.[44] Khosraw denied the catastrophic result depicted by Razi

of the Self's unification with Matter, and believed that the Self was produced by the Intellect and Nature by the Self. We may note here that Khusraw differs substantially from what Shahrastānī says about the Ismā'īlīs; according to him they held that

> l'Ame est, par rapport à l'intellect, comme le sperme par rapport à l'organisme achevé, l'oeuf par rapport à l'oiseau; ou bien comme le fils par rapport à son père, le produit par rapport au producteur, ou bien [encore] comme la femelle par rapport au mâle, l'épouse par rapport à l'époux.[45]

According to Khusraw, in order to produce its Forms, it need not succumb to but only contemplate Matter. The reason is that -- and here he draws a crucial distinction -- it is not the Self but the partial or individualized selves which have been seduced. Al-Jurjānī, too, rejected the notion of fall, but emphasized forgetfulness as the prime reason for the resulting disorder. Nature remained for him the Self's primary organ in its contemplation; but the Self forgets, and takes its contemplated images for the independent reality in which it is embodied.[46] In spite of all, the Self must incline toward Nature and the opaque world, even at the risk of forgetting its own nobility and beauty, in order to reach its goal of self-consciousness,[47] which alone holds the hope of its spiritual deliverance.

At first glance, these issues seem rather abstruse. They nonetheless reflect different notions of the nature of human activity in the world.[48] Corbin's summary conclusion is to the effect that, whereas the Ismā'īlīs regarded the physical manifestation as the only way that the Self could achieve transcendance,[49] Razi's anti-materialism amounted to an unnuanced, wholesale rejection. One easily finds evidence of this in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥanī**, which was certainly written in an ascetic frame of mind. But Corbin's argument is unconvincing, especially in view of Razi's single-minded insistence -- in the same text furnished by Abū Ḥātim -- on the "usefuless" that knowledge must display above any claimed truth value. Indeed Razi's

position at times comes perilously close to being "utilitarian," in both **Aʿlām al-nubūwah** and his ethical treatise. It points anyway in an entirely different direction than that indicated by Corbin.

What is more important is that Corbin overlooks the important link between this response and the specific context that gave rise to it in the first place. The idea was to circumvent the authoritarian implications of his opponent's position. In **Aʿlām al-nubūwah**, after all, his entire position is staked in response to Abū Ḥātim's proddings about the necessary "guidance" and "superiority" of the few. Much of the book's later discussion revolves around, literally, the question of the **aʿlām** ("signs") by which prophethood is recognizable. Abū Ḥātim holds to the tenet that all genuine knowledge must be referred back to at least one of the prophets -- which has the effect of denying that anything "new" is possible. Razi, on the other hand, hoped precisely to get around, in his definition of knowledge at least, the idea of inherent superiority, whether of the prophet, the **imām** or, for that matter, any other person; failing which certain authoritarian implications would follow and personal initiative be pre-empted.But for the moment we shall leave aside the question of equal potential, which is what he was in effect arguing in this text.

His exact reply to Abū Ḥātim's query about what God's Wisdom and Justice entailed, if not a knowledge that also raised one person above the other, was that they required that He inspire (**ilhām**) His servants "with knowledge of what is useful and what is harmful to them in this world and the next."[50] This, one would suppose, is his contribution to the search for recognizable "signs" (or **aʿlām**), as indeed the title of the book purports to indicate. However, it is the larger question of authority, rather than the use of **ʿaql** as such, which prompts Abū Ḥātim to take his opponent's position as tantamount to an outright rejection of prophethood. The kind of

"authority" that arises in this instance hardly allows for the arbitrary judgement on which Razi takes his opponent's position to be wholly dependent. Razi asserts that each religious sect pretends to be in possession of truth, though their doctrines be mutually contradictory. Believing itself to have been chosen by God, each group feels compelled to denounce the others, not on the basis of reason but imitation (**taqlīd**) alone, which in turn leads to an overbearing form of authority. Razi reserved his scorn especially for those who worshipped authority for its own sake,[51] and pointed to the consequences of blindly following leaders and **imāms**. "Whence do you [get your assertion]," he asks Abū Ḥātim,

> that it is necessary that God should have chosen [**ikhtassa**] a people [**qawm**], by [conferring] prophethood upon them rather than upon another, rendering them superior to the commonfolk [**al-nās**], making them their guides and causing people to be in need of them. [Furthermore], what in the Wisdom of He Who is Wise permits you [to claim] that He must to select this for them, to cause them to fall out among each other, to reinforce the enmity between them, to increase strife and thus bring about their destruction.[52]

Unfortunately we shall never really know his exact position in the absence of more direct textual evidence. Among the works listed under Razi's name by al-Nadīm are such titles as "Refutation of al-Khayyāl in Connection With the Imamate," "Signs of the Illustrious, Pure Imām," "The Imām, the Led and Those Who Know the Truth."[53] If indeed written by him, they indicate a keen interest in the question of the **imāmah**, although such a question cannot be settled by relying on the seemingly "utilitarian" position adopted in Abū Ḥātim's account.

Another aspect, alluded to above, relates to his egalitarian inclination. It prompts Abū Ḥātim to point to a self-contradiction. Abū Ḥātim indeed argues that Razi himself needed to presuppose the very same principle of **imāmah** he thought he had disproved, whenever he credited himself with having improved upon the ancient philosophers -- as he claimed to do,

for example, through his theory of the five eternals. His point decisively brings into focus the relationship between the problem of knowledge and authority. Briefly, Razi denied that his abilities bestowed upon him any unique superiority; and while Abū Ḥātim, as we found, had to refer all genuine knowledge to at least one of the prophets, Razi established his position in his reply to Abū Ḥātim's question -- of whether or not people possessed **ʿaql**, **himmah** and **fitnah** in equal amounts -- by saying that, in fact, they were attainable by each person, but only through hard work.[54] This is consistent with what Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī has related about our philosopher, notably that he has "transmitted from the ancient philosophers, and particularly from Plato, that all human souls are equal in substance and quiddity, although they varied in their functions due to differences in the organs."[55] This implies that he considered their differences to be purely accidental. However, we also know from **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** that he acknowledged that "there must of necessity be some men that are the chiefs and kings, wealthy and of great possessions... "[56] He held that "the laws of logic" required that "opinions about whose soundness no doubt is to be entertained are those commonly held either by all or the majority or the wisest."[57] At the apex of this hierarchy of wisdom were philosophers, such as Socrates and Plato, whom he considered as his "**imāms**."[58]

Razi indeed idealized the activity of the philosophers, who, he said, should occupy themselves with the study of philosophy and persevere and strive in it. If they excel in the knowledge of their predecessors and what they have said, they will discover new things through their own intelligence and surpass them.[59] Abū Ḥatim devoted a sizable section of his book precisely to show that it was philosphers, not religious followers, who could not agree on anything, and that they were certainly not more but less privy to truth than the followers of religion whom Razi vilified. He tried to do

this by establishing that religions are internally harmonious, insofar as they agree on essential principles. Furthermore -- and this is his retort-- if the object of studying philosophy is to arrive at truth and to abandon falsehood,[60] then any hint of progress or improvement in philosophy is tantamount to an admission of falsehood and error. How can knowledge be true and yet require improvement?

Razi denied that improvement from one generation to the next in philosophy implied "error" or **dalāl**. If one struggled and undertook theoretical study and investigation, he claimed, one was sure to be on the path of truth, **tarīq al-haqq**.[61] He obviously did not accept the contemplative idea of truth prevalent among those of more Aristotelian bent.[62]

> If the student studies and, because of it, perceives something, even though in the smallest amount, he would both purify himself from... the impurities and escape.[63]

Whoever studies and makes the effort is a **muhaqqiq**,[64] "even if he does not reach," he insists, "the outer limit or goal of what you've depicted... because persons cannot be purified except through study and investigation."[65] But no one can either purify himself nor escape from this world except through **ʿaql** or reason.

Therefore, while his doctrinal position on **imāmah** cannot really be established with any certainty, this may be of little consequence. It does not appear that **imāmah** as a principle was really at issue, neither in this text nor in his ethical treatise. His position seems to be that **imāmah** in a broad sense, at least, is acceptable. Rather, his real target is the particular implication which flowed from what he accuses religious zealots of propagating, namely, **taqlīd** as an absolute model for knowledge. He sharply distinguished between knowledge as an expression of a created entity (**ʿaql**) and that which is nothing more than **kharafāt** or nonsense which the claims

of the religious dogmatist must be dismissed as. One is acquired by effort and unfolds together with authority; the other is imposed by fiat.

Al-Fārābī and the knowledge-authority nexus:

Recently, Prof. Walker has shown that, if Razi entertained any interest at all in elucidating political principles, it remains a muted aspect of his thought.[66] Mahdi's claim that he was not a political thinker at all,[67] however, seems hardly tenable, judging from the evidence we have seen above from **Aʿlām al-nubūwah** and al-Nadīm's listing of works specifically devoted to the issue of the **imāmah.** We have seen how this elusive dimension in his thought revolved around the knowledge-authority nexus so central to most of Islam's religious altercations. The paucity of direct references, though, forces us to look elsewhere in order to corroborate this. We shall, therefore, consider the relationship between knowledge and authority through al-Fārābī. His more voluminous corpus of writings provides ample evidence for political thought in Islam.

Debate over the relationship between knowledge and authority goes back to the initial political dispute over succession that occurred in the first period of Islamic history. More than any other single factor, the subsequent elaboration of a "theory of knowledge" by Islamic scholars helped determine the way in which they viewed virtually every other issue, and thus that of succession.[68] Before Razi's lifetime, the Muʿtazilis' philosophical preoccupation with the nature of the act of creation, both human and Divine, led to the realization that if legitimate order were indeed possible after the passing of the Last Messenger, it required the exercise of reason to some degree or other. The Muʿtazilis' unique distinction lay in having placed the accent on the moral value of <u>voluntary</u> acts and on assuring the validity of new moral laws. No longer was "revelation" indispensable either for

acquiring knowledge of these laws or for establishing a moral order.[69] Rather, it was an historical fact, intimately tied to man's moral development. But mature reason, they also affirmed, was able to reach the first truths "unaided" in cicumstances unrelated to historical development. The proof was that peoples (such as the ancient Greeks) who have not had the benefit of revealed scriptures were still capable of establishing a moral order.

These somewhat tenuous theories found echo to some extent in al-Fārābī, whose "absolutely first chief" was not directed in any matter by others, but obtained all knowledge by himself.[70] The interesting feature about his "theory of knowledge" is that while the instrumental role played by knowledge in establishing political authority was affirmed, one had also conversely to ask what role the authority -- more specifically, the imāmate authority-- which knowledge helped institute itself played in determining that knowledge.[71] He groped for a unifying principle which could bring all the different considerations implied in this within a single focus. "It had become clear," he said, "that the meaning of philosopher, first chief, king, legislator and imam are all one."[72] Politics, law and philosophy, in other words, were all part of the same riddle. It must further be added that he was also keen to emphasize that pure "demonstrative reason" had no place above prophetic knowledge, and that **hikmah** (or philosophical wisdom) was superior both to demonstrative reason and to the law itself, though only as knowledge of divine truth.[73] He was not referring here to mere human intelligence or **hikmah basharīyah.** Man's highest perfection is union with the Active Intelligence. And the goal of **hikmah,** as the famous philosophical maxim goes, is the "imitation of God as far as humanly possible."

Al-Fārābī's whole purpose in all of this was to show that knowledge of the highest order was still attainable, even though the prophetic faculty as

such was, in a sense, no longer operative in any literal sense. He gave eloquent expression to an ardent desire to prove indeed that knowledge, though it be less than perfect -- certainly, less faultless than that of a Prophet -- was possible for the human mind. He did this within a framework, which allowed for a coherent division between a prophetic and a "post-prophetic" period, so to speak.

A dynamic conception was thus in the making, for the problem was not reducible to a merely epistemological dimension; it brought within its compass the whole world of human activity. "The intellectual virtues which the philosopher has acquired," he remarked in his **Tahṣīl al-saʿādah,**

> are useless if he does not have the power to bring them into existence [my emphasis] with respect to everything besides himself in the way possible to it. And it is impossible for him to seek to actualize the circumstances and conditions (necessary) for the actual existence of the volitional intelligibles **(al-maʿqulat al-iradiyyah)** without reflective virtue and... excellent capacity for persuasion and imagination... [74]

He described the "perfect philosopher"

> in the absolute sense... [as] he who acquires the speculative sciences and has the power to utilize them with respect to everything besides himself in the way possible to it... the intellectual virtues which the philosopher has acquired are useless if he does not have the power to bring them into existence with respect to everything besides himself in the way possible to it. (p. 56)

Fazlur Rahman described this as a "doctrine of interdependence of theory and practice."[75] "It results," he explained, "in a type of pragmatism which says that true philosophy must be workable in history, and conversely, that that which has successfully worked in history must be true philosophically."[76] The "king-imam" is such whether he is recognized or not; but his true identity as a "king-imam" cannot be established if none of the conditions for success outlined actually obtain. In **Tahṣīl al-saʿādah,** al-Fārābī asserts that

> The real philosopher is such as has been described in these pages.

> If, even though he is a perfect philosopher, people do not benefit from him, this is not through a fault of his but because of those who do not listen to him and those who do not think it proper that he should be listened to. The king-imām then is such by virtue of his essence and his art, irrespective of whether he finds people who would accept him or not, whether he is obeyed or not, whether he finds a people who co-operate with him in realizing his purpose or not, just as a physician is such by his essence and his art and by his ability to treat the sick, irrespective of whether he finds patients or not, can obtain suitable instruments for his work or not, be he poor or rich. But, just as in the case of the physician, it cannot be absolutely established whether he is a real physician or a seeming one, except if some of these factors obtain, similarly, the imamate of an imam, the philosophy of a philosopher and the rulership of a king is never beyond doubt unless he can procure instruments to use in his work and people whose service he can use to the achievement of his ends.[77]

This rather than the compelling but sterile dream -- or, worse, delusion--of a single individual, isolated from the rest of humanity, is what animates his whole scheme.[78] Moreover, it corresponded to other, more orthodox formulations offered by later **mutakallimūn**, who believed that knowledge remained incomplete until it was acted upon.[79] Moreover, al-Fārābī in this way was able to give recognition to practical questions, which is not to say that the ideal city he envisioned was a place where the material considerations of life predominated. The state of **saʿādah** in which its inhabitants lived was signalled by **ittiṣāl** with the Active Intellect,[80] indicating rather an "immaterial" state, as it suggested an otherworldly abode.[81] Yet the perfect king- or philosopher-imām personified the perfectly virtuous human community, and any beatific vision he attained or knowledge produced did not exist in disembodied form, but in a manner that was easily transposable to the social matrix within which ordinary human activity took place. This scheme tried to maintain the radical difference between transcendent reality and the material world without severing their relationship.

Razi's ethical treatise is based on similar presuppositions. There,

just as in the first text we have examined above, he elaborates the theme that the soteriological value of intellectual activity and the knowledge it procured derive from their primordial task of teaching man above all what is beneficial to him. Moreover, by reformulating the task of knowledge primarily in terms of helping man endure the journey to his final destination, he infuses eschatological significance into every human activity, down to the lowest. There is an exceedingly subtle link between "health" in this world and "happiness" in the next.

NOTES

1. Kraus has noted that, common both to antiquity and Razi's contemporaries, the idea of reducing everything down to five basic principles or elements of course was not unusual. Among the ancients who postulated five basic principles or elements are Aristotle himself, Porphyry, Empedocles. Jābir Ibn Ḥayyān claimed that the last mentioned had given five "substantial eternals" as the principles of all things created: The First Substance, Matter, Form, Time and Space. Other sources, however, provide a different version: namely, Prime Matter, Intelligence, Soul, Nature and Corporeal Matter. Al-Kindī, too, had his version, listing Matter, Form, Movement, Space and Time. (Paul Kraus, Jābir Ibn Ḥayyān: Contribution à l'histoire des idées scientifiques dans l'Islam (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1986), p. 137. Razi acknowledged that the idea of the "five pre-eternals" was used by the Greeks before Aristotle. (Cf. **"Al-qawl fī al-qudamā' al-khamsah,"** in **Rasā'il**, p. 195). His own position was examined by several thinkers, including: **(1)** al-Bīrūnī, **Kitāb al-tahqīq mā lil-hind min muqawlah maqbūlah fī al-ʿaql aw al-marthūlah** (p. 123; see also E. Sachau, Albêrûnî's India I, (London, 1910, p. 319). In this work, al-Bīrūnī analyzed his concepts of time (**zamān**) and duration (**dahr**) in connection with the creation of the world, and also attributes his five eternals to the ancient Greeks:

> The ancient Greeks considered five things eternal. These are: the Creator, the Universal Soul (**al-nafs al-kullīyah**), primordial matter (**hayūlā**), absolute space (**al-makān al-mutlaq**) and absolute time (**al-zaman al-mutlaq**). He [i.e., Abū Bakr] based his thought on this statement. (Cited in Abdulaziz Shamsuddin Talbani, "The Debate About Prophecy in `**Kitāb Aʿlām al-Nubūwah**': An Analytical Study," M.A. Thesis, The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, November 1987, p. 56.)

(2) Ibn Taymīyah, taqā al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Halīm, **Kitāb minhāj al-sunnah al-nabawīyah** I (Tabʿah Miṣr, 1321), p. 97. **(3)** Fakhr al-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Rāzī (d. 606 H), **Kitāb muḥassal afkār al-mutaqaddimīn wa al-mutaʾakhirīn min al-ʿulamā' al-ḥukamā' al-mutakallimīn** (Maṭbaʿah al-Ḥasanīyah al-Miṣrīyah, 1323 H), pp. 85-6. **(4)** Najm al-Dīd ʿAlī b. ʿUmar al-Qazwīnī al-Katibī (d. 685 or 693 H), **Kitāb al-mufassil fī sharḥ "al-Muḥassil"** (transl. into German by Pinès in Beiträge, pp. 60-6).

2. **"Inna al-ḥarakata al-thalāthatu: tabīʿīyah, qasrīyah wa faltīyah."** (Abū Ḥātim, **Aʿlām al-nubūwah**, p. 25)

3. **"Wa l-ʿillatu fi ihdathi al-ʿālam, inna al-nafsa ishtahat in tataabbala fi hadha al-ʿālami, wa harʃakat-ha al-shahwatu lithālika."** (Ibid., pp. 20-1)

4. Ibid., p. 20.

5. Ibid., p. 21.

6. Cf. "Introduction," M. Saghīr Ḥasan Maʿsūmī, Imām Rāzī's ʿilm al-Akhlāq with introduction and commentary by M.S.H. Maʿsumi (Islamabad, Pakistan: Islamic Research Institute, pref. 1969), pp. 5-15.

7. Kraus later published them together in the first volume of **Rasāil falsafīyah** in 1939, as we mentioned above.

8. Dr. Mohaghegh has shed interesting light on the sources for its ideas in "Rāzi's Kitab al-Ilm al-Ilāhi and the Five Eternals," published in **Fīlsūf-i-Rayy: Muḥammad Ibn-i-Zakarīyā-i-Rāzī** (Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies, Tehran Branch, 1974) **Kitāb al-ʿilm al-ilāhī** was widely influential. Kraus has published several fragments taken from different sources in **Rasā'il falsafīyah.** The following is based on information gathered from these texts and notes by Kraus. First of all is Bīrūnī's **Risālah fī fihrist kutub al-Rāzī** (p. 3), which mentions Razi's book. It is also referred to as **Kitāb al-ʿilm al-ilāhī al-kabīr** (cf. Ibn Abī Usaybiʿah I, p. 317) by both Saʿid al-Andalusī and Ibn Hazm, while Khusraw refers to it as **Kitāb ilāhī** and Mūsā b. Maymūn **al-Ilāhiyāt** (cf. **Rasā'il falsafīyah,** p. 52). Ibn al-Nadīm (p. 300) and Ibn Qiftī (p. 274), on the other hand, mention a book called **al-Saghīr fī al-ʿilm al-ilāhī,** otherwise called by both al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Abī Usaybiʿah (I, p. 320) **Kitāb al-ʿilm al-ilāhī al-saghīr ʿalā ra'y naqd kitāb al-Balkhī li-kitāb al-ʿilm al-ilāhī wa al-radd ʿalayhi.** Kraus speculates that it may well be the same one mentioned by al-Bīrūnī (Mss. 117 and 115, "**Jawābihi ʿan intiqād Abī al-Qāsim ʿalayhi**) called **Fī īdāh ghalat al-muntaqid ʿalayhi fī al-ʿilm al-ilāhī** (Cf. **Rasā'il falsafīyah,** p. 168 for different versions of this particular title). Among the book's critics, probably the most prominent was Abū Nasr Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Farabi (d. 339 H), to whom is attributed **Kitāb fī al-radd ʿlā al-Rāzī fī al-ʿilm al-ilāhī** (Usaybiʿah II, p. 139; al-Qiftī, p. 280, where it is called **Kitāb al-radd ʿalā al-Rāzī;** cf. M. Steinschneider, Al-Farabi [St. Petersbourg, 1869, p. 119]). Another critic is Ibn Hazm, who mentions a **Kitāb al-tahqīq fī naqd kitāb al-ʿilm al-ilāhī li-Muhammad b. Zakarīya' al-tabīb** in his **Kitāb al-fasl fī al-milal** V, p. 44; I, p. 35; see also M. Asin Palacios, Abenmasarra y su escuela (Madrid 1914), p. 11. A second critic is Abū al-Hasan ʿAlī b. Ridwan al-Tabīb al-Misrī (d. 460 H), to whom is attributed **Kitāb fī al-radd ʿalā al-Rāzī fī al-ʿilm al-ilāhī wa ithbāt al-rusul** ([Usaybiʿah II, p. 105]; see J. Schacht and Max Meyerhof, The Medico-Philosophical Controversy between Ibn Butlan of Baghdad and Ibn Ridwan of Cairo [Cairo, 1937], p. 48). Khusraw refutes it in **Zād al-musafir,** p. 52), and in **Kitāb al-bustan al-ʿaql** (now lost). Abū ʿUmra Mūsā b. ʿAbīd Allā b. Maymūn (al-Isrā'īlī al-Qurtubī (d. 601) criticized it in his **Kitāb dalālah al-hā'irīn.** The fragments revised by Kraus in **Rasā'il falsafīyah** were taken from: (1) Abū Muhammad ʿAlī b. Ahmad b. Saʿid b. Hazm (al-Dhāhirī al-Andalusī, **Kitāb al-fasl fī al-milal wa al-'ahwā' wa al-nihāl** I (Tabʿah misr, 1347 H), p. 10; V, p. 44; I, pp. 77-76; I, p. 35]). (2) Abī Muʿīn Hamīd al-Dīn Nāsir Khusraw al-Qabadayani's **Kitāb zād al-masafir** (Farsi) (Berlin: Tabʿat Berlin, 1341/1928), pp. 52, 53; **Dar jawa...** (in Farsi), published by Hājī Sayyid Nasrallah taqwi (Tehran: 1304-1306 A.S.H), pp. 563-573. (3) Mūsā b. Maymūn al-Isrā'īlī, **Kitāb dalālah al-hā'irīn** III, published by S. Munk (Paris, 1886), p. 18 (transl. p. 66-67). (4) Abī al-Qāsim Saʿid b. Ahmad b. Saʿid al-Andalusī. (5) Abū Rihānī al-Bīrūnī, **Fihrist kitāb muhammad b. Zakarīya' al-Rāzī** (Tabʿah Paris:, 1936), pp. 3-12. (6) Abū al-Qāsim Muslimah b. Ahmad al-Majrītī, to whom is attributed the introduction **Kitāb ghāyah al-hakīm wa ahaqq al-natījatayn,** publ. by H. Ritter (Hamburg, 1933), p. 206. (7) Abū al-Hasan ʿAlī b. al-Husayn al-Masʿūdī, **Kitāb al-tanbih wa al-ishraf** (Leiden, 1893), p. 162; and by the same author, **Kitab murūj al-thahab** IV (C. Barbier de Maynard, Paris, 1865), pp. 67-8. (8) Al-Sayyid al-Sharīf ʿAlī b. Muhammad al-Jurjānī (d. 816 H), **Sharh al-mawaqif** I, (Istanbul: Tabʿah Istanbul, 1311), p. 438 (9) Abū ʿAlī Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. al-

Haytham (al-Basrī) al-Riyadī (d. 430 H), to whom is attributed **Naqd ᶜalá Abī Bakr al-Rāzī 'al-mutatbbib ra'yahu fī al-ilāhiyāt wa al-nubuwat'** (Ibn Abī Usaybiᶜah II, p. 97); cf. Kraus, Rivista degli Studi Orientali XIV (1934), p. 363).

9. Cf. Sorabji, pp. 354-7.

10. Ibid., p. 397.

11. Pinès, p. 8. Razi's views on atoms were discussed in his **Kitāb al-shukūk ᶜalá jalīnus.** Ms. 4573, Malik Library, Tehran). In this work he drew an analogy between atoms and **habā' al-munbaᶜit fī al-jaww;** similarities with Democritus' conception; see Kraus, Jābir, p. 154, n. 6. His book also contains a passage from Galen's lost work, Peri apodeixeos Bk 13. Khusraw recorded Razi's notions of **jawhar** and **hayūlá** in his **Kitab zād al-musafir.** (Published by Muhammad Bathal al-Rahmanī [Berlin: Matbaᶜah Kawiyanī, 1341 H], pp. 231-5)

12. Op. cit., p. 351.

13. The Muᶜtazilis were associated, from the outset, with a faction which distanced itself from anyone claiming to be on one side or the other of the succession question (i.e., either allies or opponents of ᶜAlī). They seem to have generally occupied a similar "intermediary" position in the dispute that pitted ᶜAlī, Talha and Zubayr against each other. Such a position was known as **al-manzilah bayn al-manzilatayn,** which gradually emerged thanks to the debate between Hasan al-Basrī and Wāsil Ibn ᶜAtā' (the presumed founder of the Muᶜtazilī school).

14. Al-Nadīm, p. 705.

15. Albert N. Nader, "Al-Balkhī, Abu'l-Kāsim (ᶜAbd Allāh b. Ahmad b. Mahmūd)," **EI²**, pp. 1002-03. Known by the Muᶜtazilis as al-Kaᶜbī, al-Balkhī (d. 319/931) was a disciple of Abū b. Abī ᶜAmr al-Khayāt.

16. The works on al-Balkhī "compiled by Razi", according to al-Nadīm, are "To Abū al-Qāsim al-Balkhī, with an addition to his answer and to the reply to this answer," and "Refutation of al-Balkhī's refutation of theology." (Al-Nadīm, pp. 705, 706) The latter may, however, have been ᶜAlī, the son or relative of Shahīd ibn al-Husayn al-Balkhī. (Cf. editor's remarks, ibid., nn. 159, 179 and 183)

17. Al-Nadīm lists the following treatises on al-Jāhiz also "compiled by Razi": "Refutation of al-Jāhiz concerning the deficiency of medicine," "Contradiction of al-Jāhiz in connection with his book on the excellency of theology. (Ibid., p. 705)

18. Al-Nadīm lists, "Refutation of the Contradiction of Medicine of al-Nāshī." This was probably al-Nāshī al-Akbar. (Cf. editor's remarks, ibid., n. 167)

19. This is Mismaᶜ Ibn ᶜAbd al-Malik. Al-Nadīm lists the following works "compiled by al-Razi": "A Refutation of al-Mismaᶜī the theologian, About His Rejection of Upholders of Primordial Matter," and "Against al-Tammār in Connection With His Refutation of the Refutation of Mismaᶜī Concerning

Primordial Matter." (Ibid., pp. 705, 706; cf. Kraus and Pinès, **EI'**, p. 1135)

20. Kraus and Pinès think that these two names refer to the same person. (Ibid., p. 1134) Al-Nadīm, in any case, quotes someone affirming that Razi studied philosophy under someone called al-Balkhī. As to who that person was, al-Nadīm recounts that,

> This person was an inhabitant of al-Balkh who travelled through the lands, roaming about in various countries. he had a good knowledge of philosophy and the ancient sciences. It has been said that al-Rāzī made claims to his books about these subjects. I have read many selections, written in his handwriting, about numerous sciences. They were rough copies and samples, not one of them being issued to the public as a completed book. It is said [however] that books of his are in Khurāsān. He was contemporary with al-Rāzī. (Ibid., p. 702)

21. Pinès, p. 35. Razi is implicitly referred to in Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's discussion of **hayūlā** in **Kitāb al-matālib al-ʿāliyah.**

22. Ibid., p. 35. Al-Bīrūnī's (d. 440 H) work is entitled **Kitāb al-tahqīq mā lil-hind min muqawlah maqbūlah fī al-ʿaql aw al-marthūlah.** It was translated by E. Sachau as Albêrûnî's India (London, 1910).

23. Pinès', p. 38.

24. After describing how order emerges from the scattered elements, Plato asserts his controversial point:

> Wherefore also the various elements had different places before they were arranged so as to form the universe. At first, they were all without reason and measure. But when the world began to get into order, fire and water and earth and air had only certain faint traces of themselves, and were altogether such as everything might be expected to be in the absence of God; this, I say, was their nature at that time, and God fashioned them by form and number. (Timaeus 53, lines 7-12; cf. Ch. 17, Sorabji, pp. 268-83; the chapter contains a very brief but helpful synopsis of the issue which has troubled the commentators of the Timaeus, starting with Aristotle.)

25. Cf. Sorabji, p. 270 et seq.

26. There is no direct proof of his having ever read any of Plato's works. According to al-Bīrūnī and Ibn Nadīm, he wrote a commentary on the Timaeus. As Mehdi Mohaghegh has also added, he may have been in possession of an Arabic translation of "The Epitome of the Timaeus of Plato" and "On Moral Character," both written by Galen. We know that he read two other of Galen's treatises, **Fī taʿarruf al-rajul ʿuyūb nafsihi** and **Fī anna al-akhyā yantafiʿūna bi-aʿdā'him.** And he mentions incidents which Galen recounts in yet another treatise called "On the Passions of the Soul." (M. Mohaghegh, "Notes on the `Spiritual Physic' of al-Rāzī," Studia Islamica XXVI, pp. 7-8)

27. Le R.P. Festugière, O.P. La Révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste I (Paris: Société d'Edition Les Belles Lettres, 1986), p. 8.

28. Ishāq b. Hunayn, **Ta'rīkh al-atibbā'** in Franz Rosenthal, "Ishāq b. Hunayn's **Ta'rîkh al-atîbbâ'** Oriens 7 (1954), p. 67. This understanding of author's intended meaning is corroborated by Abū Sulaymān al-Mantiqī al-Sijistanī in his **Siwān al-hikmah**, where he identifies, as Rosenthal notes, Thessalos as the person referred to in the **Ta'rīkh**. Thessalos represented the methodist school. The third school was the dogmatic. (Ibid., p. 77, n. 3; for the empirical school in Alexandria see Mūsā, pp. 149-50)

29. Sorabji, p. 301. According to Galen, however, others denied causes altogether.

30. This opinion is shared by Festugière I, p. 13.

31. Ibid., p. 14.

32. Ibid., p. 15. Festugière paints an interesting picture of this religious movement in late antiquity and its reliance on revealed knowledge transmitted by Pythagoras in particular. (See his introduction to vol. I)

33. Majid Fakhry, A History of Islamic Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970), p. 190.

34. Festugière I, p. 16.

35. For an interesting analysis of these two important institutions, see Youssef Eche, Les bibliothèques arabes: publiques et semi-publiques en Mésopotamie, en Syrie et en Egypte au Moyen Age (Damas: Institut Français de Damas, 1967), esp. Part One, chs. I and II, pp. 9-162.

36. Abdulaziz Shamsuddin Talbani, "The Debate About Prophecy in '**Kitāb Aʿlām al-Nubūwah**': An Analytical Study," (M.A. Thesis, The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, November 1987), p. 78.

37. Abū Hātim provides the most direct evidence of this, but al-Nadīm's list of books written by Razi reveal a sustained interest in the subject of imamate and prophethood.

38. Shaykh Abū al-Hasan ʿAlī b. ʿUthmān al-Jullābī al-Hujwirī al-Ghaznawī **Kashf al-mahjūb li-arbāb al-qulūb** ("Somme Spirituelle"), traduit du persan, présenté et annoté par Djamshid Mortazavi (Paris: Sindbad, 1988), p. 316.

39. Quoted from **Fusūl Mūsā fī al-tibb** (Medical Aphorisms), translated by Joseph Schacht and Max Meyerhof, "Maimonides Against Galen, on Philosophy and Cosmogony," in Max Meyerhof's Studies in Medieval Arabic Medicine, ed. by Penelope Johnstone (London: Variorum Reprints, 1984), p. 69.

40. Ibid., p. 76.

41. Ibid., p. 60.

42. Henri Corbin and Mohammad Mo'in, Commentaire de la **Qasida** ismaélienne d'Abu'l-Haitham Jorjani (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1955),p. 58.

43. Ibid.

44. Corbin **al-Qasida**, p. 64.

45. Shahrastānī, Livre des religions et des sectes (Paris: Peeters/UNESCO, 1986), p. 556.

46. Ibid., p. 65.

47. Ibid., p. 60.

48. For Razi's critics on the self's relationship with the world, see Usaybi'ah I, p. 321, where he mentions "**kalām jarā baynahu wa bayn al-Mas'ūdī fī huduth al-'alam.**" The issue was discussed in **Majmū'ah jāmi' al-bada'**, published by al-Shaykh Muhyī al-Dīn Sabrī al-Kurdī (Matba' al-sa'idah, Misr, 1330 H, pp. 126-127), where Ibn Sīnā's reply to al-Bīrūnī.

49. Corbin, **Hikmatayn**, p. 132.

50. Abū Hātim, p. 3.

51. While he states this in **A'lām al-nubūwah**, the term also figures in his ethical treatise, in terms of pleasure:

> Now the pleasure imagined by lovers and others possessed and infatuated by some passion -- such as those in love with authority, rulership, and all other excessive objects infatuation with which dominates some men's souls so that they desire nothing else but to achieve that, and think life worthless without it-- this pleasure, I say, seems to them very great indeed and beyond all reckoning when they imagine the realization of their desire. (**Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**, p. , p. 40)

52. Abū Hātim, p. 3.

53. Al-Nadīm, pp. 706, 707.

54. Abū Hātim, pp. 4-5. In his **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**, Abū Bakr states, "However to reach the highest summit of this virtue attainable by human nature is scarcely open to any but the supreme philosopher; such a man must be accounted as superior to the common run of humanity, as mankind as a whole excels the beasts in reigning the natural instincts and controlling the passion. From this we realize that whosoever desires to adorn himself with this ornament, and to perfect this virtue in his soul, is upon a hard and difficult quest; he needs to acclimatize himself to controlling and opposing and wrestling with his passion. And because there is a great difference and a wide range of variety between men as regards their temparaments, the acquisition of certain virtues rather than others and the getting rid of certain vices rather than others will prove a harder or an easier task for some

men rather than the rest." (**Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, p. (Arberry, p. 23)

55. Fakhr al-Din, p. 164.

56. **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, p. (Arberry, p. 55).

57. Ibid., p. (Arberry, p. 83).

58. As Goodman points out, however, "For Râzî himself, despite his respect for the thinking of Plato and the person of Socrates, the title of philosopher belonged first and foremost to those who exercised independently in the search for truth... " (Lenn Evan Goodman, "The Epicurean Ethic of Muhammad Ibn Zakariyâ' ar-Razi," Studia Islamica XXXIV [1972], p. 6.)

59. Ibid., p. 11.

60. Ibid., p. 12.

61. See also Corbin **al-Qasida.**

62. As Richard Sorabji observes, this was the majority view among the Greek philosophers as far as non-discursive thinking was concerned: "It is that non-discursive thought does not involve seeking, and that in general contemplating the truth is more rewarding than seeking it." (Sorabji, p. 137) Aristotle's own view is expressed in the following:

> Now everyone agrees that of all the activities that conform with virtue activity in conformity with theoretical wisdom is the most pleasant. At any rate, it seems that [the pursuit of wisdom or] philosophy holds pleasures marvellous in purity and certainty, and it is not surprising that time spent in knowledge is more pleasant than time spent in research. Moreover, what is usually called "self-sufficiency" will be found in the highest degree in the activity which is concerned with theoretical knowledge." (Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, transl. with introduction and notes by Martin Ostwald [New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.], p. 289 [Bk X:7, 1177a, 22-28].)

63. Abū Ḥātim, p. 12.

64. Ibid., p. 13.

65. Ibid., p. 13.

66. Paul Walker, "The Political Implications of Rhazes' Philosophy," presented at the NEH Conference on "The Political Aspects of Islamic Philosophy" (October 7-10, 1988).

67. Muhsin Mahdi, "Al-Farabi and the Foundation of Islamic Philosophy," in Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism, edited by Parviz Morewedge (New York: Caravan, 1981), p. 14.

68. As Hodgson says: "All these disputes about the imamate among the Kharijis and Shi'is and their rivals gave occasion to, or at least sharpened, further questions in the realm of 'ilm knowledge. For it must be a matter of 'ilm to know how the commander of the faithful should be chosen; to recognize who it was could represent Islam, who it was had 'ilm." Op. cit., Hodgson, p. 262. Many different solutions were, of course, proposed for "the problem of creating an enduring government." Hodgson listed five, represented by: (1) the Khariji and Zaydis, (2) the Isma'ilis, (3) the faylasufs (4) the adibs and (5) the **Shari'ah** 'ulama'. (Hodgson vol ?, pp. 473-4) The Isma'ilis were, however, distinguishable by their special emphasis on numerological-cosmological interpretations, which distanced them from other currents, even if all were concerned with the same or similar problems. Greek science and philosophy were then coming into wide circulation, their impact being far from superficial.

69. Nader, Le système philosophique, p. 257.

70. Ibn Sīnā, on the other hand, later specifically denied that illumination occurred at the end of a process and elaborated a doctrine of intuition, which differed among people and required no syllogistic forms. Above all, the "imagination," he determined, distinguished the prophets from ordinary men and, as Fazlur Rahman explained, "represents in the form of particular, sensible images not verbal modes, the universal truth grasped by the prophet's intellect." **Ilham** or inspiration was of a lower order. (Fazlur Rahman, Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy [Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1979], p. 36)

71. Incidentally this made it possible to delimit the nature of moral acts: while man needed to act freely in pursuit of knowledge or the good, he also could not act without pre-established authority nor, epistemological speaking, without warranty. This may perhaps be compared to the Hegelian formulation. As Prof. Flay phrased it, "if one is to offer a systematic account of the ultimate nature of reality -- and this was Hegel's main task-- then one must first show one's indubitable right to make truth-claims of an ultimate sort or, in more traditional terms, one must first show that one has access to that domain in which such ultimate truths are found. The problem is to establish warranty for one's certainty of access, rather than merely professing such certainty." This was a novel point of departure which, offered a secular alternative to the well-trodden dogmatic path toward (a nevertheless Christian) incarnation. For Hegel the warranty or validity of claims depends on the internal criteria of the philosophical system in which they first arose and "cannot depend upon external sources." (Joseph C. Flay, Hegel's Quest for Certainty [Albany: State University of New York, 1984], p. 1.) These "external sources" are not only of a logical but also of an institutional nature. The two are here interlinked, so as to make the latter equally an embodiment of the "idea".

72. Lawrence V. Berman, "The Political Interpretation of the Maxim: The Purpose of Philosophy is the Imitation of God." Studia Islamica 15, p. 58.

73. Fauzi M. Najjar, "Fārābī's Political Philosophy and Shi'ism," Studia Islamica XIV, p. 70.

74. Al-Fārābī, **Tahsīl al-Saᶜādah** (Haidarabad, 1345 A.H.), p. 42 l. 5 ss. Cited in Berman, p. 57.

75. Fazlur Rahman, p. 58.

76. Ibid., p. 59.

77. Cited in Fazlur Rahman, p. 59.

78. One wonders, despite the scanty evidence, if the latter was the intended target of Razi's vitriolic attack, instead of prophethood and **imāmah** as such, in the fragments known as **al-ᶜIlm al-ilāhī**.

79. Op. cit., "**ᶜIlm**," **EI**[1], p. 470. They distinguished between **ᶜilm nazarī** (knowledge of things) and **ᶜilm ᶜamalī** (knowledge of Islamic duties).

80. As Muhsin Mahdi observes, al-Fārābī nowhere mentions "worldly happiness" or "this present life" in either Attainment of Happiness, Philosophy of Plato or Philosophy of Aristotle. ("Remarks on Alfarabi's **Attainment of Happiness**" in Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science, ed. by George F. Hourani (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), p. 47.

81. Like Razi, he argued that

> the fate of the Soul will depend upon the condition of the body with which it was associated during its earthly career, as will its portion of happiness or misery. This portion will increase, though, as successive generations of kindred Souls rejoin the intelligible world. (Fakhry, p. 146)

Chapter Three

ETHICS AND THE MEDICAL PARADIGM

Razi's career spanned a crucial period in the formative phase of Islamic intellectual and scientific tradition. Razi himself was thoroughly knowledgeable in practically every discipline. His ingenuity is perhaps nowhere more visible to us than in the technical sciences, where he was well-placed to witness the precariousness of theorizing and the limited value of "truth value" for scientific investigation. It is hardly surprising, then, that a didactic concept of knowledge should colour all his philosophy. In the field of ethics, medical precepts became more closely associated with epistemological questions, and "truth value" linked to broader, "extralogical" demands in a way comparable perhaps to what al-Fārābī held about the **imām**'s knowledge. This knowledge, we saw, was in effect recognizable through its enduring and practical success. In Razi's medical paradigm, bodily and "spiritual medicine" exhibit continuity, although each retains also its character as a rigorous undertaking in its own right. Before analyzing his "spiritual medicine" in detail in the next two chapters, let us first briefly outline some basic characteristics of medical science in his day.

The medical concept of "health" in Razi's time

Al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah being merely a personal testimony and apology, Razi's only full-length philosophical treatise to survive is **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**. What it reveals is the extent to which medicine permeated every aspect of his thought. His ethical arguments are dependent on the physiological concept of "health," which Plato had defined as the proper balance of the humours. A similar conception was held by Sushruta (400 CE)

and Charak (frequently quoted by Razi in **al-Ḥāwī**) in terms of the **doshas**, namely, that "a healthy man is one in whom all the doshas -- vata, pitta and kapha -- are in equilibrium, whose proper balance is normal, the tissues and excretions of whose body are normal, as well as soul, senses and mind are in full vigour."[1] The three **doshas**,[2] like the four humours in Greek medicine, are basic to the Ayurvedic view of pathology and physiological functions.[3] The elements composing them were thought to be five,[4] a number al-Ṭabarī[5] had dismissed and which was ultimately rejected by most Islamic thinkers in favour of the more perfect Pythagorean figure of four.

The frequent quotations from Ayurvedic sources found in **al-Ḥāwī** are an indication of their importance to the early medical commentators. But we shall not dwell on them seeing that Greek medicine, itself largely derived from non-Greek sources (especially Egyptian and Chaldean), was similar in many respects to Hindu medicine. In any case, it was the Hippocratic system, interpreted and codified by Galen (129-199 CE), which was really at the center of Razi's medical investigations. True to this system, Galen believed that everything, including food and drink, was composed of four elements, fire, air, water and earth. These elements carried the qualities of hot, cold, dry and wet. His theory of humours was echoed by most Islamic physicians.[6] Heat, they said, transformed nutritive intake into substances (**banāt al-arkān**), which resulted in the humours (**al-akhlāt**), namely, blood (**damm**), phlegm (**balgham**), yellow bile (**al-marārah al-ṣafrā**) and black bile (**al-marārah al-sawdā'**). Because it was hot and wet, blood corresponded to air; phlegm corresponded to water, because it was cold and wet; yellow bile to fire, because hot and dry; and black bile to earth, because cold and dry.[7] These were mixed in the liver and transported to the different organs of the body for nourishment, and the rest excreted. The humours also produced the

bodily parts and their actions.[8] Every humour had its own exit (**manfadh**) by which the body released the materia peccans and excess. The natural release of blood was through the nose, mouth and menstrual emissions.[9] Phlegm escaped through the mucus of the nose, yellow bile through the gall bladder (**kīs al-safrā'**) and black bile through the spleen.

Illness was etiologically explicable in terms of the disequilibrium of the humours; everything from sleep to the passions of the soul was capable of creating imbalance. The Greeks borrowed from the Egyptians the idea that illnesses were due to the corruptibility of organic matter; hence the need for purging and exercise.[10] Razi accepted the idea that nutritive superfluities created the physiological conditions for disease, whereby matter extraneously introduced could not be transformed by the body,[11] and that any treatment depended on knowing the exact proportions of the four elements, qualities and humours. Hippocrates' original dictum was that "Everything is founded on a united confluence of all the humours, a united concordance and a united sympathy."[12] This had to be actively sought by the physician. Health depended on **krasis** (Ar. **mizāj**, temperament or blending) and proper equilibrium was described as **eukrasia** or, literally, "the state of being well mixed." In Arabic this was known as **iʿtidāl al-mizāj**, which carried strong ethical connotations.[13]

The medical paradigm

Medicine goes a long way in illuminating some of Islamic philosophy's unique features. Ironically, this connection has rarely received more than passing interest by Western scholarship. Although medical analogies fill page after page of many of al-Ghazzālī's best-known works, they appear to many of us today almost as superfluous, exotic details of a dated conception of the world. They have never been systematically studied by any modern

scholar to date, and nowhere perhaps is this oversight more starkly evident than in the case of Ibn Sīnā, who chose to give to his best-known work the curious title of **al-Shifā'** ("the healing"), even though its contents -- from logic, mathematics, physics and metaphysics -- were of philosophical rather than strictly medical interest.

The technical language of philosophy and its ancillary disciplines, however, acquired built-in axiological and eschatological features through this early patterning of Islamic thought by medicine's long syncretic tradition. The other sciences, such as chemistry and conventional bodily medicine, certainly exhibited similar features, despite their more specialized nature. Anatomy is a case in point. The lack of interest in Europe's early medieval age in this discipline -- which is normally attributed by modern scholars to influence of the "methodist" school of the Roman physician Soranos -- gradually changed with the influx of Islamic works in medicine. Commentaries on Ibn Sīnā's **Canon** (the Latin translation of **Qanūn fī al-ṭibb**) not only displayed the sum of knowledge of the scholar, but also afforded the opportunity to introduce the most fundamental issues of scholasticism with a view to confronting certain prevailing notions.[14]

This is hardly surprising, since the body was considered an instrument by which man actualized his goals and God's design becomes manifest, and not merely a physical entity.[15] Indeed, the physiological cause of every organic function was what the Creator ordained it to be. Razi, for one, states this at practically every step of his explanation in **Kitāb al-manṣūrī fī al-ṭibb.** In a strictly technical sense, finality manifested itself and was expressed in terms of interlocking <u>functional</u> relationships between the bodily parts. Since it is necessary that each part move to the exclusion of the other, he says, the bones were not made by the Creator as one single bone, but broken up into many linkages.[16] And since their movement does not occur

spontaneously, but on the measure of some other influence originating beyond the level of the parts, they are all linked to the principle and source of all perception and movement (**ʿunsur al-ḥass wa al-ḥarakah**) whose locus happens to be the brain (**al-dimāgh**).[17] The nerves (**al-aʿṣāb**) serve as the links between this source and the parts, and so on down to the last tissue. The brain is the source (lit. "mine," **maʿdan**) of all imagination (**al-takhayyul**), thinking (**al-fikr**) and memory (**al-dhikr**).[18] As to the functions (**al-manfaʿah**) exhibited by the animal, but not the plant, Razi found that the heart provided the former with a natural heat (**al-ḥarārah al-gharīziyah**) that was distributed throughout its body,[19] and the brain made for its perfection. Interestingly, they both shared one common function, that of the "liver,"[20] of all things. It was the locus of the nutritional and growth function.

Clearly, then, while the immediate object of study -- namely, the physical "body" -- is unmistakable, we must ask what underlying principles are being applied, for this was not a descriptive anatomy in any ordinary sense. The same functional principles found in this "physiology" seem ultimately capable of being projected on an entirely different scale. In this sense, medico-philosophy furnished a methodology, based on analogical principles presupposed by practically every Islamic thinker of note since al-Kindī. It sought to discover the inaccessible features of the larger (or hidden) world by framing its questions within manageable proportions derived from a closer and more familiar universe. The movement from the known to the unknown in orderly fashion is expressed in terms of the precept which says that there can be no knowledge without prior knowledge. What better reference is there than our own "selves," or our own bodies? Razi's somewhat cryptic remark in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, that man's object in this world is really to study and to understand the "body" in which the soul temporarily has to reside, is best understood in this light.

As a motif, the analogy between the human world (or body) and the larger cosmos, so central to medicine, is as indigenous to the Native cultures of North America as it was to ancient Babylon.[21] But if the analogical mode of reasoning implied, philosophically speaking, knowledge of the unknown based on the previously known, Razi also introduced a new level of technical rigour which was really unrivalled by any of his predecessors; in a sense also it distanced him from the sort of esoteric puritanism that was frequently espoused in his time, as we shall see. He lived in a period when the growing need for precision in technical language was making itself felt; such a lacuna had prompted almost every notable **faylasūf** to compose a separate treatise, usually entitled **Risālah al-hudūd**, to try to redress it.[22] His proficiency in several languages[23] naturally allowed him more easily to recognize the serious deficiencies that plagued the translated texts available in his time, and even to propose more exact renderings. But his ingenuity made him more than just a passive recipient of past knowledge at this early, tentative stage of science. He achieved scientific success not by delving into abstract definitions alone but through systematic experimentation. This is how he was able to determine properties and relationships with much greater precision and depth, and record his results in specialized treatises on minerals and substances, such as **Kitāb al-khawāss**.

Throughout his writings, Razi was able to comment on and to correct many misconceptions contained in older theories. His contributions in chemistry, in particular, are an interesting, if not yet wholly understood, facet of his great intellect. It was rediscovered only in this century by Ruska.[24] Razi's study of its ancient founders and contemporary revivers, such as Khālid b. Yazīd and Jābir b. Ḥayyān,[25] carried him far afield, connecting him with the most important foreign source of influence on early scientific

thought in Islam, namely, the medical school established in Alexandria just prior to the Muslims' entry into Egypt. An important discipline then, chemistry had not always been regarded as a reputable science,[26] and its unfettered symbolism often poses insuperable difficulties to the modern scholar.[27] But its Islamic practitioners at least endeavoured to give rigorously-derived practical applications to Divine and ethical injunctions, which were otherwise held to be only formally known by the large majority of people.

Some sought to develop this "spiritual science," as they called chemistry, literally by reading the world's alphabet. Shahrastānī gives an interesting account of this method in connection with the "**batiniyah**":

> ... aux compositions [opérées] dans les lettres et les mots correspondent les compositions des formes et des corps; les simples lettres, par rapport aux composés que sont les mots, sont comme les éléments purs par rapport aux composés que sont les corps. Toute lettre a un correspondant dans l'univers, une nature qui lui est propre, et, du fait de cette propriété, une efficience sur les âmes. De là vient que les connaissances tirées des mots servant à l'instruction deviennent nourriture pour les âmes, de même que les nourritures tirées des natures issues de la création deviennent nourriture pour les corps. Dieu en effet a déterminé que tout existant [tirerait sa] nourriture de ce dont il est créé.[28]

Although given at a later period than Razi's, this testimony helps us get an idea of the difference that separated the two approaches. It seems to lie in the efficacy assigned to the letter -- or, for that matter, the numbers -- on the beholder. It is rather doubtful that Razi ever considered his "chemistry," the science of properties, as constituting by itself a "spiritual science" or source of "nutriment" in the sense evoked above. One indication of his attitude is his declaration that, strictly speaking, the "causes" of properties are all but unknowable, at least in the sense in which they were often used.[29] Significantly, this implies that one cannot move from properties to final causes in any straightforward or direct manner, regardless -- one would presume -- of whether the object of study is properly

that of chemistry or of sacred science. The technical aspect of a problem was clearly distinguishable from the end, though requiring at every step at the same time not only definitional precision, but verification.

Yet if Razi is generally reputed for the dry, purely "operational" character of his science. there is no evidence that he stopped dead at this stage. There is little indication that it necessarily crowded out the larger spiritual quest, as Corbin and others makes a point of arguing.[30] It cannot be denied that his **ta'wīl** led to a different emphasis than that of Jābir b. al-Ḥayyān's letter-based science of cosmological interpretation,[31] and away from an identification of number and reality in the manner of the Pythagoreans. Interestingly, though, the focal interest in the properties of things he helped spawn was later shared by mystical or learned circles, such as the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā, who set out to build a grandiose scheme based on the principles of mathematico-philosophy. They held that the properties of numbers were the prototypes of the properties of things, and that numbers inhered as accidents in the same way that accidents inhered in substances. But they also insisted that their **Rasā'il**'s discussion of numbers served only as a <u>prelude</u> to the "knowledge of the soul" and preparatory to the "knowledge of God."[32] The precise determination of properties, at any rate, served a much higher, spiritual end than the technical aspect by itself indicated. As the highest knowledge possible for man, the "knowledge of God" inevitably returns us to the problem of human conduct, and nothing, of course, is more germane to Razi's philosophical thought. He emphatically declared in his later work, **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, that philosophy was no idle exercise in "geometrical superfluities"; rather, it had as its object the highest, most desirable form of knowledge, viz. the knowledge of God (**maᶜrifah Allāh**), which consists in the following. Since,

> the Almighty Creator has the attributes of knowledge wherein is no ignorance, and justice that is innocent of wrong, whereas He is Himself absolute knowledge, justice and mercy, and whereas He is our Creator and Ruler and we are His slaves and bondservants, and those servants are most beloved of their masters who most faithfully adopt their master's way of life and most carefully follow their code of conduct -- that man is therefore the nighest of God's servants unto his Master who is the most knowing, just, merciful and compassionate.[33]

This is no different, he notes, from what every philosopher means when he says that "philosophy is the imitation of Almighty God so far as lies within man's power." The maxim was coined by Plato in Theaetetus,[34] the idea being that we ought to fly from earth to heaven as quickly as we can, that is, in order to become like God. Galen, one of Plato's commentators, argued in a similar vein that "the wise man is he who resembles God."[35]

The exhortation to imitate God's Perfect Attributes is perhaps more conducive to an active search for salvation than a mere deciphering of the universe's alphabet, no matter how perfectly this is identified with spiritual transformation. This also meant though that the true state of salvation, though immaterial, was also closely bound up with worldly pursuits. In Razi's medically-inspired conception, as we shall see, the only route to salvation was through puposeful human activity, and the dynamics of this activity were posed in the medically-inspired terms of "internal equilibrium." He tried to operationalize the "analogical language" employed by the faculty of the imagination -- which we saw was a fundamental element of medical tradition -- in his field of "character reformation." He did this by conferring upon the reasoning process itself a role comparable to that of diagnosis and treatment in medicine. Knowledge acquisition proceeded here, too, from the unseen to what was, figuratively speaking, hidden and "exterior" and thus amenable to "medical" controls.

Although diagnosis, treatment and medicaments are palpably medical expressions, the same principles of **tamthīl** (analogy) which apply in

philosophy and metaphysics as soteriological considerations enter the picture (that is, if they are ultimately to lead to man's salvation), do so also to the physician as apothecary. In the area of diagnosis, analogy (**tamthīl**) was defined as a transfer of a judgement from one "manifestation" to another, or from one particular to the next, by way of comparison in some aspect or other.[36] Ultimately, the object is to effect a cure through a treatment that is specific to the disease, assuming that the cause of disequilibrium among the humours could be identified. It has also been traditionally held that treatment may be found through use of the imagination or even recollective powers, by which the physician saw or imagined in his mind the actual state of the afflicted person and, always in a "dream state," cured him through medicaments.[37] He must then try to realize all this in his wakeful state, moulding circumstances accordingly.

This, in very rough outline, is the nature of the process called treatment. But there is more to the analogy. Razi insisted that the physician cannot cure his patient by the mere administering of drugs. The mark of a true physician was his ability to rely on the vital power of the patient himself, so that, ultimately, everyone had to be his own physician. The object of medicaments and treatment, whether physical or spiritual, was only to nurture and to strengthen inner capacity. They were not meant to supplant it. By the same token, even the highest attainable metaphysical knowledge must be pursued with a view to nurturing and strengthening the spiritual capacity. Finally, spiritual and physical health provided the conditions for the attainment of truth, the wherewithal to arrive at the proper destination; to some extent it even constituted that end's very actualization. Perhaps Razi's objection in **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah** to being denied the recognition due to him as a genuine philosopher has very much to do with the definite strictures he deliberately placed on the type of

knowledge to which philosophers at least could lay claim. These strictures did not entail renouncing all responsibility of trying to "know" the "unknown"; on the contrary, it seems more plausible to say that he viewed knowledge of "transcendent reality" as somehow related to that of the immediate world. Unfortunately, the only available evidence is provided in the course of Razi's ethical argument, which we shall now examine.

Razi's ethical argument

In **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, Razi tries to present a coherent argument for ethical conduct by drawing on a correspondence with the model of pleasure. He does this out of purely pedagogical considerations, his express purpose being to induce two types of people to follow a reasonable course in life:

(1) the one uneducated in philosophy and

(2) the skeptic about the afterlife, but who is nevertheless inclined to the same view as the believer that pleasure must be curbed.

The goal for all categories of people, without exception and regardless of their educational level is the virtuous life.

By way of introduction, let us review, before we begin analyzing the argument in detail, what some scholars have said. The last study to appear is based on an opinion expressed by Pinès that the ethical argumentation in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** is essentially different from that of his later apologetic essay, **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah.** In his second work, Razi makes use of the "idea of God" in order to show that the aim of philosophy is "the imitation of the Creator," as far as humanly possible.[38] In his **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, on the other hand, he is alleged to assume an "agnostic" position on the question of God, His attributes and the afterlife. From this, Bar-Asher, the author of this study, draws the doubtful conclusion,

however, that two opposite approaches are being entertained.[39] Since Razi himself notes in **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah** that his earlier book already contained the basic ideas found therein,[40] it would seem more appropriate to consider how, not if, this relationship was viewed by him. However, it is simply untrue that he adopted an "agnostic" stance in his earlier work. Yet Bar-Asher ventures even to add, as we already pointed out, that his views were so revolutionary that they "allaient contre ce qui était considéré comme les fondements mêmes de la foi et des institutions musulmanes (création du monde ex nihilo; prophétie, à laquelle il oppose des arguments jamais entendus avant lui, et ainsi de suite)... [41] One wonders, though, how this can be supported: if he is trying to prove heresy by alluding to Razi's position on creationism -- let alone "prophecy" -- he seems grossly misinformed about the whole intent of his allegorical argument in **Aʿlām al-nubūwah**, as we saw in the previous chapter.

Goodman much more accommodatingly opines that it is difficult to characterize the "hedonic" structure of his argument as being "in the service of anything but quite conventional or at any rate philosophically and religiously acceptable values."[42] Razi's argumentation, he thinks,

> provides a kind of net for gathering up what at this time were regarded as all the best ascetic and otherworldly values, reinforcing their claims by prudential reasoning and putting them within reach of the (ethically ordinary man, without ever fully subordinating to an alien standard the claims of these "higher" values (religious and philosophic) to intrinsic or even transcendent worth.[43]

But Goodman was able to arrive at this interpretation by focusing on two distinct components in Razi's philosophy, namely, the Platonic and the Epicurean. He makes no bones about Razi's ethical theory being clearly of Epicurean and "hedonic" inspiration. But he does so with the provision that Razi had a "paradoxical ascetic bias." Razi realized, he says, that "hedonistic" arguments could never conflict with but only "moderate" the

higher -- but more "dangerous" -- claims of Platonic asceticism and otherworldliness,[44] which are more evident in his earlier than his later work. This analysis, in fact, gives us much better insight into Razi's thought. In Goodman's view, the issue arises with,

> Razi's repeated (albeit hedonic) reference to man's soteriological reward -- for surely the rejection of all such reference is the hallmark of Epicurean ethical and intellectual integrity and provided the express primary motive for all truly Epicurean philosophy. Razi's doctrine of the predominance of suffering in this life, combined with his optimistic theodicy and his rejection of the Epicurean denial of providence forces him to adopt a most un-Epicurean soteriological metaphysics and willy-nilly to reintroduce into philosophy the very other worldly considerations which Epicurus thought it the prime task of philosophy to remove.[45]

The key word used by Razi which makes all the difference is excess (ifrāṭ), equally tempting for a "young Socrates" in his spiritual, ascetic peregrinations as for the person given to a life of pleasure. Measured in terms of the mean, which Razi was so keen to establish as a principle, these two types of excess are exactly identical, offering nothing more than a life of misery. Goodman brings us nearer to grasping the elusive link which binds them together. Excessive intellectualism is condemned by Razi "solely in terms of its harmfulness to health and the unattainability of its objective when set too high or too passionately sought."[46] This is exactly the same line of reasoning used to demonstrate the futility of worldly pleasures. We may remark parenthetically here that this seems related to the important epistemological connection between pleasure and belief, first elucidated by Socrates in the Philebus. But we shall defer discussion of it to the next chapter.

To bring out his point, Goodman conveniently recaps the argument from pleasure by completing a metaphor used by Razi to the effect that pleasure is like a baited trap. Razi's real recommendation to us would then be,

> to recognize the paradox, relax the springs of the trap, to unset it and thereby gain the bait, now recognized with the abatement of

> desire for the paltry thing it is. It is not pleasure unqualified we seek, but rather the enjoyment of pleasure. And enjoyment, in fact, is possible, but only if we understand enjoyment as a negligible, largely negative thing, a state of rest rather than a product or a process.[47]

As Goodman says, there is more to Razi than just some Greek-inspired, heretical reverence for "Reason" -- as if reason were not, in any case, of fundamental concern even to Islamic authorities as unimpeachable as al-Ghazzālī. However, that "pleasure becomes the judge of reason, not reason of pleasure,"[48] which he claims to be consequent upon Razi's condemnation of excessive intellectualism, seems to me to be overstating his actual position.

Unfortunately, the limited number of extant philosophical works limits somewhat our understanding of Razi's real position. The general result of this, as Pierre Lory remarked, has been that Razi, "censurée, stigmatisée, caricaturée par des polémistes hostiles, est devenue difficile à reconstituér pour des savants contemporains."[49] It may also be added that his position on "pleasure" was equally, if not more, controversial than his praise of "reason." Overall, his negative reputation may have more to do with the age-old distrust of Epicureanism, with which his arguments are heavily laden, than with his philosophy. Al-Maymūn's denunciation of Razi, in particular, parallels in many ways the view held by Philon and Joseph Flavius[50] that Epicurus was a dangerous infidel and atheist. The old obloquy against Epicurus was that he was a rebel, and his hope of ridding society of its superstitions did not sit well with anyone espousing a doctrine of "revelation." The main characteristic he appears to share with Razi, however, is the emphasis on freeing the self from the pain and troubles that accompany worldly pursuits. He even counselled against having children, which Razi repeats for effect in his **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**. But Epicurus' most unsettling claim was that the fear of death and poverty was unfounded.

What was feared, strictly speaking, simply did not exist -- was, in the case of death, non-existence itself. His purpose was to show that the real object of all activity, even for natural science, was to attain imperturbability (**ataraxia**), as we noted above.[51]

Most modern scholars agree that Epicurus exercised great influence on Razi. But if he adhered to his ideas, Razi drew his consequences in a thoroughly pedagogical frame of mind. His main concern in his ethical treatise, as we saw, was to convince the least trained and the most skeptical of philosophers alike of those basic tenets that were absolutely necessary for the good life. It was with this purpose in mind that he enunciated **al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** ("spiritual medicine"), a science aimed primarily at reforming character. To give more legitimacy to this science, he refers to Plato as having laid down that "corporal medicine" (**al-ṭibb al-jasdānī**) and "spiritual medicine" (**al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**) should be used for the same purpose of balancing actions in order to avoid excess. The second type of medicine consists of the use of "persuasion through arguments and proofs" (**al-iqtināᶜ bil-ḥujaj wa al-barāhīn**).[52] On this principle, Razi demonstrates how character vices are rooted in the faulty exercise or even total abandonment of reason. What is needed is a correct "intellectual prognosis." Since "intellectual prognosis" in spiritual medicine is comparable to medicaments in bodily medicine, he relies on the same principle of contraries (**bi-diddihi**) for treatment. We know this from the specific recommendations he makes in the interest of suppressing undesirable habits, fears or impulsions; for example, subjecting oneself to public criticism if one suffers from the inability to tolerate it. Also based on this principle is his counsel for inuring oneself to the loss of dear ones and possessions; an image must be conjured up of the state in which their loss is fait accompli. It is clearly evident that, truthful as it has to be, once freed from its logical

integument, the correct "intellectual prognosis" must be assessed also according to its efficacy in producing the desired result or, to be precise, the condition of health.

In **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, however, there is no attempt to elaborate the bearing this crucial aspect of his thought has either philosophically or metaphysically. He only tantalizingly refers to a much larger theme, namely, "the state of the soul after it has left the body."[53] The reasons he gives for its avoidance in this particular work are merely that

> to speak of this would take us far beyond the scope of the present book, alike in loftiness, length and breadth... in breadth, because the purpose of such researches is the salvation of the soul after it has left the body, though it is true that the discourse involves a major consideration of the reformation of character.[54]

Thanks to this passage we can at least picture the place he accorded to the the object of **al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, namely, the reformation of character, in his overall scheme of things. But he also explains that even the larger study is identifiable in terms of its value to the soul in its quest for salvation and dissociation from its material body. It is not difficult to imagine the relationship which exists between the highest metaphysical knowledge and its beholder as being somehow analogous to that between medicaments and the person to whom they are administered. Finally, the two other reasons mentioned for failing to elaborate further are the following:

> in loftiness, because this involves research into the nature of the soul, the purpose of its association with and separation from the body, and its state after it has gone out of it; in length, because each of these several branches of research requires its own interpretation and explanation, to an extent many times the discourse contained in this book... [55]

To summarize, the reasoning process has a distinctly medical role to play. To provide a correct and accurate judgement remains its primary objective, though this is never assured solely through internal (logical) consistency. We shall see that the latter can never ensure against

interference by the passions, for passions can masquerade themselves as reason even in its logically most impeccable form. Razi's emphasis on "dramatization" offers an escape from the many pitfalls of ratiocination.

NOTES

1. Dr. B.A. Pathak, "Panchmahabhuta Theory of Ayurveda," Theories and Philosophies of Medicine, compiled by Department of Philosophy of Medicine and Science (New Delhi: Institute of History of Medicine and Medical Research, 1973), p. 289.

2. They are called **dhatus** when intended in a physiological sense, and **doshas** when they undergo change and become pathological. They are referred to as **mayas** when their effect is deleterious to the body's normal functions and are excreted. (Ibid., p. 287)

3. The two principal Indian treatises known at that time were the **Nidāna** (in pathology) and Astāngahrdya (a large seventh century summa). (Jacquart and Micheau, p. 238, n. 26)

4. Namely, earth, water, fire, air and sky. For the details of this "panchabhuta theory," see G. Srinivasamurti, "The science and art of Indian medicine," ibid., p. 261 ff.

5. Abū al-Hasan ʿAlī b. Sahl Rabban al-Tabarī, **Firdaws al-hikmah fī al-tibb** (Berlin: Maṭbaʿ Āftāb, 1928), pp. 11-13.

6. The first authoritative treatise in the Islamic era was written by Hunayn b. Isḥāq, namely, the **Kitāb al-masā'il fī al-tibb.** In fact, however, this same treatise had circulated under another title, **Kitāb mudkhal fī al-tibb**, which was probably due to its having been completed by his son Hubaysh. (Cf. Jacquart and Micheau, p. 47) It contains a general outline of Alexandrian Galenism, part of which was translated by Danielle Jacquart and Françoise Micheau, La médecine arabe et l'occident médiévale, op. cit.

7. Michael Dols, "Introductory essay," in Medieval Medicine (Berkeley: University of California Press), p. 10.

8. Ibid., p. 11.

9. Mūsā, p. 157.

10. Ibid., p. 12.

11. Muhammad b. Zakarīyā' al-Rāzī, **Kitāb al-tibb al-mansūrī** (First Section), edited by Pieter de Koning (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1903; reprinted 1986), p. 10 For Razi's summary of "superfluities, see pp. 11-12.

12. "Philosophy and practice of medicine," Theories and Philosophies of Medicine, op. cit., p. 64.

13. Dols, p. 11.

14. Jacquart and Micheau, p. 197.

15. See Elgood, p. 344.

16. **Al-Mansūrī**, p. 3.

17. Ibid., p. 5.

18. Ibid., p. 8.

19. Ibid., p. 8.

20. Ibid., p. 10.

21. Among the early Islamic philosophers, al-Fārābī applied the analogy politically in order to elaborate his vision of the "virtuous city." The ruler of this city reigned over his subjects or the
the city's various functioning parts in the same manner as the intellect did over its lower faculties. This conception was based on Plato's tripartite division of the soul. In order to elucidate their own ideas on justice, both Miskawayh and al-Ghazzālī used the same doctrine. (Miskawayh, **Tahdhīb al-akhlāq** (Bayrūt: Dār al-maktabah al-hayat, 1961), Discourse IV, pp. 103-126; al-Ghazzālī **Mīzān al-ʿamal**, edited and introduced by Dr. Sulayman Dunya (Misr: dār al-maʿārif bi-misr, 1964), p. 273.

22. Soheil M. Afnan, Philosophical Terminology in Arabic and Persian (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1964), p. 38.

23. Albert Z. Iskandar, "The Medical Bibliography of al-Rāzī," in George F. Hourani, Essays on Islamic Philosophy and Science (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1975), p. 46. Iskandar infers from the introduction of **Kitāb istinbāt al-asmā' wa al-awzān wa al-makāyīl** that Razi knew Greek, Syriac, Persian and one Indian language.

24. Ruska's remarks on the difference between the "alchemy" of Razi and that of Jābir b. Hayyān are found in his preface to the published edition of Razi's **Sirr al-asrār**. His classification of minerals was studied by H.E. Stapleton, R.F. Azo and Hidāyat Husain, "Chemistry in ʿIraq and Persia in the Xth Century A.D." Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal VIII (1927), pp. 317-418. Razi's classification in **Kitab al-mudhal al-taʿlimi** was also edited by H.E. Stapleton and R.F. Azo in the same journal, vol. III (1910), pp. 57-94.

25. Razi has listed these names at the beginning of **al-Asrār**, attributed to him. It is interesting also that he refers to Ibn al-Hayyān as "our teacher" (**ustādhinā**). (**Al-Asrār wa Sirr al-asrār**, annotated and edited by Muhammad Taghī Dānishpajjūh [Tehran: Published by the National Iranian Commission for UNESCO, 1343/1964] pp. 1-2)

26. Leclerc describes "alchemy" among the Muslims as a direct and immediate inheritance from the School of Alexandria. (Histoire de la Médicine Arabe, p. 61)

27. Pierre Lory, "Introduction," in Jâbir ibn Hayyân, Dix Traité d'alchimie (Paris: Sindbad), p. 21.

28. Shahrastānī, p. 559.

29. The passage from Razi's **Kitāb al-khawāss** in question was quoted by Paul Kraus in Jabir, p. 95, n. 1.

30. Corbin claimed that this "opposition" is due to the entirely different conception which Razi had of "alchemy."

> Qu'il connût ou non Jâbir, sa conception est différent. Si l'on a présente à l'esprit la connexion de l'alchimie jâbirienne avec la gnose ismaélienne, on pressent que chez Rhazès l'ignorance de la "science de la Balance" doit impliquer la méconnaissance, sinon l'hostilité, à l'égard du principe fondamental du **ta'wîl**, dont on a rappelé ci-dessus que l'opération alchimique était une application éminente. On s'explique alors la tendance générale chez Rhazès à refuser les explications ésotériques et symboliques des phénomènes de la Nature. Ce sont deux types de perception du monde qui s'affrontent. (Histoire de la philosophie islamique [Paris: Gallimard, 1964], p. 199)

This view is shared by a number of other writers, including Seyyed Hossein Nasir and Paul Kraus. Nasir describes the separation of chemistry from "alchemy" in terms of Razi's religious divergence with the Ismā'īlīs. ("Islamic Alchemy and the Birth of Chemistry," Journal for the History of Arabic Science (Spring 1979) 3:1, p. 41.) But his assertion that Razi was not looking for the ultimate causes that others were perhaps accounts better for these differences. (Cf. ibid., p. 42) Kraus specified that a major difference between Jābir and Razi was the restricted use of "organic" as opposed to "mineral" substances" in the latter's researches. (Jābir Ibn Hayyan [Paris: Société d'Edition "Les Belles Lettres," 1986], p. 3)

31. For a discussion of this current represented by jabirian thought and its implications for grammar, see Paul Kraus' Jābir Ibn al-Hayyān (esp. pp. 236-270; also n. 2, p. 251, for the implications of this on the nature of grammar). In **Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhānī**, Razi deprecated the inordinate stress of some on grammar at the expense of productive science. His critique is probably equally pertinent to the letter cosmology in question here, which seems to involve the same thought -- though pursued much more systematically and in conscious fashion, of course -- that the structure of language reflects that of the universe.

32. Fakhry, p. 193.

33. **Al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, p. (Arberry pp. 127-8).

34. Theaetetus, 176B.

35. Mohaghegh, "Notes on the "Spiritual Physick of Rāzī," Studia Islamica XXVI, p. 19.

36. Mūsā, p. 164.

37. Ibid., p. 161.

38. S. Pinès, "Deux hommes cheminent dans le désert," (in Hebrew) Studies in the History of Jewish Philosophy (1977), p. 10. (Cited by Bar-Asher, p. 8)

39. He claims that,

> ... tandis que, dans **al-tibbal-ruhānī**, al-Rāzī présente ses théories sous la forme d'une alternative, lassant côte à côte des thèse parfois opposées sans faire le moindre effort pour trancher entre elles, **al-sīrat al-falsafiyya** nous révèle, au contraire, al-Rāzī prenant parti. Après avoir étudié et, à sa manière habituelle, exposé les une à côté des autres les diverses possibilités qui s'offrent à lui il désigne de façon claire et nette celle qu'il faut rejeter (en occurrence, le recours à l'ascétisme) et celle qui doit être choisi (l'adoption du juste milieu comme critère pour diriger sa vie et ses passions). (Bar-Asher, p. 37)

40. **Al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, p. 100 (Arberry, p. 122).

41. Bar-Asher, p. 5. Indeed Bar-Asher even claims that "il est évident qu'al-Rāzī sentait une telle répugnance pour toutes les religions, y compris l'Islam et qu'il s'interdisait toute référence religieuse -- fût-elle tirée d'une source littéraire." (Bar-Asher, p. 21)

42. Goodman (1972), p. 21.

43. Ibid., p. 26.

44. Ibid., p. 25.

45. Ibid., p. 20.

46. Ibid., p. 17.

47. Ibid., pp. 14-5.

48. Ibid., p. 17.

49. Jābir ibn Hayyân, Dix Traités d'alchimie, par Pierre Lory, p. 289, n. 21.

50. Sarton, A History of Science I, p. 597.

51. Ibid., p. 591.

52. **Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhānī**, p. 29 (Arberry, p. 30).

53. Ibid., p. 27 (Arberry, p. 29).

54. Ibid., p. 28 (Arberry, p. 31).

55. Ibid., p. 28 (Arberry, p. 29)

Chapter Four

SELF AND THE DYNAMICS OF REASON

In the preceding chapters we saw that the main objections raised against Razi by his critics were related to problems that stemmed from their common preoccupation with the question of the self's attachment to matter (or, alternatively, as we shall now see, its relationship with the world) together with the nature and role of the **ᶜaql**. Contrary to what many modern scholars have alleged, reliance on **ᶜaql** does not necessarily imply religious irreverence. Razi's skepticism rather was directed primarily at the epistemological implications of a particular doctrine of prophethood -- more precisely, the Ismāᶜīlī, at least according to **Aᶜlām al-nubūwah**. Otherwise his argument in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** may very well serve, on the whole, to support instead of to undermine prophetic tradition, as Goodman suggests.

We also noted in connection with his allegorical account transmitted to us by Abū Ḥātim that he viewed the **ᶜaql** as having been created by God for the benefit of the self, this after the decisive event had taken place, namely, the self's attachment to matter and its subsequent "fall." If we follow the logic of this allegory more closely, there are two basic movements: "downward" (the "fall") and "upward" ("salvation"). **ᶜAql** essentially figures only in the second movement, that is, back toward the "immaterial" state; it is not at all implicated in the downward one, where the self's yearning for matter is manifested. Its sole value rests in its ability to help the self escape from "material confusion." Moreover, that it is the Creator Himself who sends **ᶜaql** is surely clinching proof that Razi believed its ultimate source anyway to be Divine. We have no evidence concerning his exact position on the related but more fundamental question of whether the Qur'ān is created or eternal, apart from a curt dismissal in **Aᶜlām al-nubūwah** of the

fractiousness of the whole debate.[1]

As we shall see in this chapter, it is clear from **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** that he did not deny that some form of ratiocination was involved in the downward movement. However, he regarded it as a palpably false form of reason, not on any logical grounds, but because it ultimately drew its inspiration from and acted on behalf of the passions (**al-hawā**). Was he then saying that it was possible the same form can have different origins?

ᶜAql in Razi's ethical treatise

His ethical treatise may well be taken as an alternative, discursive form of the same "argument" previously propounded through allegory. Its special merit is in offering a full length exposition not only of his concept of **ᶜaql**, but its true and false uses.

Razi lays down the essential features of the intellect in the very first chapter of his treatise on the spiritual medicine. His stated purpose, from the outset, is to establish the meaning of both **ᶜaql** and **hawā**, which constitute the "starting point" of his study. Thus **ᶜaql**, God's greatest gift to men, is meant "to mark their superiority over the beasts, and in order that they might see the evil qualities of passion and therefore rein and rule it... "[2] Because of its explicitness, we shall take the liberty of quoting the passage in full.

> The Creator (Exalted be His Name) gave and bestowed upon us Reason to the end that we might thereby attain and achieve every advantage, that lies within the nature of such as us to attain and achieve, in this world and the next. It is God's greatest blessing to us, and there is nothing that surpasses it in procuring our advantage and profit. By Reason we are preferred above the irrational beasts, so that we rule over them and manage them, subjecting and controlling them in ways profitable alike to us and them. By Reason we reach all that raises us up, and sweetens and beautifies our life, and through it we obtain our purpose and desire. For by Reason we have comprehended the manufacture and use of ships, so that we have reached unto distant lands divided from us by the seas; by it we have achieved medicine with its many uses

> to the body, and all the other arts that yield us profit. By Reason we have comprehended matters obscure and remote, things that were secret and hidden from us; by it we have learned the shape of the earth and the sky, the dimensions of the sun, moon and other stars, their distances and motions; by it we have achieved even the knowledge of the Almighty, our Creator, the most majestic of all that we have sought to reach and our most profitable attainment.[3]

After giving this glowing depiction, Razi then offers a succinct description of the reasoning mechanism. He describes **ᶜaql** very much in the spirit of the nascent **falsafah** tradition,

> the thing whereby we picture our intellectual acts before they become manifest to the senses, so that we see them exactly as though we had sensed them, then we represent these pictures in our sensual acts so that they correspond exactly with what we have represented and imagined.[4]

Passion and instinct, on the other hand,

> are always inciting... us to follow after present pleasures and to choose them without reflection or deliberation upon the possible consequence, even though this may involve pain hereafter and prevent us from attaining a pleasure many times greater than that immediately experienced.[5]

Whereas reason comprehends obscure and remote matters, "things that were secret and hidden from us" (**al-umūr al-ghāmidah al-baᶜīdah minnā al-khafiyah al-mastūrah ᶜannā**) -- such as learning the shape of the earth and the dimensions of the sun, etc.[6] -- passion (**al-hawá**) and instinct see nothing but their <u>actual state</u> (**hālatahumā fī al-laththī humā fīhi lāghayr**).[7] Spatial dimensions help convey the movement of reason from the immediate to the exceedingly subtle -- the terminal point being the original state of immateriality. If true pleasure, much less true and beneficial knowledge, were to be attained, it is both our fundamental duty and the safest route to suppress the call of the passions and gradually to train the soul to that end. For a person cannot be sure, in <u>any</u> of his activities, "that in gratifying his appetite he will not involve himself in evil consequences very many times more painful and distressing than the labour of resolutely suppressing it."[8] We only need to picture to ourselves the perfidious end

proper to the unreflected course of action, which is no different from that of anyone deliberately setting out to destroy himself.[9] Therefore, even when in doubt, we must never succumb to our appetite, for

> The intelligent and perfect man follows only the dictate of reason, and never continues in any state unless he feels free to do so for a definite reason and with a clear justification; he will not follow or obey or go along with his passion when it would lead him in a contrary direction.[10]

The goal of all activity -- including knowledge acquisition -- is to seek to restore internal equilibrium. As we shall see, this condition is equally necessary for the seeker of much higher goals, in fact ones that are "far beyond the mere reigning of the passions." This is what we learn from the whole argument Razi presents in **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī.** He never assumed an "agnostic" position in relation to these goals, as some commentators have claimed, but only tried to define the nature of those conditions which remained valid in every form of purposeful activity.

The tripartite division of the soul

Razi goes on to elucidate this state of equilibrium in terms of the Platonic conception of the self. His second chapter in fact begins with a brief, though ostensibly uncommitted, exposé of Plato's tripartite division of the soul, which he probably learned directly from the Timaeus. The same or a similar division has been adopted by many other Islamic thinkers and, in a sense, "Islamized." At this early juncture, however, it is still clearly associated by Razi with the ancient philosophers; he even mentions the proponent of the idea by name, as it was his custom to do in all his works.[11] Here is how Razi represented this division:

(1) the rational and divine (**al-nafs al-nāṭiqah wa al-ilāhīyah**),

(2) the choleric and animal (**al-nafs al-ghadabīyah wa al-haywanīyah**), and

(3) the vegetative, incremental and appetitive (**al-nafs al-nabātīyah wa al-nāmīyah wa al-shahwanīyah**).[12]

Each part is important, and cannot be extirpated without causing disequilibrium to the whole. All the different needs and drives must be counterbalanced against each other and a state of equilibrium established. The ideal state is thus neither the "dictatorial rule of reason" nor that of the appetites. This does not detract from the fact that each soul was created for the sake of the one above it. Briefly, at the top is the rational and divine soul, which ought to rule over the rest. Next, the vegetative, is the instrument of the rational soul, "for the body," he says, "is not of an eternal, indissoluble substance, but its substance is fluid and soluble, and every soluble object only survives by leaving behind it something to replace that element which is dissolved."[13] While the vegetative soul serves to feed the body, the choleric acts to prevent the rational soul from being overly preoccupied with its desires. Reason, the highest faculty, must be employed by the rational faculty in order to deliver the soul from the body in which it is trapped.[14] To achieve this, it must make use of the temperament of the brain (**mizāj al-dimāgh**) in its entirety as its first instrument and implement (**awwal ālah wa adāt**).[15] A similar description of the brain's functions is found in his physiological studies, including **al-Ḥawī**[16] and his more compact **Kitāb al-manṣūrī**, which we have already examined. Man's sensation, voluntary motion, imagination, thought and memory belong to the brain. However, these are not taken in the sense of a property and temperament peculiar to it, but rather insofar as they belong to the very substance that dwells in the brain and uses it as an instrument.[17] For the brain is merely an organ, albeit the inner essence's most intimate of instruments.[18]

Razi was more committed to Plato's theories than he lets on, for it is

at this point that he alludes to Plato's teaching that men should labour through both corporal and spiritual medicine (the latter consisting of persuasion through arguments and proofs).[19] Medicine must equilibrate the actions of the souls, he says, with a view to preventing them from either failing or exceeding what is expected of them.[20] His purpose in bringing up Plato's views in this preliminary discussion is to place the spiritual medicine -- the science he is enunciating in this work -- in clearer perspective. Its object being "the reformation of the soul's character," it follows that the loftiest and most important matter in this specific task is "the suppression of the passions, the opposing of natural inclinations in most circumstances, and the gradual training of the soul to that end."[21] This must be done through deliberation, for deliberation is what distinguishes man from the beasts. Thus, without renouncing the possibility of higher knowledge, Razi begins at the most rudimentary level. But since spiritual medicine relies on the intellect to maintain and actively to promote a state of internal equilibrium, it stands to reason that the highest summit in the acquisition of the virtues is attainable only by the "supreme philosopher."[22] The only condition is that equilibrium among the faculties be maintained through every level of realization, including that of the philosopher -- even if the philosopher's goal goes "far beyond the problem of the mere reigning of the passions alone."

A similar conception was worked out some years later by Miskawayh, whose express aim in **Tahdhīb al-akhlāq** was to ensure good character through an understanding of the nature of the soul according to "a hierarchally ordered teaching."[23] Like Razi, Miskawayh made specific reference to a discipline called **al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, and defined the pathology of the self by referring to the intellect's altered natural state. In other words,

> de même que le malade atteint dans sa partie corporelle--principalement si sa maladie provient d'une des deux parties nobles: je veux dire le cerveau et le coeur -- arrive à avoir l'intelligence si altérée, l'âme si affectée qu'il s'en rend compte lui-même et qu'on ne se fie plus ni a son esprit, ni à sa pensée, ni a son imagination, ni aux autres facultés de son âme noble; de même, le malade atteint dans son âme soit par la colère, soit par le chagrin, soit par l'amour-passion, soit par les appétits qui solèvent sa fougue, nous apparaît d'autant plus altéré dans sa forme passe par toutes sortes d'avatars directement observables.[24]

Miskawayh also had a similar conception of treatment of the diseases of the "soul." This treatment depended on the cause of imbalance: the passion or the appetite which happened to suppress the intellect. The symptoms of "spiritual" illnesses were intimately related to sorrow and fear of whatever happened or may happen.[25] Their diagnosis and treatment essentially consisted of the proper employment of reason to the end that a state of health might be restored. This state was definable in terms of the rule of the intellect and of the proper functioning of all the faculties of the self. Equilibrium among these faculties signified the rule of justice (**ᶜadl**) -- or **iᶜtidāl**, as Razi would say. This was the proper end of all mundane activity.[26]

Furthermore, Miskawayh's account is marked by a concern similar to al-Fārābī's -- and, for that matter, al-Ghazzālī's in **Mizān al-aᶜmāl** -- to highlight the analogical correspondence between "the virtuous city" and the idea of the imām. He greatly emphasized that the virtues were realizable only within society, each person seeing his own completion in the other.[27] In classical philosophy, this was expressed by Plato, who not only distinguished among the different faculties of the self, but argued that they should be harmoniously balanced in the same way that the city was. The regal sage in Miskawayh's case embodied the microcosm-macrocosm relationship by successfully bringing the citizenry, over whom he ruled, properly to perform their specialized tasks. Justice implied a state of equilibrium both

in the soul and in the city.

The fact that Razi fails to make explicit use of this analogy, does not alter our understanding of his philosophy, for he was certainly not indifferent to its social implications. It remains, however, that his philosophical principles are projected mostly on the scale of the "microcosm" -- if we are permitted to use this term in his case -- without this entailing for the individual any abnegation of his social duties. The more elaborate outline of the virtues and vices presented by Miskawayh allowed him to distinguish clearly between habitus and character (**khalq**).[28] Habitus was obtainable only incrementally through training and education, which it was the business of moral science to undertake; whereas character or **khalq** entailed that goodly acts emanated without effort or pain, for these acts could not be generated by means of discursive thought.[29]

While he hoped to establish the "spiritual medicine" as an art which inculcated good habits in the individual, Razi argued from a different direction than Miskawayh. Ideally, the "spiritual medicine" must enable him to act effortlessly and independently; in short, it must render him capable of becoming his own healer or spiritual physician. In this sense, the "spiritual medicine," as he insists, was accessible ultimately to anyone with the power to think. But this did not mean that philosophical reasoning, if we follow Razi's medical logic, can achieve the desired effect in every case and at every level of activity. Clearly, the person inadequately trained in philosophy will not be overly affected by its arguments, and will require another method to restore **i^{c}tidāl**. The bottom line in this seems to be that there is no such thing as an eternal proof or sure reflective path to the pure state of repose or happiness. Each case demands its own diagnosis and treatment. And this clearly shows why Razi can never really be cast in the role of a "rationalist" in Islam in any western European sense.

Self-Purification

If Razi's purpose in discussing virtue and vice is not classificatory, he nevertheless goes to great lengths to show, practically and discursively, the steps to achieve the one and eradicate the other. He starts out by explaining what failure and excess in each faculty of the tripartite division of the self signifies. Failure of the vegetative soul consists in not being able to supply food, growth and increase in "the quantity and quality required by the body."[30] Its excess is when the body is furnished with all these beyond its needs. The choleric soul's failure is recognized when the soul lacks the fervour, pride and courage "to enable it to rein and vanquish the appetitive soul at such times as it feels desire, so as to come between it and its desires"[31]; whereas excess is when arrogance and love of domination become its prime qualities.[32] The breakdown of the rational soul is indicated by its failure both to marvel at this world and "above all to investigate the body in which it dwells and its form and fate after death."[33] If a man does not wonder at our world and is not concerned "to discover what his state will be after death, his portion of reason is that of the beasts--nay, of bats and fishes and worthless things that never think or reflect."[34] Excess in reason, on the other hand,

> is proved when a man is so swayed and overmastered by the consideration of such things as these that the appetitive soul cannot obtain the food and sleep and so forth to keep the body fit, or in sufficient quantity to maintain the temperament of the brain in a healthy state. Such a man is forever seeking and probing and striving to the utmost of his powers, supposing that he will attain and realize these matters in a shorter time than that which is absolutely necessary for their achievement. The result is that the temperament of the whole body is upset, so that he falls prey to depression and melancholia, and he misses his entire quest through supposing that he could quickly master it.[35]

Similarly to other dysfunctions, "excess in reason" disturbs the harmony among the various faculties. Yet it is passion which obscures the intellect, counting indeed as the "blemish of reason," "clouding it and diverting it

from its proper path and right purpose, preventing the reasonable man from finding the true guidance and the ultimate salvation of all his affairs."[36] Consequently, it is necessary that we

> discipline and subject our Passion, driving and compelling it to obey the every dictate of Reason. If we do thus, our Reason will become absolutely clear and will illuminate us with all its light, bringing us to the achievement of all that we desire to attain; and we shall be happy in God's free gift and grace of it.[37]

We shall see how, in order to demonstrate the correct exercise of reason, Razi uses "pleasure" as a didactic model. He is able, in this manner, to restate the problem of knowledge in more concrete and immediate terms. Here, one is naturally reminded of the analogical link between pleasure and belief first intimated in Plato's dialogues.[38] Even though genuinely felt, Plato said, some pleasures are "false."[39] Their genuineness alone did not guarantee their truth. Just like beliefs, which existed as mental statements or images, pleasures had still to be established as either true or false. Razi, too, does not deny the mere fact of pleasurable sensations, no more than that of the images. However, he was more insistent than Plato in trying to show how true knowledge, just like true pleasure, was accessible only through self-purification (that is, from the passions and the vices to which they give rise). Therefore, the direction of his thought went beyond pure epistemology. He relied on a more complex and dynamic model than the correspondence theory of knowledge usually associated with Plato. Ultimately, his model implied nothing short of a sense of existential self-realization in the path of knowledge acquisition, although it was left more to the adepts of Sufi and Shī^{c}ah traditions to develop this understanding.

The idea of self-purification, as we shall see in the next chapter, is readily illustrated by Razi through the obvious question of ablution.[40] The presence of impurities cannot be treated in any absolute sense without at the

same time undermining the entire purpose of the act, which he says is not to eradicate completely every impure element, however minuscule, but simply to effect a state of purity. This is achievable, he insists, within experiential bounds rather than analogically.[41] By so formulating the issue, Razi tries to preserve both the coherence and the viability of a discourse whose main focus is on the simple act of purification. But we may extend its range to cover all manner of human activity. Only, analogical thinking would, in this case, figure more and more prominently, presumably as technical sophistication increases and as the task requires.

By the same token, the "spiritual medicine" must maintain viability and coherence at every level of activity, whatever its form or purpose. Its principal goals are to eradicate vices and to train the soul in self-control, which alone create the conditions for success and, ultimately, salvation. Human vices are, however, pervasive and not always apparent even to the person with the best of intentions. Consequently, Razi urges those of "lofty purpose" not to recoil from going to great lengths in ensuring that they are on the right course, and recommends even that they employ an intelligent or perceptive person who can point out their character flaws.[42] Underlining the importance of candour, he cites Galen's "Good Men Profit by their Enemies,"[43] since we can hardly expect to do this with perfect honesty by ourselves, but only "with the pure and single eye of reason."[44] Should their critic give an exaggerated opinion from time to time, he should be thanked.

True reason is, in fact, so subtle and elusive that no one individual can claim fully to possess it. The possibility that intellectual faculties have been pressed into service by the passions, rather than vice versa, renders our freedom to choose a somewhat dubious advantage, since this freedom is precisely what pushes the door ajar just enough to allow our base instincts to infiltrate through. Razi accepts that the reasoning powers can

procure for man all the material benefits he desires. Indeed, the degree of success with which they can do this is what makes us so radically different from the animals that our sole distinguishing mark is precisely our ability to reason. Our intellect opens before us boundless opportunities. But while our reasoning power serves as a God-sent instrument, it can undermine itself. How can reason rule over the passions, therefore, without this leading to the destruction of the human organism? Razi's answer is that the self must eschew the illusory path of seeking things for their own sake. And what better didactic model to convey this than the theory of pleasure? Pleasure is quintessentially that which is desirable for its own sake.

In the end, there is more to the relationship between knowledge and pleasure than mere analogy: pleasure-seeking, as we said, has in common with excessive intellectualism the rule of the passions in some form or another, the systematic avoidance of which is preconditional to achieving a genuinely felicitous state. Epistemology and pleasure are, in this sense, not two different aspects, but merely alternative ways of describing the same thing.

NOTES

1. Abū Ḥātim, p. 32.

2. **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, p. 40 (Arberry, p. 41).

3. Ibid., pp. 17-8 (Arberry, p. 20).

4. Ibid., p. 18 (Arberry, pp. 20-1).

5. Ibid., pp. 21-2 (Arberry, p. 23).

6. Ibid., p. 18 (Arberry, p. 20).

7. Ibid., p. 22 (Arberry, p. 24).

8. Ibid., p. 22 (Arberry, p. 24).

9. Ibid., p. 23 (Arberry, p. 25).

10. Ibid., p. 72 (Arberry, p. 74).

11. Razi's familiarity with Plato's works was mainly based on the Timaeus. But Plato's treatment of the three faculties of the soul is also found in The Republic among other works.

12. Op. cit., p. 27 (Arberry, p. 29).

13. Ibid., p. 28 (Arberry, p. 30).

14. Ibid., p. 28 (Arberry, p. 30).

15. Ibid., p. 28 (Arberry, p. 30).

16. Cf. **Kitāb al-ḥāwī fī al-ṭibb** I (Haiderabad, 1955/1374) pp. 86-94.

17. Op. cit., pp. 28-29 (Arberry, p. 30).

18. Ibid., p. 29 (Arberry, p. 30).

19. Ibid., p. 29 (Arberry, p. 30). Plato points in this direction in Timaeus 89.

20. Ibid., p. 29 (Arberry, p. 30).

21. Ibid., p. 20 (Arberry, p. 22).

22. Ibid., p. 21 (Arberry, p. 23).

23. Miskawayh, p. 3.

24. Ibid., p. 268.

25. Al-Kindī's only complete surviving ethical work, "On the Means to Drive Away Sorrow," relates sorrow to the loss of material possessions, just as Razi did. The remedy consists in gazing upwards to the intelligible world, where more perfect objects of love exist. Though similar in structure, Razi's argument is proffered in terms of pleasure. (George N. Atiyeh, Al-Kindī: The Philosopher of the Arabs (Rawalpindi: The Islamic Research Institute, 1966), p. 130.

26. We shall examine this social aspect below. Arguing along similar lines, Miskawayh asserted that man attained his perfection in society. (Cf. Miskawayh, pp. 45-46.

27. Ibid., p. 18.

28. Miskawayh's discussion of the virtues is found in **Tahdhīb al-akhlāq**, pp. 17-34. Al-Ghazzālī's is found in **Mizān al-ʿamal**, pp. 264-87.

29. Miskawayh, p. 51.

30. **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**, p. 29 (Arberry, p. 31).

31. Ibid., p. 29 (Arberry, p. 31).

32. Interestingly, Razi here mentions the case of Alexander. Muslim philosophers have often depicted Alexander in a more positive light. His depredations in Iran and India, burning sacred texts and imposing Greek dominion, were well known, however, and Razi's attitude may indicate certain respect for other pre-Islamic cultures beside Greek.

33. Op. cit., p. 29 (Arberry, p. 31).

34. Ibid., p. 29 (Arberry, p. 31).

35. Ibid., pp. 29-30 (Arberry, pp. 31-2).

36. Ibid., p. 18 (Arberry, p. 21).

37. Ibid., pp. 18-9 (Arberry, p. 21).

38. Plato, Philebus 37a-e, 40c-e.

39. Plato, Philebus 40c-e.

40. **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**, pp. 79-80 (Arberry, pp. 86-7).

41. Ibid., p. 79 (Arberry, p. 86).

42. Ibid., p. 36 (Arberry, p. 37).

43. **Fī anna al-akhyār yantafiʿūna bi aʿdā'ihim** (Good men profit by their enemies). This book was summarized by P. Kraus in **"Mukhtasar min Kitāb al-akhlāq li-jālīnus."** Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Egypt (Arabic Section) (1937) V/1, pp. 1-51. The copy read by Razi was probably translated into Arabic by Hunayn Ibn Ishāq. Also of interest is the Arabic version of Galen's **Fī taʿarruf al-rajul ʿuyūb nafsih** (How a man may

discover his own vices).

44. Op. cit., p. 36 (Arberry, p. 37).

Chapter Five

THE PEDAGOGICAL OBJECTIVES OF KITĀB AL-ṬIBB AL-RŪḤĀNĪ

In Chapter Two we considered how the self's attachment to matter was conveyed through allegory. In this chapter, a different, more discursive form of argumentation will be examined. While it was not occasioned by any concern to prove that the world was created, similar philosophical presuppositions as we saw earlier are not far to find. Here, however, Razi devises a theory of pleasure serving to augment the persuasive force of his argument over his heterogeneous audience. Although Razi purported to establish thereby the reasonableness of ethical conduct, he also wished to buttress, and by no means to undermine, eschatological aspirations.[1]

The meaning of "pleasure"

Razi defines "pleasure" (**al-ladhdhah**) by reference to "the original state" of repose and equilibrium. Before considering his definition, we should underline the fact that the notion of "original state" is the key to the philosophical dilemma of ends and means in practical conduct; it is what prevents the problem from being reduced to either its teleological or its technical aspect. For this "state," he asserts, is "so to speak the road and pathway to the attainment of the quest."

The problem of pleasure arises only when people seek things for their own sake, namely, pleasure. But "pleasure" lacks any positive features of its own. Its definition, which he says is universally valid in a philosophical sense, is conveyed through the following illustration. When one departs little by little from the original state of rest and then returns to rest suddenly, an acute "sense of a return" occurs called "pleasure"

(ladhdhah).[2] Razi contends that the philosophers define all pleasure as the very process of "return to the state of nature."[3] In fact, it is the diminution of pain rather than a constant or positive state,[4] for "there cannot in fact be any pleasure except in proportion [bi-miqdār] to a prior pain, that of departing from the state of nature."[5] This definition comes very close to the one proposed by Plato, who argued that all pleasures involved prior pain. As Socrates states in the Philebus, "when the natural state of any creature is being disrupted by aggregation or disintegration, replenishment or lack, in short by any development or decline, the result is pain, discomfort, distress and their cognates... When the natural state is being restored, however, we satisfied ourselves that this restoration is pleasure."[6]

Several thinkers, ranging from al-Kirmānī to Ibn Maymūn, have later, for different reasons of course attacked Razi's theory of pleasure -- Razi having in fact written a whole treatise on the subject,[7] of which only a few fragments have survived. In Chapter Three, we found that one modern writer,[8] at least, saw self-contradiction where Razi's earlier asceticism had somehow to "coexist" with another, contrary admonition, one he expressed later in life.[9] On the one hand, Razi seemed to preach world renunciation and, on the other, to reject the alleged monkish tendencies of established ascetic traditions.

We shall not return here to Goodman's syncretic approach to the arguments offered by Razi in **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūhānī**. Briefly, his view was that there was complementarity between thought and pleasure in Razi's philosophy. Excess in either case, expressed as "excessive intellectualism" and "pleasure-seeking," respectively, led only to apparent contradiction. They both engendered exactly the same result and issued from the same cause. If there is one thing on which Razi was consistent, it is that he based

himself on the principle of moderation.

Goodman also made a useful distinction between the universal "standard" and its particular application. In the one, Razi appeared willing to accept the "hedonist" argument from pleasure, the clearest evidence of which is found in his later work, **al-Sīrat al-falsafīyah.** Indeed, we find Razi insisting that since "the pleasures of the world where no death is are everlasting, unending and infinite, surely that man is demented who would purchase a pleasure which perishes and comes to an end at the price of an everlasting, enduring, unending and infinite pleasure."[10] This does not contradict, but rather complements the more ascetic position adopted in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī.** As Goodman rightly says, despite being a "thoroughgoing hedonist," in the second instance, "when it comes to the examination of specific moral problems superficially at least something would seem to go awry, for in almost every case where some object of pleasure is under consideration Razi counsels its avoidance." Here combatting the disruptive effect of the crass instincts is the paramount concern.[11] According to Goodman, any disdain for matter or for the physical world that we may wish to read into Razi's depiction of the self's "fall" is true only in relation to the specificity of the act. This, in fact, is the domain allocated to the science of character reformation.

Yet Goodman describes Razi's position here, too, in terms of the "pleasure optimum."[12] Razi's expression evokes a particular meaning we encountered before in connection with Plato's metaphorical theory of the "mixture" or "potion," which had to balance between thought and pleasure.[13] This "mixture" was meant to achieve **hygeia** (health) and **harmonia** (harmony), taken in a fundamentally ethical as well as physical sense. Razi similarly goes so far, at one point, as to propose amusement and pleasure, not for their own sake, but as remedies for specific ailments -- namely, excessive

anxiety and worry.[14] One cannot infer from this suggestion, however, a licence for the active pursuit of pleasure. Pleasure is here beneficial in a restricted, metaphorical sense only; and this is perfectly compatible with his "ascetic" insistence that "it is senseless to seek satisfaction of appetites which can never be sated,"[15] since it is excess in <u>whatever</u> form, for both the religiously committed and uncommitted which constitutes the root cause of every ailment. The "application" of pleasure here merely seeks to preempt excessive behaviour by establishing the just mean. He still adheres to the idea that surrendering to the passions does not procure one real satisfaction but pain. This basic rule applies whether one is religious or not:

> As for the man who sees no harm on religious or theoretical grounds in filling himself and taking as much food as possible, he should nevertheless be held back from doing so by the argument about balancing the pleasure so enjoyed against the consequent pain, as we have explained before [e.g., indigestion]. We would also add that since it is inevitable that the food which gives so much pleasure must be denied the eater in the end, it behoves the intelligent man to put forward the moment, before the situation arises where he cannot be sure of not being involved in evil consequences [e.g., crime].[16]

This reasoning, he adds, "satisfies those who have not been trained in the discipline of philosophy, more than arguments based on philosophic principles (**al-usūl al-falsafīyah**)."[17] As we saw, he discounted philosophical argument as a pedagogical tool in this particular context. Any "reasoning man" is capable of keeping to the most basic rules, thereby averting all the discomforts, risks and harms that beset others. Through his natural faculties, then, he gains presentiment of what lies in store for the person unduly given to his every impulse. "Therefore, let the reasoning man," he says,

> observe these ideals with the eye of his reason, and keep them before his attention and in his mind; and even if he should not achieve the highest rank and level of this order described in the present book, let him at least cling hold of <u>the lowest level</u>.

> That is the view of those who advocate the reining of the passions to the extent that will not involve mundane loss in this present life... [18]

In sum, the evidence suggests that Razi did not advocate the complete eradication of the instincts, any more than he gave licence to the pleasure instinct. The metaphorical use of the notion of "pleasure" allowed him to contemplate its deployment within the dimensions of the immediate world, without endorsing pleasure as an end in itself. If any rule of thumb is conceivable here, it is that of moderation. Razi tried to convey an idea of the disciplined use of **ʿaql**, based on its rule over the lower faculties of the self, while disclaiming at the same time excessive intellectualism, indeed, identifying this "affection" with any other passion. All conscious effort must accordingly strive to return the self to a "state of repose" and to re-establish equilibrium among all the faculties. As we saw, however, equilibrium on the scale of the individual somehow mirrored that of society, where every member needed to find his proper place. Let us now examine this aspect of his argument. Razi's philosophy of temperance based on the suppression of the passions is all but unthinkable without its social backdrop, which gives it depth and meaning.

The social aspect of the pleasure principle

Rather than counsel retirement from the world of activity, he prefers to advocate above all that men acquire a sort of detachment from the mundane world that translates into an independent (**istiqlāl**)[19] attitude. This is what his "asceticism" really amounts to. He views this independence at once as beneficial to the individual and to the society in which the former, by nature, has to live. The chapter on social duties occurs toward the end of his book, and comes just before the topic of "the virtuous life" (**al-sīrah al-fāḍilah**). He defines "the virtuous life," incidentally, as "consisting

in treating all men justly [**bil-ᶜadl**]." This, he says, conforms with what the "great philosophers" of the past have said about the matter.[20]

> Thereafter it means acting towards them, with a proper continence, compassion, universal benevolence, and an endeavour to secure the advantage of all men, save only those who have embarked upon a career of injustice and oppression, or who labour to overthrow the constitution, practicing those things which good government prohibits -- disorder, mischief and corruption.[21]

In the latter group, Razi names the extremist followers of Daisan and the Red Khuramis of the ninth century, whose doctrines permitted them "to act deceitfully and treacherously towards their opponents."[22] He also makes mention of the Manicheans who refuse water and fail to treat medically anyone not sharing their beliefs. Not to be forgotten are those misguided people who fail to kill the noisome creatures which happen to be in our midst out of concern for the safety and health of people. The arbitrary nature of these doctrines is contrary to reason, which alone makes it possible for us to enjoy "the good life" (**husn al-ᶜīsh**) through mutual helpfulness and cooperation (**al-taᶜāwun wa al-irtifāq li-baᶜḍunā**).[23] Razi here relies on the assumption that reason tends to promote rather than hinder this mutuality. We thus gather from this brief discussion that the truth of a doctrine or idea is partly recognizable through its effects on people's behaviour, without this necessarily leading to the platitude that effects are by themselves sufficient.

Let us examine his position a little closer, since the entire argument of the book in fact culminates at the point where Razi reveals the social matrix of his psychology. We learn of this chapter's importance from his own declaration that all the previous ones were merely a "prelude" to the present topic of earning, acquiring and expending."[24] Its objective is to demonstrate why both pauperism and exploitation in human pecuniary relations ought to be avoided. The good life attainable through mutual cooperation and

helpfulness is based on complimentarity: not only between individuals, but the individual and the collectivity. His conception is not based on a relationship between "atomized" individuals. The efforts of the many must ultimately bring benefit to the individual, and vice versa.[25] While everyone needs food, shelter and security, each person "only prosecutes one of these businesses."[26] The basic essentials of life, let alone "the good life" would consequently be inconceivable in the absence of mutual exchange. One must, therefore, take cognizance that our duty consists in adopting some "means of providing this assistance, and to labour to the limits of [our] powers and abilities to that end, avoiding at the same time the two extremes of excess and deficiency (**tarfay al-ifrāṭ wa al-taqṣīr**)."[27] In other words, one must give and take in just measure, otherwise either pauperism (such as when a man desires something from his neighbour without compensation) or exploitation (such as when he sets no limits to his earnings) could result. The person who toils all his life to earn more than what he requires is really "both deceived and enslaved without being aware of the fact."[28] His wealth needs to yield repose or, in other words, compensation. The purpose in earning (**iktisāb**) is then, predictably, "to gain as much as will balance the amount of one's expenditure, with something over to put away and keep in store against such emergencies and accidents as may prevent one from earning."[29] In this manner, one receives toil for toil and service for service.

His chapter on acquisition ends with a story serving to illustrate that the best "worldly" possession is something, like a profession, immaterial. A good profession presumably also has just the kind of beneficial value he insisted to Abū Ḥātim was absolutely necessary for genuine salvation. The story is of a shipwrecked philosopher who, having lost all his possessions, has to begin anew on a remote island. The prospects of the philosopher are at once greatly improved when he discovers geometrical designs, which not

only indicate the presence of human beings but also of learning. His hope of acquiring wealth thus rekindled, he fails to be swayed by the chance to leave on another ship, his only wish in the end being to send a message to his compatriots urging them to "acquire and store away that which cannot be sunk."[30]

"Love" and "envy"

A balanced relationship between individual and society would presumably help diminish the possibility of falling to the most grievous and humiliating state of existence: that of want (**faqah**) and need (**hājah**). In an earlier chapter on "carnal love,"[31] Razi begins by examining the character vices that produce this mean state of dependence. The most abject of these vices is any kind of infatuated love (**ʿishq**) or familiarity (**ilf**). Included in this category is the love of authority and rulership as well as "all other excessive objects of infatuation which dominate some men's souls so that they desire nothing else but to achieve that, and think life worthless without it... "[32] Those of a clearly carnal nature, such as habitual sexual intercourse, are not essential to life and may be cast away at will. They are due either to natural instinct or to bad education and training, and the great majority of mankind evinces revulsion against this whole affair.[33] It must not be overlooked that Razi regarded love of oneself (**mahabbat kull insān li-nafsihi**) as the most powerful obsession of all.[34] It results, among other things, in conceit.[35] And, as we noted before, no character reform can proceed without an honest self-portrayal This cannot be had without the critical eyes of another person.[36] The reason is that each person is inclined to overestimate his own qualities and to underestimate those of others at the same time that he is unwilling fully to disapprove of his bad traits, and yet magnifies them in others.[37]

Razi's consideration of the argument proffered by certain literary (**adab**) people who advocate "love" as a habit possessed by refined and subtle minds (**al-ṭibāᶜ al-raqīqah wa al-adhhān al-laṭīfah**) is interesting.[38] This, he says, is baseless. However much one may wish to intellectualize it, "love" or "infatuation" remains the habit of gross and stupid natures.[39] In his chapter on carnal love, he makes the important point that the idea of "love" as something legitimate to be cherished by "subtle brains" is a completely misguided approach to human talent. He identifies the reason for the confusion as the mistaken notion that grammar, poetry, correctness of speech and eloquence somehow constitute the whole of knowledge and wisdom, and counterposes a different standard,

> To this we answer that refinement of nature and mental subtlety and clarity [**safā'**] are recognized and proven by the capacity of those so endowed to comprehend obscure, remote matters [**al-umūr al-ghāmidah al-baᶜīdah**] and fine, subtle sciences [**al-ᶜulūm al-laṭīfah al-daqīqah**], to express clearly difficult and complicated ideas, and to invent useful and profitable arts [**istikhrāj al-sināᶜāt al-mujdiyah al-nāfiᶜah**].[40]

He makes it clear that he is not seeking to denigrate the value of grammar and linguistics, but only to expose the "ignoramuses" who think that other legitimate sciences do not exist.[41] He puts forward the philosophers' view that the wise man is "he who knows the conventions and rules of logical demonstration [**shurūṭ al-burhān wa qawānīnahu**], and succeeds to acquire and achieve the highest degree of mathematical, physical [**ṭabīᶜī**] and metaphysical knowledge [**al-ᶜilm al-ilāhī**] that lies within human capacity."[42]

Constant indulgence in the pleasures of life, which are in effect being countenanced by those whose sole standard is eloquence and lyrical refinement, can only produce a "familiarity" for worldly possessions. The consequent reluctance to be parted with these possessions carries with it a most surreptitious danger, for it "increases and augments with the passage of time, and yet is not sensed until the actual moment of parting, when it

suddenly bursts forth all at once in a most painful form... "[43] The only security (**ihtirās**) against this is "to dispose oneself [**bil-taᶜarrud**] to parting from one's companion [**al-mashūb**] constantly," and to train oneself gradually [**tadarraj nafsahu ilayhi wa tumarrana ᶜalayhi**] in this practice.[44]

The obsessive attachment to things may furthermore result in envy (**hasad**), which Razi describes as a combination of miserliness (**bukhl**) and greed (**sharah**).[45] Envy is worse than either one, he says, because the envious person does not wish any good for others even if he himself cannot obtain it. It contains a large element of malice,[46] though not necessarily directed at any particular enemy. What prompts a person to harbour this feeling is "the actual fact of his being able to contemplate [**mushāhadah**] [other people's] circumstances."[47] His power of imagination (**tasawwur**) in this instance is like an instrument in his hands, though one to which he imparts a particular value and meaning; hence, he is equally capable of misusing it. It is only natural, then, that "counterargument" would constitute the best remedy for those susceptible to envious feelings. This method should reveal their underlying irrationality. Razi illustrates this through the example of those townsfolk who become much more resentful at the man who rises from their own midst to a position of power than they would a stranger, even if the former is more likely to be "considerate and compassionate."[48] He attributes this to people's "extreme self-love" (**fart mahabbatihim li-anfusihim**).[49] There is no just ground for the "rage and fury" displayed by the envious man, since he has no greater right to good fortune than the successful person. If one were only to look closer, the bond of relationship enjoyed by being a relative, kinsman or townsman ought to present greater opportunity for profit, not less.[50] But that some men are chiefs and kings, he notes, must be accepted by the envier as a necessary and inescapable fact; it is immaterial for him that this or that person should be

the one to enjoy success, since the envier himself does not expect to have this wealth passed on to him.[51] Envy, in the end, is self-destructive and only deprives the envier of that very quality which impelled him in the first place to rage over his fellow men's successess, namely, pleasure. In short, the reasonable man must,

> rein his animal soul by means of the perspicacity of his rational soul and the strength of his choleric soul, so as to restrain it from enjoying even the things that are pleasurable and delicious, let alone that which is neither appetizing nor pleasing and is at the same time positively harmful to both sound soul and body.[52]

The spiritual harm brought on by envy is primarily due to its capacity to "stupefy" the self (**yudhilihā**) and to undermine its powers of reflection (**fikr**).[53] It so vitiates **fikr** that it no longer can retain enough control over the person's affairs to procure him maximum profit. It tends to provoke secondary reactions such as sorrow, anxiety and care.[54] Moreover, the body, too, is affected when these "accidents" (**a^{c}rād**) afflict the soul. The onset of insomnia (**sahr**) and malnutrition (**saw' al-ightidhā'**) is a physical response to the preoccupation with unworthy thoughts, and results in "poor colour, a muddy complexion and a disordered temperament."[55] All the more reason for the power of thought, as a form of remedy, to seek to eradicate the irrational impulses that lead to these conditions, this in order that the person may interrupt unworthy thoughts and train the self in this direction.[56] If these be the harmful effects of envy, Razi argues, it must certainly be considered "an admirable ally assisting the envied to take revenge upon the envier."[57] "What weapon," he asks, "is better fit to be cast away than that which protects the enemy while wounding him that bears it?"[58]

Once this is established, he cautiously introduces an "alternative" approach to the above based on more sophisticated principles. One may wish to consider, for example, whether the nature of the desired object is really

worth seeking. Is the envied person as happy as we imagine him to be? He argues that the "inward state" of the envied person is often the complete opposite of what is supposed.[59] Here Razi applies his theory of pleasure in order to prove that enjoyment is but a fleeting sensation lasting only until the person becomes "fixed and established in that state and to be known to have achieved it."[60] Thereupon, the self begins to yearn for a yet higher state simply in order to continue to feel enjoyment, with the result that present accomplishments will always prove inadequate. The person will even be gripped by feelings of anxiety and fear "lest he should lose the advancement he has already succeeded in winning.[61]

The intelligent man must consider frequently the known consequences of ill-feeling and of letting his passions gain the better part of him.[62] Vivid illustrations of this are given in a following chapter focusing on how anger may be repelled. Here Razi gives the anecdote of a man who was so angered that he punched the other in the jaw and, instead of hurting him, dislocated his own fingers.[63] Another recounts the story of a man who went into such a screaming rage he spat blood, which led to consumption and finally to his death. Razi also borrows a story from Galen about his ill-tempered mother who used to bite her padlock when it refused to open. The purpose for all these examples is to show how we are more likely to injure ourselves than anyone else by blindly following our impulses. In this case, the impulse is anger. False reason betrays itself with the "botchy and patched-up manner" (**jawāb mulazzaq muraqqa^{c} mulajlaj**) in which we try to justify our action, rather than to acquire a pertinent view of the circumstances.[64] On the one hand, for example, there is no "clear and valid excuse" (**hujjah bayyinah maqbūlah**) for being miserly if no imminent danger of decline exists.[65] Yet the same meticulous care for one's possessions would, under very different circumstances, be considered "canniness," if it is not the

result of passion but of reason and deliberation. In this case, it ought not to be abolished but increased and confirmed.[66]

The "affections of reason" and their remedies

This granted, Razi next shifts his focus to the affections of reason itself, namely, excessive and hurtful anxiety (**fikr**) and worry (**hamm**). These are "just as hurtful and deleterious when present in excess, in the way of denying access to the achievement of our desires, as the lack of them... "[67] Excessive activity by the rational self (**ifrāṭ fa^{c}l al-nafs al-nāṭiqah**) leads to a similar erosion of health as that which we found earlier and, consequently, of the very capacity to obtain the desired object. This is invariably how Razi views the irrationality of impulsive drives throughout this treatise. The remedy for the intelligent person is

> to give his body repose from them [i.e., the affections of the intellect], and to indulge it in as much diversion [**lahw**] and amusement [**surūr**] and pleasure [**ladhdhah**] as it requires to help keep it fit and maintain it in good health; otherwise the body will weaken and become emaciated and finally collapse, so preventing us from reaching our goal.[68]

In this manner, the "remedy" of pleasure is aimed at promoting renewal and strength, so that thought (**fikr**) and care (**hamm**) -- distinguished from their excessive forms -- may eventually come to bear. It is they which help the person realize his desired goals in the first place.[69] Remedies must, in the short term, help the "body" recover its health; yet their longer term goal is to establish habit (**^{c}ādah**), which can raise the "power of endurance" (**iḥtimāl**).[70] Thus treatment and remedy bring into view a number of larger issues. Elsewhere in his writings, Razi asserts that "power is to the patient as provision is to the traveller, and illness is to the path."[71] In a medical sense, "therefore, the physician must pay utmost heed (**^{c}ināyah**) that power never declines before term."

In the present treatise, Razi uses a similar metaphor, one that al-Ghazzālī later expanded on, whereby the care and remedies given the body are likened to the provender given by the traveller to his horse. Just as the idea is "not to give it the pleasure of eating but to strengthen it so that it may bring him safely to his lodging-place, so it is necessary for us to act in watching over the interests of our bodies."[72] This will ensure arrival at our destination in the shortest time possible. Two extremes are thus avoided, for "we shall not be like the man," he says,

> who destroyed his mount before ever coming to the land he intended by overloading and overstraining it, neither shall we resemble the other man who was so concerned with pampering and fattening his horse that the time went by in which he ought to have reached his stage and lodging-place."[73]

Al-Ghazzālī, it will be recalled, has added a distinctly more religious character to this theme by describing the traveller as a pilgrim on his way to the city of Makkah. Hence his camel requires special care, but feeding it out of all proportion to its need only leads to ruin.[74] Here, the traveller's journey is likened more to a spiritual transformation through a relationship with the world that must be intricately balanced by means of the "chemistry of happiness" (**kimyā al-sa^{c}ādah**).

Razi has clearly stated from the outset that his present topic is the intellectual affections, where treatment and nourishment may be applied in analogical manner to the lower faculties. In his scheme of things, these affections lie at opposite end to such vices of the lower faculties as greed and gluttony, the latter which he explains result when the normal functioning of the appetitive soul is disrupted by overindulgence. First of all, this normality is attained when the appetitive self unites

> with the rational soul only in order that it may supply this body, which serves tha rational soul as an instrument and an implement, with sufficient to keep it alive for the period required by the rational soul to acquire knowledge of this world -- such a man will always suppress the appetitive soul and prevent it from obtaining

> food above a modest adequacy. For he takes the view that the object and purpose of feeding in created beings is not enjoyment but survival, which cannot be secured without food.[75]

As we have seen, each faculty has its own special function, and the harmonious relationship of all the faculties is what constitutes a state of health. But we also saw that, while excess in intellectual matters and those of the appetitive self lie opposite one another, Razi returns these two distinct senses of "excess" to a common reference point via his theory of pleasure. Active care or attention (**ʿināyah**) is necessary in order to give proper nourishment to the "body" (or the traveller's mount); however, excess, in any sense at all leads to the destruction of this body. In a literal and straightforward sense, too much attention indicates the striving for enjoyment over and beyond mere survival, whether we are speaking of intangibles, such as the hereafter, or of things more immediate, for example, the material world.

In short, Razi uses "pleasure" generically -- in Goodman's sense -- to explain the extreme ascetic activity of self-denial (especially as described in **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**) as well as that of the gluttonous, both of whom are afflicted with the domination of passion. When employed in just proportion, thought (**fikr**) and care (**hamm**) do not obstruct the body's natural physical functions; on the contrary, they have a salutary purpose. Since the unrestrained exercise of intellectual powers is what is at issue in this section, rather than that of either of the two lower faculties, let us consider what he understands by it. While the study of philosophy must admittedly aim at surpassing the ancient masters, delusion and melancholia, in medical parlance, are the only return for trying to do so in too short a time.[76] On the opposite side is the dilettante, whose life epitomizes human shortcomings. We shall consider the nature of the object of study in a metaphysical sense below. The crucial factor here is the time period which

it takes to accomplish this otherwise meritorious intellectual task. And it is here that the exercise of reason, which helps us improve upon past knowledge, is used also for the more immediate -- though always related-- objective of self-regulation or balance. Its range of application thus equally extends to practical ethics whose primary means is similarly to provide an honest and accurate portrayal of things. This portrayal is anchored to the fundamental principle that in the world "nothing is constant or permanent as an individual, but rather that all things pass away and perish and change and decay and vanish... "[77] The primary function of reason here is to create the correct images which, when conjured up with sufficient frequency, can inure the person, in this case, to the "successions of generation and corruption" (**kurūr al-kawn wa al-fasād**) of life.[78] At this point, Razi tries to identify the source of affective disruptions. It consists of

1) the hope that things will last forever (**dāma biqā'uhā**) is yearning (**rāma**) for the impossible (**mā lā yumkin**) and

2) by yearning for the impossible, a person inevitably brings grief upon himself.[79]

Razi then offers the following line of argument. The "substance" that actually generates (**tawallad**) sorrows (**ghumūm**) is the loss of desired things (**mahbūbāt**). Since that person is most grief-stricken who has the greatest number of loved things, it necessarily follows that he is least affected by grief who has the least. The goal then is not ever greater accumulation of valued possessions, but their reduction. And reason must serve this end. It can protect against grief allowing the person to recall "the bitterness that must be tasted when [the objects of love] are lost."[80] By removing or at least diminishing the evil consequence and the hurtful -- the wasting grief caused by worldly attachments -- independence (**istiqlāl**) is regained.[81] The greatest degree of achievement in this is when "the very substance of grief"

(**miwādd al-ghumūm**) is finally "amputated."

Razi, however, freely admits that "the possession of the beloved is agreeable and congenial to nature [**muwāfiq mulā'im al-tabī^{c}ah**], and the loss thereof is contrary and repugnant [**mukhālif munāfir**] to nature... "[82] Like Plato, he was careful not to dispute genuineness of the sensation, which may cause him to overstep the rules of intelligibility. Pleasure remains pleasure, recognizable by convention; it can never be made to mean pain. Yet this does not imply that, deliberately sought, it cannot sooner or later also lead to pain. This prospect is most poignantly felt with the sudden loss of something dear. The painful feeling which follows is likened to that felt by the person who, having enjoyed good health for a lengthy period and takes it for granted, feels severe pain upon the sudden onset of a sickness.[83] One may construe this to mean that the only way to happiness is to lead an austere existence, since all that which is loved in this world by any normal human being ought to be shunned; and nothing less than physical "death" could satisfy these conditions. Razi's purpose, however, is to relate how accidents can acquire such great importance that we come to regard them as essential things, although they are never so. We are beguiled into thinking that we cannot live without them, a predisposition that reflects the presence of bad habits; and habits are precisely the proper domain of the "spiritual medicine's." Razi found his solution, as have others after him, in the nurturing of good habit or patient training of the self.

In sum, while pleasure may promise momentary enjoyment, the image left by pleasant sensations cannot be allowed to overrule the sagacity of clearheaded reason in this matter. Reason alone "urges one towards a course that yields profit sooner or later," regardless of its often tortuous beginnings[84]; it is what procures for the self the real substance of what it

desires. The conditions for its realization are conceivable, however, only by reference to the state of repose toward which all activity must tend. Should misfortune finally befall a man, he must act as his own physician and find a curative means out of his crisis. Thus, knowing that things cannot last forever, a person "ought not to take too much to heart or feel too outraged or stricken by the sudden deprivation of anything."[85] Misfortune itself, when it does arrive, cannot last forever.

> It therefore behoves the intelligent man to remind himself, when the misfortune is upon him, how it will presently pass and give way and he will return once more to normality; he should present this picture to his mind, and stir within himself the desire for its realization, all the time drawing to himself what may preoccupy and divert his thoughts as much as possible, to speed his emergence into his settled state.[86]

Life continues and "gaiety returns, and things come back to what they were before the misfortune happened."[87]

Razi does not pursue immediately the epistemological implications of his argument. He takes us further afield by explaining more of the character vices and how they may be eradicated through the "spiritual medicine." The epistemological value of his arguments will become more apparent later.

Ritualism and the imaginative powers

Excessive fondness (**al-wala^{c}**), trifling (**al-^{c}abath**) and ritual (**al-madhhab**) -- the subjects of his next chapter -- bring us to an interesting aspect of that attachment to the things of this world which, as we said, includes everything from sexual obsession to the worship of authority. As a natural remedy for fondness and trifling, Razi suggests inducing a sense of "shame and disdain."[88] In technical terms, the reason for this course is that the rational soul must induce the choleric soul to feel pride and disdain in order that a firm resolve may emerge in the rational soul to resist committing an undesirable act. The choleric soul, he asserts, exists

solely for the purpose of assisting the rational against the appetitive soul "when the struggle is fierce, attraction strong and the draw difficult to withstand."[89] The intelligent man must shake off forgetfulness and absent-mindedness by activating his anger whenever reason is submerged by appetite.[90]

Razi includes in this chapter his views on ritualism. We have already touched on this subject above in another context. Let us now complete our discussion of it. To reiterate his argument, he urges that a definite limit be placed on the notion of cleanliness (**nazāfah**) and purity (**tahārah**), and demands that the state of purity be assessed only by means of our external senses (**hawāss**), where the use of analogy (**qiyās**) or imagination (**wahm**) is excluded.[91] Interestingly, in classical times, Iamblichus had related the Plotinian formulation that "la purification la plus parfaite consiste à se débarrasser des passions et des connaissances figuratives."[92] Similarly, matters connected to cleanliness and purity, states Razi, should be "regarded according to the reach of sensation, not of the imagination."[93] The goal, he reminds us, is not to look for them "in full reality and exactitude" (**ʿalā al-tahqīq wa al-tadqīq**), which requires our imagination and which will always leave us impure; the little filth that escapes our perception will not render us impure or injure us in any way.[94] What we cannot see we should not fear nor feel squeamish about. We ought neither to think about it nor should "its presence [**wujūduhu**] occur to our minds at all."[95] God has ordained self-purification (**al-tatahhur**) within our means and capability, and to entertain a "squeamish fancy" is to argue where no valid argument (**hujjah**) is possible. Indeed, it would be tantamount to an "abnegation of reason [**mufāraqah lil-ʿaql**] and the pursuit of pure and unadulterated passion [**al-hawā**]."[96]

Razi does not quite suggest complete denial of what may remain imperceptible to the senses after every consideration had been reasonably

met. The problem in hand is one of degree of exactitude, and really depends on the nature of the task. As we mentioned earlier, he distinguishes between two ways of knowing:

(1) directly through the senses (**hawās**), or
(2) analogically (**qiyās**) through the imagination.

In the case of ablution, the senses establish our field of vision. That impurities may or may not still be present in some indeterminable quantities has no direct bearing on the ultimate success of the act of purification. The presence (**wujūd**) of impurities, hidden from view, is a question which serves an entirely different purpose. It acquires importance only through the second manner of knowing listed above, though acts subsumed in this category may, through analogy, still be regarded as an act of purification. In this way, ethical considerations are not diminished by the question of ontological character of the object; they are indeed inseparable from it. Elsewhere in his writings, we discern a similar position, which seems to add up to the following: that so and so really is the case can never be fully established by proof[97]; but, he hastens to add, it does not follow from this that we should deny the existence of anything for which there is no confirming proof, lest we deprive ourselves of its possible benefits.[98] It is through analogical reasoning that the imaginative faculty obtains knowledge of reality, which manifests itself with various degrees of "remoteness" from the senses, without this conferring ontological status, so to speak, upon the "imagined" object in any strict sense.

As we shall see, Razi considered epistemic constructs by themselves to be of a "fictional" nature by virtue of the use that the intellectual faculty has to make of the "imaginative" powers. This is the interesting aspect of his thought, although we might want to qualify our meaning in order to avoid drawing too direct parallels with modern-day notions in the philosophy of

science. Qualifying "intellectual analogy" as "imaginary" and even "fictitious" -- perhaps in a sense not too distant from his "fictional" allegory -- normally weakens any argument for reason.[99] Such a position for Razi appears simply to deny that there is any epistemological sense whereby knowledge can be taken to be identical with reality. Technically at least, this view seems to entail that knowledge is, at every stage of the inquiry, a product of the imagination. Indeed, what the faculty of "dramatization" (**al-tamthīl**) and "intellectual analogy" (**al-qiyās al-ᶜaqlī**), Razi informs us, allows us to do in the field of ethics is to view things as if they had actually occurred.[100] The mind simply represents the consequences (**ᶜawāqib**) and issue (**awākhiruhā**) of any affair. Does this characterization of knowledge as being "fictional" (or at least "imagined") necessarily undermine truth, then?

Though "imagined," knowledge -- whose adequate definition the paucity of Razi's surviving works unfortunately renders practically impossible beyond what we can infer from his terse but significant expression of "knowledge of God" (**maᶜrifah Allāh**)-- may still be something radically different from the usual sense we attach to "fictional narration" today. I believe that Razi's was above all a profoundly religious view and that, accordingly, it is still possible to accommodate "revelation," though with a further provision (later elaborated by mystical thought in Islam) emphasizing the core dimension of self-realization. The works of other **falāsifah** already present a complex notion of knowledge, more anyway than what is found in the meagre fragments attributed to him. Al-Fārābī, for instance, held that "figurization" and "symbolization" belonged to the imaginative faculty, and are distinguishable from the discursive.[101]

> It is not impossible that when a man's imaginative power reaches extreme perfection so that he receives in his waking life from the Active Intelligence a knowledge of present and future facts or of

> their sensible symbols and also receives the symbols of immaterial intelligibles and of the higher immaterial existents and, indeed, sees all these -- it is not impossible that he becomes a prophet giving news of the Divine Realm, thanks to the intelligibles he has received. This is the highest degree of perfection a man can reach with his imaginative powers.[102]

The imaginative faculty, then, conveyed through particular images what other modes of knowing did through a philosophical mode of thought, the latter being a different, less perfect route to the same truth. Ratiocination played a necessary (though insufficient part), while "figurization" was active in the form of permanent religious symbols, which differed from one nation to another. These "imaginative symbols" are used because,

> the masses cannot understand [the essences] in their real existence... Most people who believe in happiness can believe in it only in figurative, not conceptual terms. Those people who believe in happiness because they can rationally conceive it and receive [the essence] of the principles, are the Sages [**hukama'**], whereas those who figuratively understand them and believe in them as such [i.e., who believe the figurative truth to be literal truth] are the believers.[103]

Though he shared many of their philosophical preoccupations, we do not know if Razi in fact employed the distinction between the figurative and the discursive which underlies the basic division between the prophetic and the philosophical modes of knowing. What is striking is the notable absence of any such discussion in his existing works, though it is more or less implicit in many of his arguments. One suspects that the reason has to do with his emphasis on continuity and the avoidance of a dichotomous view of knowledge. In a sense, all knowledge is "imagined," but this hardly means that it is all equally falsifiable.

The quest for worldly rank and the use of the imagination

As we learned from the allegory, Razi placed the intellect entirely and squarely within a spatio-temporal dimension, even though its ultimate source is the Creator. His ethical treatise, on the other hand, illustrates how

this **ᶜaql** may be used as an instrumental. He elucidates the principles and methods needed for the gradual training of the self to leave the material world, its temporary abode. What this movement toward the immaterial state signifies has been variously interpreted by his rivals and later critics. We have tried to show the complexity of meaning imparted to it by Razi himself. This will become much clearer in his final chapter on the "fear of death." Given that it required effort and activity, and given that no activity of the self can have proper meaning without being accompanied by that of other individuals, it follows that the self achieves its salvation only through its exchange relationship with society. Razi determined that acquisition, the central component of this relationship, required a clear and sound "intellectual prognosis" (**taqḍimah al-maᶜrifah al-ᶜaqlīyah**)[104] which helps the person to picture in his mind a situation in which the object of acquisition was lost while the need for it still remained.[105] It is precisely to avert this prospect that he needs to enter into exchange with others. The self has to tread a narrow path between two extremes: deficiency (**al-taqṣīr**) (which led to pauperism) and excess (**al-ifrāṭ**) (which led to incessant toiling).[106]

In his chapter on "the quest for worldly rank and station" (**al-rutab al-manāzil al-dunyā'īyah**), Razi now emphasizes the point that the one who fails to set upper limits in any of his pursuits, but is always "working to shift himself into another, higher state, yearning and hankering after attaching himself to yet grander circumstances," can never be satisfied.[107] One needs to apply the principle of moderation (**iᶜtidāl**). Before we take up his depiction of the higher levels to which people aspire, let us first consider his recapitulation of the previous arguments presented so far. The chapter begins with a declaration that his aim was "lofty" and of "great usefulness." He now gathers together different strands and ideas from the preceding

chapters before introducing his main points which he says will "help achieve and complete" his overall goal.[108] The superiority of the intellect is reiterated and we are reminded that the need to suppress the passions is necessary if we are truly to ennoble the soul. He goes out of his way to underline the specific importance of previously argued points dealing specifically with envy. In this connection, the intelligent person, he says, ought to consider well his fellow's real circumstances before judging him to be happy. He should recall what was previously said about grief. It results from undue attachment to the things of this world, toward which envy nevertheless tends to push him. He points out that it is the desire to reach fulfilment in a higher state which impels people to worldly pursuits, and then proceeds to enumerate "the three so-called states" (**ahwāl**):

(1) the present state wherein people normally grow up and are raised;

(2) the grander (**ajall**) and higher (**a^{c}lā**) one; and

(3) the lower (**adnā**) and meaner (**akhass**) one.[109]

Razi explains that his aim is to determine which state may truly be considered the better (**aṣlaḥ**), more restful (**aryaḥ**) and more reasonable (**ūlā bil-^{c}aql**).[110] All along he has been careful not to deny that certain impulses are at least comprehensible: the soul has a sound propensity to reach for ever higher states of fulfilment,[111] without it being necessary, in addition, to suppose an inherently evil nature. It will be recalled that in Abū Ḥātim's account the motion which resulted from the self's attachment to matter was described as **ḥarakah faltīyah**, or released motion; the evil that resulted has thus nothing that is necessarily premeditated about it. Similarly, in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, we saw that the drive to acquire worldy possessions was justifiable under one set of circumstance (determined by need), and yet was found to be unwarranted under another (where greed

prevailed). The problem arose when people harkened to their base instincts, embarking upon a course where pleasure became the end and purpose of activity, with all the nefarious consequences this brought on. Yet "pleasure" by itself had no positive features of its own to merit this attention.

Razi applies the principles earlier established concerning "pleasure" to argue that a person risks bringing upon himself suffering many times greater than the pleasure expected by yearning for ever "grander states." Moreover, trying to achieve these states requires "the most strenuous endeavour."[112] Is it right, therefore, "to exhaust ourselves just to surpass the present state we are accustomed to"?[113] Accepting the "image" of success conjured up in the course of a dubious kind of reasoning constitutes self-deception and delusion if we fail adequately to take into account "the road whereby alone [we] can come to it... "[114] The intelligent person ought in any case to remember that the pleasure gained, should a higher state be reached, will eventually dissipate and happiness decline.[115] The difference is that once the feeling of contentment finally vanishes, this person will be burdened with what previously had to be used as a means to climb to this state. Added to this is the fact that his desire will have been whetted, leaving him ever more inclined to continue farther along this path.

In the end, the transient pleasure enjoyed can never justify the effort expended. This is the main point he wishes to impress upon his audience. The "weariness" it requires ought rather to give pause to the reasonable man, reminding him of his final destination, rather than of the short term pleasures. For not only does the enjoyment accompanying a "shift" upwards decrease with familiarity, but weariness also ensues. Excessive pleasure-seeking in this context denotes the same instinct causing intellectual dysfunctions as that related to the lower faculties.[116] The new point he

wishes to emphasize here in his attempt to disqualify the belief that rank by itself could constitute anything worth pursuing [117] is that passion makes us "imagine that its appeal is that of the reason and not of the passion at all... "[118] Under certain circumstance, it may actually appear in the guise (**yatashabbah**) of reason, camouflaging itself (**yudallis nafsahu**) as reason.[119]

To support his contention, he carefully differentiates between reasoned and passionate representation (**mā yarī al-ᶜaql wa mā yarī al-hawā**).[120] Reason always represents what is harmful as well as advantageous, normally through careful argument and clear justification (**bi-ḥijjah wa ᶜadhur wāḍih**).[121] The reasonable person must always suspect his judgement whenever he is at an advantage, since passion might cause him to falter.[122] Passion, on the other hand, can only picture the advantageous, without giving the rest, thus offering only a truncated view of reality.[123] Yet its "show of logic" (**yatashabbah bil-ᶜaql**) is characterized by the "hesitant and interrupted" nature (**mulajlaj munqatiᶜ**) of its arguments.[124] This does not prevent one from exuding self-confidence, a shortcoming against which Razi specifically warned.

Whereas the allegory of the fallen self conceived of the possibility of redress through the sending of **ᶜaql** by the Creator Himself, in this chapter Razi takes into account the further fact that we can never be sure that the impetuosity of desire is not interfering in the reasoning process.[125] Nothing in logical reasoning by itself can render us absolutely certain about what we either do or think. Against those beguiled by the thought that mere ratiocination afforded a sure path to salvation, Razi disconcertingly phrases his doubt in terms of the fact that man's appetite is insatiable precisely because he uses his reason to realize his goals. This, of course, is assumed from the outset, when we first learned that reason, which marked man's unique distinction, opened up boundless opportunities. Though error can arise with

its use, Razi would no doubt hasten also to add, as he did in a different context in the last chapter of his book, that ideas (**maʿānī**) merely allow for "a standard of analogy and comparison" (**naqīs shay' ʿalá shay' wa naʿtabir shay' bi-shay'**).[126] The "imaginary and fictitious" (**mutawahhamah mutaṣawwarah**)[127] character no doubt allows the passions to enter in the guise of reason, though this in itself, as we said earlier, does not make for falsity. This fictitiousness is the only means by which the intellect can in fact function. It is perfectly legitimate, if we keep in mind that the proper end of reasoning is to carry the self to its desired destination.

In short, the reasoning process can never ensure absolute certainty in any temporal sense, the existential cause being that we can never be sure that passions are not interfering with our reasoning. The way to success, rather, is prudently suggested by him in terms of "modest adequacy" (**ḥālah al-kafāf**) as the proper end of every activity, "and to reach after that in the easiest possible way, the manner most secure as to its sequel (**ʿaqibah**)."[128] This is how we can profit best from that special gift, our intellect, which raises us above the beasts.[129] The pedagogical objective of Razi's argument becomes more clearly evident in this chapter. It boils down to the admonition that, failing to forego "superfluous" things, people should at least limit themselves to "their usual and accustomed state," whatever it may be, even if they have it in their power to reach for a higher state.[130]

The "fear of death"

In this manner, Razi has presented a systematic argument for the avoidance of the pain and trouble occasioned by the pursuit of pleasure at a level where the intellect is used. The concluding chapter deals with the "fear of death" and the acute sense of insecurity to which it gives rise.

While the vices discussed in the previous chapters were said to drive us ever deeper into worldly pursuits, they culminate in the fear of death, which lies at the bottom of every feeling of insecurity. Indeed, Razi acknowledges that it is so deeply engrained in our minds that it can never be completely eradicated.[131]

The notion of "fear of death" has a long history dating back to classical times, and was widely discussed by Islamic scholars.[132] The Greek philosopher Epicurus (341-270 BC), whom we met earlier, presented a powerful argument against its debilitating effect on the normal course of living. He claimed it was rooted in a vision that was really extrapolated from the immediate surroundings rather than one that arose from a true awareness of the afterlife, as all such fear had to claim. As we have noted, Epicurus was keen to undermine superstitious beliefs, though he may not himself have been as "anti-religious" as many of his critics have claimed.[133] The original subtlety of his formulations, however, seems somewhat to have been glossed over by the more unabashed materialism of his most illustrious interpreter, Lucretius, who forthrightly declared that,

> If the future holds travail and anguish in store, the self must be in existence, when that comes, in order to experience it. But from this fate we are redeemed by death, which denies existence to the self that might have suffered these tribulations. Rest assured, therefore, that we have nothing to fear in death. One who no longer is cannot suffer, when once this mortal life has been usurped by death the immortal.[134]

According to Lucretius, death had "much less existence" than sleep, indeed less existence than "what we perceive to be nothing"; and his purely atomistic interpretation of it was given in terms of a "dispersal of the seething mass of matter: once that icy breath in life has intervened, there is no more waking."[135]

Razi repeats the argument that we cannot be touched by pain after death. Pain (**adhā**), he says, is a sensation (**hass**), which is a property possessed

only by the living being (al-ḥayy).[136] Within this life, however, we must seek to reduce pain so that a state of repose might result. Without mincing his words, he infers from this that since "the state in which there is no pain is obviously more salutary than the state in which pain exists, death is therefore more salutary to man than life."[137] The pedagogical aim, rather than any ontological concern, for submitting this view seems to dictate the direction of his argument. He pursues his line of argument by contending that after physical death man cannot be troubled by any renunciation of pleasurable feeling at some future time, if that is the fear of the pleasure-seeker. Since he cannot possibly be expected, once dead, to desire the enjoyment of pleasure, nor to exist in a state of dependence of any kind, the argument that the state of death is more salutary is "doubly confirmed."[138] Any "advantage," he says, of the living over the dead can only be in terms of pleasure. But since the dead can experience neither pain nor pleasure, this turns out to be no advantage at all.[139] Indeed, even these very "ideas" which we are attributing to the dead, Razi contends, are really irrelevant as far as the dead person is concerned. What is the purpose, then, one may ask, of producing any argument at all about the dead?

His answer is very interesting, since he tries to circumvent the obvious difficulty of speaking of some such state after death which, as he admits, is not at all a "state." He reminds us of the essentially didactic function of this train of thought and the ideas associated with it. What happened was that "we merely posited them as imaginary and fictitious, to have a standard of analogy and comparison," which must be agreed to beforehand by the interlocutor.[140] The objection that we cannot apply these ideas to the dead is therefore granted: the thought of attributing things to the dead is futile if the intention is to uncover "something" while agreeing beforehand that nothing exists. But neither does the argument pertain to something

which does not yet exist, but which we are endeavouring to realize.

This is a crucial point. Referentially speaking, the question concerning the nature of the afterlife as a state simply does not arise; the notion of "death" simply precludes all discussion of it at this level. By the same token, to yearn to "leave the body" is not actually to leave it. In fact, the notion has none of the markings of the crude physicalism of metempsychosis with which Razi is sometimes associated, strictly speaking; only the most ignorant man will desire death "for its own sake" -- the underlying premise presumably being that it is illegitimate to desire things for themselves, such as pleasure-seeking implies. Moreover, to be affected or crushed by grief in face of the greatest imaginable loss -- namely, death -- before its advent is superfluous, if only because physical death is inevitable. Something of Lucretius' cheerful acceptance of it is recommended in this urging, but without its well-known "anti-religious" connotations. As far as the living are concerned, one's own death must simply be forgotten, although his earlier counsel had precisely been that the opposite was true in other people's case: their death or loss must constantly be kept in mind.

Therefore, while ascetic "death," figuratively speaking, may be regarded as a salutary "state," death in itself is of no consequence to the living, at least in this context of practical ethics. It would consequently serve us best to desist from inanely speculating on the matter, especially when the only means at our disposal are the limited intellectual tools of the ethical practitioner, who must aspire before anything else to inculcate a sense of responsible behaviour in himself and in other people, one he hopes to apply in every aspect of life. Razi observes that animals are perfectly immune to the grief which, after all, only the imagination seeking to grasp death brings in its train. Furthermore, "[t]he man who imagines [**al-mutasawwar**] death and is afraid of it," he says, "dies a separate death at

every image [**taswīrah**] he calls up, so that his imagination over a long period concentrates upon him many deaths."[141] It turns out, therefore, that the only conceivable "death" is a condition marked by grief, which results from nothing more than false reason. This is "death" as a deficient form of living. Therefore, we must continue, he insists, "to expel this grief from us."[142] And to be able to do this, we must concentrate our efforts to acquiring <u>independence</u> from excessive involvement in worldy pursuits. As we have seen in the course of this paper, the primary task of the **ᶜaql** is to achieve this through the reining of the passions.[143]

Razi summarises his position by denying that any grounds exist for fearing death. For the person of purely utilitarian inclination, there is simply no future state <u>after death</u> to worry about. Razi reasoned that such an argument was acceptable even to the most skeptical group of philosophers, those (like Lucretius perhaps) who object to the whole idea that the soul is immortal. If, on the other hand, the person bases himself on the assumption that there is an afterlife, there is no reason for concern here either, so long as his conduct remains virtuous and he "carr[ies] out all the duties imposed upon him by the religious law which is true; for this law promises him victory and repose and the attainment of everlasting bliss."[144] His "state after death" will depend on the way he lives in the present life, while still associated with his body.[145] Both positions are united in one aspect: the pedagogical repercussions of their teachings. This does not detract from other more metaphysical considerations. However, the pervasively ethical nature of his purpose is clearly emphasized, for "if any man should doubt the truth of that [religious] law, or is ignorant of it, or is not certain that it is real, it only behoves him to search and consider to the limit of his strength and power."[146] If he does this, he cannot fail

to reach his goal; but should he again fail, God will pardon him, for no man is charged with what he is incapable of doing.[147] Razi has clearly disposed of all possible sources of authoritarian prophetism which were at least implicit in the views of some of his critics, without denying the fundamental premises of prophetic tradition as these are conventionally known. Indeed, his unique contribution is in having made the practical quest for truth preconditional to religious salvation, without identifying the practical activity itself with religion.

NOTES

1. He says, in fact, after recounting a brief anecdote, that its only purpose was to "serve as an additional encouragement [**min baʿd al-munabbihat**] and incentive [**dawāʿī**] to the nobler part, for that is the sole object we have before us ub this book." (**Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhānī**, p. 44 [Arberry, p. 47])

2. **Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhānī** in Abū Bakr Muhammad b. Zakariyā' al-Rāzī (Cairo: Jamiʿah Fu'ād al-Awwal, 1939). pp. 36-8. (Arberry, p. 39-40)

3. Ibid., p. 36 (Arberry, p. 39). Razi's theory was studied by many Islamic authors. Some of these authors, according to Kraus and other sources, include: Al-ʿĀmirī, Abū al-Hasan. **Al-saʿāda wa al-isʿād** (Wiesbaden, 1957-58), p. 50 (in his discussion on different views of pleasure, he attributes to Plato, Galen and Gregorius (d. 381) a definition similar to Razi's). Al-Baydawī, Nāsir al-Dīn ʿAbdullah b. ʿUmar (685 H), **Kitāb al-tawāliʿ al-anwār** (Printed on the margins of **Sharh al-mawāqif al-Īji** [Istanbul, 1311], s. 1, p. 272); see Kraus' notes in **Rasā'il**, pp. 142-3 and p. 142, n. 3). Al-Hillī, al-Hasan b. Mutahhar al-ʿAllāmah (726 H), **Kitāb al-anwār al-malakut fī sharh al-yāqut** (ref. ʿAbbās Iqbāl, **Khandān Nawbakhtī**, p. 177); author is Abū Ishāq Ibrahim b. Nawbakhti: ref. Muhsin al-Amin al-Husaynī al-ʿĀmilī, **Kitāb aʿyān al-shiʿah** (Damascus, 1936) (s. 5, p. 104, raqm 59; see Orientalia 4 (1935), pp. 306-7; see **Rasā'il**, p. 144, n. 2). Al-Jabbār, Qādī ʿAbd, **Tathbit dalā'il al-nubuwah**, edited by ʿAbd al-Karīm ʿUthman (Beirut, 1966) (in which he rejects Razi's pleasure/pain theory and creation of man by God by "only natural means" [i.e. **al-tarīq al-tabiʿī**]; see editor's introduction, pp. 293-94). al-Kātibī, Nijm al-Dīn ʿAlī b. ʿUmar al-Qazwīnī (675 H), **Kitāb mufassal fī al-mufassil fī sharh al-muhassil**, "al-Fasl al-sābiʿ" (Theory of pleasure). Al-Kirmānī, Hamīd al-Dīn, **Al-Aqwāl al-dhahabiyah**, edited by Salah al-Sawy. Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1977 (in which he refuted **Kitāb al-tibb al-ruhānī**); see Ivanow, W., Ismaili Literature [Tehran, 1963, p. 26]. Al-Qawshakhī, ʿAlā' al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Muhammad (879 H), **Sharh al-mawāqif**, s. 3, p. 186 (also al-Hijr al-Hindiyah, 1305 H edition (p. 366); see **Rasā'il**, p. 143 for text). An informative source on what Greek philosophers said about "pleasure" is Aristotle himself in Nichomachean Ethics, translated with introduction and notes by Martin Ostwald (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1962), Bk X. Also, V. Brochard discusses the connection between Epicurean and Platonic theories of pleasure with documents in "La théorie du plaisir d'après Epicure," Etudes de philosophie ancienne et de philosophie moderne (Paris, 1929), pp. 252-293.

4. Razi says, "He continues to feel pleasure in that place [where he took refuge from pain] until his body returns to its original state; then he loses the sense of pleasure as his body goes back to normal." (Ibid., p. 36-7, [Arberry, p. 39])

5. Ibid. p. 37 (Arberry, p. 39).

6. Philebus, 42c-d.

7. In fact he states this in this treatise. (Op. cit., p. 38 [Arberry, p. 40] Kraus has published fragments of a work on pleasure. (**Rasā'il**, pp. 139-64)

8. Bar-Asher, p. 23.

9. Ibid., p. 31.

10. **Al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, p. 102 (Arberry, p. 123).

11. Goodman, p. 13.

12. Ibid., p. 14.

13. We are referring to the Philebus. See Hans-Georg Gadamer's interesting discussion of this in "The Dialectic of the Good in the Philebus," The Idea of the Good in Platonic-Aristotelian Philosophy (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), esp. pp. 110-15.

14. Op. cit., p. 62 (Arberry, p. 66).

15. Goodman, p. 10.

16. Op. cit., p. 71 (Arberry, p. 76-7).

17. Ibid., p. 71 (Arberry, p. 76).

18. Ibid., pp. 31-2 (Arberry, p. 33).

19. Ibid., p. 66 (Arberry, p. 70).

20. Ibid., p. 91 (Arberrry, p. 101).

21. Ibid., p. 91 (Arberry, p. 101).

22. Ibid., p. 91 (Arberry, p. 101).

23. Ibid., p. 80 (Arberry, p. 88).

24. Ibid., p. 81 (Arberry, p. 89).

25. Ibid., pp. 80-1 (arberry, p. 88).

26. Ibid., p. 81 (Arberry, p. 88).

27. Ibid., pp. 81-2 (Arberry, p. 89).

28. Ibid., p. 82 (Arberry, p. 90).

29. Ibid., p. 82 (Arberry, p. 90). Al-ʿĀmirī, Abū al-Hasan. **Al-saʿāda wa al-isʿād** (Wiesbaden, 1957-58), p. 50 mentions that earning should be equal to expenditure, p. 92. It must be added, however, that this was prevalent among many major Islamic thinkers after him.

30. Ibid., p. 84 (Arberry, p. 92).

31. On "carnal pleasure," see A.J. Arberry, "Nichomachean Ethics in Arabic." Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies 17 (1955).

32. Op. cit., p. 38 (Arberry, p. 40).

33. Ibid., p. 77 (Arberry, p. 83).

34. Plato argued in a similar vein that "[t]he most serious vice innate in most men's soul is one for which everybody forgives himself and so never tries to find a way of escaping. You can get some idea of this vice from the saying that a man is in the nature of the case 'his own best friend,' and that it is perfectly proper for him to have to play this role." (The Laws 731)

35. Op. cit., p. 46, (Arberry, p. 50).

36. The reason, as Plato said, is that "a love which blinds us to the faults of the beloved and makes us bad judges of goodness and beauty and justice, because we believe we should honour our own ego rather than the truth. (The Laws 731]

37. Op. cit., p. 46 (Arberry, p. 50).

38. Ibid., p. 42 (Arberry, p. 44).

39. Ibid., p. 42 (Arberry, p. 45).

40. Ibid., p. 42 (Arberry, p. 44).

41. Ibid., p. 42 (Arberry, p. 45). Language was a hotly debated issue at his time, and is one of the major themes developed by Abu Hatim in **A^{c}lam al-nubuwah.** (See especially Ch. 3, Sect. 4)

42. Ibid., p. 43 (Arberry, p. 45).

43. Ibid., p. 46 (Arberry, pp. 48-9).

44. Ibid., p. 46 (Arberry, p. 49).

45. Ibid., p. 48, (Arberry, p. 52).

46. Ibid., p. 48 (Arberry, p. 52).

47. Ibid., p. 49 (Arberry, p. 53).

48. Ibid., p. 50 (Arberry, p. 54).

49. Ibid., p. 50 (Arberry, p. 54).

50. Ibid., p. 51 (Arberry, p. 55).

51. Ibid., p. 51 (Arberry, p. 55).

52. Ibid., p. 51 (Arberry, p. 55).

53. Ibid., p. 51 (Arberry, p. 55).

54. Ibid., p. 51 (Arberry, p. 56).

55. Ibid., 51 (Arberry, p. 56).

56. Ibid., pp. 51-2 (Arberry, p. 56).

57. Ibid., p. 52 (Arberry, p. 56).

58. Ibid., p. 52 (Arberry, p. 56).

59. Ibid., p. 52 (Arberry, p. 56).

60. Ibid., p. 52 (Arberry, p. 57).

61. Ibid., p. 53 (Arberry, p. 57).

62. Ibid., p. 55 (Arberry, p. 59).

63. Ibid., p. 55 (arberry, p. 59).

64. Ibid., p. 60 (Arberry, p. 64).

65. Ibid., p. 60 (Arberry, p. 64).

66. Ibid., p. 61 (Arberry, p. 65).

67. Ibid., pp. 61-2 (Arberry, p. 66).

68. Ibid., p. 62 (Arberry, p. 66).

69. Ibid., p. 62 (Arberry, p. 66).

70. Ibid., p. 62 (Arberry, 66).

71. Mūsā, p. 190.

72. Op. cit., p. 62 (Arberry, p. 66).

73. Ibid., p. 62 (Arberry, pp. 66-7).

74. This is how he recounted it:

> As a camel is to a pilgrim, so the body is like an animal upon which the heart rides. The pilgrim is obliged to give food and water to his camel, and to treat it with attention, that he may reach the end of his journey in safety, and by its means be successful in the object for which he travels. But the attention bestowed by the pilgrim upon his camel, should be only in that proportion which is really necessary. If he should be busy with his camel day and night, and should expend all his capital in feeding it, he would not reach his destination, but would ultimately become separated from his caravan, would lose all that he possessed, and in view of the injury he had sustained, he would be the victim of unceasing regrets, and ruin would ensue. Just so is it with man in general. If he pass all his days in attending to the preservation of the body, and spend the capital of his life, in providing food and drink for the body, he will

> not reach the mansions of felicity, but will wander in the wilderness of destruction, without capital, penniless and a naked vagabond. (The Alchemy of Happiness, translated from the Turkish by Henry A. Homes [Albany, N.Y.: J. Munsell, 1873], p. 67; cf. also pp. 67-9)

75. Op. cit., p. 71 (Arberry, p. 76).

76. He mentions Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Theophrastus, Eudemus, Chrysippus, Themistius and Alexandria. Ibid., p. 63 (Arberry, p. 67).

77. Ibid., pp. 67-8 (Arberry, p. 72).

78. Ibid., p. 65 (Arberry, p. 69).

79. Ibid., p. 68 (Arberry, p. 72).

80. Ibid., p. 65 (Arberry, p. 69).

81. Ibid., p. 66 (Arberry, p. 70).

82. Ibid., p. 66 (Arberry, p. 70).

83. Ibid., p. 66 (Arberry, p. 70).

84. Ibid., 69 (Arberry, p. 74).

85. Ibid., p. 68 (Arberry, p. 72).

86. Ibid., p. 68 (Arberry, p. 73).

87. Ibid., p. 68 (Arberry, p. 72).

88. Ibid., p. 78 (Arberry, p. 85).

89. Ibid., p. 78 (Arberry, p. 85).

90. Ibid., p. 78 (Arberry, p. 86).

91. Ibid., p. 79 (Arberry, p. 86).

92. Festugière, III, p. 238.

93. Op. cit., p. 79 (Arberry, p. 86).

94. Ibid., p. 79 (Arberry, pp. 86-7).

95. Ibid., p. 79 (Arberry, p. 87).

96. Ibid., p. 80 (Arberry, p. 87).

97. Mūsā, p. 181.

98. Ibid., p. 182.

99. Abū Hātim held that all new knowledge must come directly from God through inspiration or **ilhām.** While this is not necessarily inconsistent with Razi's own position, he, unlike Razi, was constrained to argue that no new knowledge was possible since no new revelation could be received. Two different paradigms of truth were at work. See his **A'lām al-nubuwah.**

100. Op. cit., pp. 85-6 (Arberry, p. 94).

101. Fazlur Rahman, Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979) p. 36.

102. Ibid., p. 38.

103. Ibid., p. 41.

104. Ibid., p. 83 (Arberry, p. 90).

105. Ibid., p. 83 (Arberry, p. 91).

106. Op. cit., p. 83 (Arberry, p. 91).

107. Ibid., p. 83 (Arberry, p. 91).

108. Ibid., pp. 85 (Arberry, pp. 93-4).

109. Ibid., p. 86 (Arberry, pp. 94-95).

110. Ibid., p. 86 (Arberry, p. 94).

111. Ibid., p. 86 (Arberry, p. 94). This seems consonant with the Qur'anic view. It is illsutrated by numerous **ayat,** such as **"inna al-insan li-hubb al-khayr la-shadid."**

112. Ibid., p. 86 (Arberry, p. 95).

113. Ibid., p. 86 (Arberry, p. 95).

114. Ibid., p. 87 (Arberry, p. 95).

115. Ibid., p. 88 (Arberry, p. 95).

116. In the extreme case of "dictatorial reason" and exaggerated asceticism, Razi associated this dysfunction with the "younger Socrates" (Goodman, p. 11). As Goodman points out, the origin of the ascetic image of Socrates may have been the distorted Cynic image passed on to Muslim students of Hellenic works in philosophy. (Ibid., pp. 6-7) On the Muslims' knowledge about Socrates' life and different variations (including Razi's view), see Atiyeh, pp. 133-66.

117. Op. cit., p. 88 (Arberry, p. 96).

118. Ibid., p. 88 (Arberry, p. 97).

119. Ibid., p. 88 (Arberry, p. 97).

120. Ibid., p. 88 (Arberry, p. 97). Plato's phrase on self-love, quoted above is pertinent to this distinction. He said: "a love which blinds us to the faults of the beloved and makes us bad judges of goodness and beauty and justice, because we believe we should honour our own ego rather than the truth." (The Laws 731) See also al-Farabi's **Talkhīs**, p. 26. The idea was widespread in Islamic literature, as the following tradition testifies: "The love of a thing blinds and deafens," Wensick, A.J. Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane (Leiden, 1936), vol. 1, p. 409. And the same one is found in Jalal al-Din al-Rumi's **al-Mathnawi**.

121. Ibid., p. 89 (Arberry, p. 98).

122. Ibid., p. 89 (Arberry, p. 98).

123. Ibid., p. 89 (Arberry, p. 98).

124. Ibid., p. 89 (Arberry, p. 98).

125. Ibid., p. 86 (Arberry, p. 94).

126. Ibid., p. 94 (Arberry, p. 104). He did this in his last chapter, "On Death," where he sheds more light on the "imaginary" or perhaps hypothetical character of this type of reasoning by noting that

> When this line is denied to you, you are finished according to the laws of logic: this is a well-known variety of termination which is called by logicians "applying the closure," because the opponent closes the discourse and runs away from it, not attempting to carry it on any further for fear of having the verdict go against him. Even if he has resort to repetition and saying the same things all over again, the ultimate result is the same. (Ibid., p. 94 [Arberry, p. 104-5])

127. Ibid., p. 94 (Arberry, p. 104).

128. Ibid., p. 90 (Arberry, p. 99).

129. Ibid., p. 90 (Arberry, p. 99).

130. Ibid., p. 90 (Arberry, p. 99).

131. Ibid., p. 93 (Arberry, p. 103).

132. It was discussed by al-Ghazzālī in **Mizān al-ᶜamal**, pp. 393-9; Ibn Hazm, **Risālah fī ᶜalam al-mawt wa ibtālih**, in **"Rasā'il"** (Leiden, 1894), p. 105 [with very similar views to Razi's]; Miskawayh, **Tahdhīb al-akhlāq** (he has a whole chapter on **"ᶜilāj al-khawf min al-mawt,"** pp. 183-9); Ibn Sīna devotes a treatise on the subject, **Risālah fī dafᶜ al-ghamm min al-mawt**, with similarities to Razi. See A.F. Mehren, Traités mystiques d'Avicenne [Amsterdam, 1889-1899], pp. 39-57.

133. See Epicurus' letter to Menoiceus, where he explains that since God is most blessed, it is not the "gods" but people's false assumptions which are unacceptable, for they lead to wickedness. See Sarton, A History of Science: Ancient Science through the Golden Age of Greece (New York: W.W. Norton &

Company, 1952), p. 593.

134. Lucretius, On the Nature of the Universe (Middlesex, England; Penguin Books Ltd.), p. 122.

135. Ibid., p. 124.

136. Op. cit., p. 93 (Arberry, p. 103).

137. Ibid., p. 93 (Arberry, p. 103).

138. Ibid., p. 93 (Arberry, p. 104).

139. Ibid., p. 94 (Arberry, p. 104).

140. Ibid., p. 94 (Arberry, p. 104). Gadamer has an interesting characterization of the Socratic dialogue as "a serious game, even though only based on words.

141. Ibid., p. 95 (Arberry, p. 106).

142. Ibid., 95 (Arberry, p. 106).

143. As would the animals by placing fetters or **ᶜuqūl** on their limbs, as Jubbā'ī would say. There was a relation, he explained, "parce que l'homme est capable de s'empêcher, grâce à elle, d'accomplir ce qu'un fou est capable de s'empêcher de faire." (Albert N. Nader, Le système philosophique des Muᶜtazila [Beyrouth: Dar el-Machreq Sarl, 1984], p. 240)

144. Op. cit., pp. 95-6 (Arberry, p. 106).

145. **al-Sīrah al-falsafīyah**, p. 101 (Arberry, p. 123).

146. Op. cit., p. 96 (Arberry, p. 106).

147. Ibid., p. 96 (Arberry, pp. 106-7).

Chapter Six

CONLUSION

The question of **ᶜaql** (reason or intellect) is central to Razi's philosophy. But though true, one cannot simply infer from this, as many scholars do today, that Razi was necessarily a "rationalist"; certainly not a "rationalist" in any modern Western sense. Moreover, despite his singular interest in **ᶜaql**, there is no real evidence to suggest that his views could not be accommodated to the prophetic tradition of which he was a part. Indeed, this is precisely what Goodman's argument appeared to suggest.

It is still arguable that, if anything, his insistence in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī** that knowledge was a form of "dramatization" and, in a sense, "fictional," lends credence to Abū Ḥātim's charge his notion of "truth" embraced falsehood. Razi's strategy had been to contend that there was no end to intellectual perfectibility, which is what gave occasion to Abū Ḥātim's charge in the first place. But we have tried to understand his dynamic conception of truth in the light of other sources beside Abū Ḥātim. It appeared to us in **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**, for example, that epistemological rules remained uniform at every stage of "self-realization," beginning with the most mundane ethico-practical considerations. While logical reasoning was analogous to medical treatment, it was inseparable from "truth value" all the same. Indeed, It was by virtue of this "holistic" and typically medical approach that "self-realization," in which later mystical tradition had infused both an existential and an epistemological sense, could determine the nature of metaphysical investigation itself.

Abū Ḥātim's book, which we examined in Chapter Two, is valuable particularly for the allegory it has transmitted to us. Because of its figurative language, this allegory appears to offer an interesting escape

from certain epistemological dilemmas, by functioning as both explanation and illustration. The philosophical purpose of his allegory is in fact twofold: to prove both that the world was created and that **ʿaql** constituted the means by which God's Order, Justice and Mercy were restored in the wake of the "material confusion" caused by the self's "fall." Razi recounts how the **ʿaql** was created by God for the benefit of the "fallen" self but, significantly, does not include it among the "pre-eternals." We found that it occurred only in the movement back to salvation. So long as it remained part of this general movement and promoted the salvation of the self in every respect, that self was able to partake of truth. Razi managed in this manner to impose some very definite epistemological limits without necessarily impugning the notion of "truth."

The most telling aspect of the allegory is that **ʿaql** was sent by the Creator for the soul's ultimate salvation from the material world; this imposes certain conditions on his concept of knowledge, whereby knowledge is required to have a recognizably beneficial and profitable value for human life. This is precisely the theme he systematically develops in **Kitāb al-tibb al-rūḥānī** within a medically-inspired paradigm. The position which Razi seems to be arguing is consequently far more elaborately explained in this second text. In Abū Ḥātim's account of their debates, Razi's rejection of the restrictive epistemological interpretation of "revelation" offered by his opponent -- which was indeed quite current among some of his other intellectual opponents -- does not necessarily imply a rejection of the prophetic tradition in toto. Such an inference seems to us to be, on the whole, rather superfluous. More probably, Razi is more likely to have reckoned the difficulties which such an uncompromising and absolutist position surely engendered. It not only seems ineffective against the argument for the eternity of the world, but perhaps bore no relation

to actual human needs. That view would hence do little to illuminate the path to salvation.

We saw in the case of the Sufī thinker, al-Hujwirī, that such an intellectualized understanding had safely been dismissed, as far as the question of **ilhām** was concerned, by early mystical Islamic tradition. We also saw that certain Greek influences coming into play at this early juncture in Islamic history may have been at the root of the controversy, thereby accentuating the authoritarian implications of doctrines seeking to defend epistemological "revelation" against encroachment by non-Islamic traditions. It is clear from Razi's dialogue with Abū Ḥātim that the former was concerned to refute this aspect of his opponent's doctrine.

Unfortunately, we do not have in our possession any work by him which could enlighten us further on his position. We have had to clarify the relationship between knowledge and authority by referring to al-Fārābī's contributions to the question. Authority, it turns out in the latter's case, was conceived neither at some imagined end nor beginning of the process of knowledge acquisition. It was necessary at every step, so to speak. The Imām or philosopher-king needed authority before he could lay claim to true knowledge. Yet this knowledge itself, in a kind of mutual unfolding, invested him with the necessary legitimacy. The figure of the Imām also corresponded to the ideal of a full-fledged community," that is, the "virtuous city." A similar vision, based on the analogical relationship between the individual and society, was used by other authors, such as Miskawayh and al-Ghazzālī. Although Razi did not elucidate this relationship in any explicit fashion, we found that the micro-macrocosm motif, so typical of medical tradition, is a pervasive element in his analogical scheme. It is clearly reflected, of course, in his claim that he could furnish a convincing argument against the world's eternity through his allegory of the "fall" of

the self, where the self's attachment to matter, in effect, constituted the cause of the world's coming into being.

The same conception is carefully laid out in his longest surviving philosophical treatise, namely, **Kitāb al-ṭibb al-rūḥānī**. Razi begins by discussing briefly Plato's tripartite conception of the "soul," without openly endorsing it. The "soul" is said to be comprised of the rational and divine, the choleric and animal and, finally, the vegetative, incremental and appetitive. The functional relationship among these "souls" or faculties is central; a state of equilibrium exists when each functions properly in relation to the other, and the rule of the rational and divine soul, in a sense, epitomizes this perfect state. On this scale, it is possible to envisage, in Miskawayh's sense, justice (**ʿadl**). For Razi, this state of equilibrium is actively pursued through the proper deployment of each of the lower faculties, and signalled balance on three levels:

(1) within the individual,
(2) within society and
(3) between the individual and society.

The equilibrious state is really manifested neither individually alone nor collectively alone; neither the individual nor society is conceivable in isolation, but through their exchange relationship. It is at this level that the best and the worst in human characteristics are observable -- in other words, where virtues and vices manifest themselves. It is the attachment to worldly possessions and envy that worked to undermine the balanced relationship between the individual and the collectivity.

The internal state of repose that must be actively sought, however, is intimately connected to the pleasure model used by Razi to argue his view. We have found that his definition of pleasure is strikingly similar to Plato's in the Philebus. Our philosopher begins his discussion on the subject with a definition that virtually reduces the concept of pleasure to a

sense of "return" from a previous state, where painful sensations were initially experienced. Since this sensation must eventually cease and a state of repose be restored, the most obvious course is to resist the whole temptation of seeking pleasure, which cannot but destroy the original state of repose in the first place. Razi tried to justify this through the double proposition that pleasure always involves much greater pain than is at first anticipated, and that the greatest pleasure is not of this world at all, but of the hereafter. Goodman pointed out, however, that the rejection of immediate pleasures was connected only to the specificity of the human act; at the more general level, Razi was able to speak in what the author called "hedonic" terms. In this second sense, there is a different, metaphorical usage. However, since Razi thought that only the principle of moderation and the just mean, a principle whose fundamental importance he constantly reiterated, could achieve equilibrium or repose, this same metaphorical sense is manifested in the ethical field as well, where the use of analogical reasoning comes into play. Although necessary, the suppression of the passions recommended by him fails to lead to the excessive world renunciation some of his critics have often charged him with. This is because moderation constitutes an overriding principle at every level, to the extent of defining even the strictest regimen required by "asceticism." The real object is to guard against the rule of the instincts in whatever form, which he insisted leads only to pain, not pleasure. Indeed, in a metaphorical sense, pleasure may conceivably be used even as a remedy against excess anxiety and worry; for excessive intellectualism, too, constitutes a breach of the order to be found among all the faculties. Passion, Razi pointed out, may make a show of logic in this case, though its arguments are always inconsistent and identifiable. Therefore, when in doubt, selecting the most moderate course is always the safest course. This helps establish good habits in the long

run and greater facility with every decision in the future. A contrary course only weakens one's defences; and, with every failure to follow the sound advice of reason, the ability to cope with future difficulties diminishes. Lack of moderation would also leave the person more inclined to aspire to reach ever grander and higher levels, which only multiplies the pains and losses, since loss is in any case inevitable. In short, insecurity would be reinforced to a degree that may exacerbate the "fear of death"--though this fear can never be completely extirpated.

We have tried to uncover some of the underlying epistemological presuppositions connected with his discussion on the "fear of death." Briefly, then, the "fear of death" was considered to be baseless, because neither pleasure nor pain can be projected after death. If death were to be judged in terms of cessation of pleasure, it constituted the best possible state, by virtue of the fact that such a state is considered bereft of all sensation. In this sense at least, it must be actively sought. But Razi was by no means recommending suicide as a rational course. His purpose rather was to show the philosopher who disbelieved in the afterworld that if he merely followed the logic of his own argument, he ought to have no fear of death. The believer, on the other hand, ought to curb his anxieties, knowing well that if he followed the right and legal path, he ought only to expect the reward promised him by his religion. Should he fail, God is Merciful and would not encumber him with a burden he cannot bear. Razi tries to deal in this manner with two categories of people, both of whom are subject to the same rules in life. He tried to do this by demonstrating the uses of reason, and dispelling some of the misconceptions and excessive expectations to which certain beliefs had given rise. His main strategy in his ethical treatise has been to argue against "seeking things for their own sake," which is quintessentially pleasure-seeking. His use of "pleasure" as an intellectual

distraction is medically-inspired, and does not lead to self-contradiction. Instead, in this particular context there is an underlying link between this metaphorical use of "pleasure" as a didactic instrument and the epistemological controls he appears to have imposed on the type of knowledge to which philosophers could lay claim. Propositions thus depend not only on their truth value but also on extralogical criteria making for the continued "health" of the patient or traveller (whichever the case) on his way to recovery or final destination. Such a link, it would appear, adds up to a medical paradigm for philosophical discourse.

- END -

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