

THE CONCEPT OF TAWHID IN THE THOUGHT OF

HAMID AL-DIN AL-KIRMANI

(d. after 411/1021)

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of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy**

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation deals with the concept of *tawḥīd* in the thought of Kirmānī. Kirmānī played an active role in defending and propagating the Fāṭimid cause during Imām al-Ḥākim's reign. He is considered a major exponent of the Ismaili faith. Ismailism is one of the Muslim schools of thought which advocate an apophatic theology, based on the incapacity of human language to describe God as He deserves. Kirmānī's exposition of *tawḥīd* is a more minute and further elaboration of this stand. In analyzing the two aspects of *tawḥīd* -- related to the act of God and to that of man -- Kirmānī tries to demonstrate that in neither case is the act of *tawḥīd*, due to its intrinsic contingency, applicable to God. Rather, *tawḥīd* is related to his creatures, and hence although it conveys the most subtle and most noble meaning in speech, it cannot be applied to God. The Ismaili concept of *tawḥīd*, thus, in negating the attributes of the existents from God, whether physical or spiritual, reaches its climax in Kirmānī's thought and God becomes absolutely ineffable and incognizable to His creatures directly.

Nonetheless, according to Kirmānī and other Ismaili thinkers, God has compensated for the impossibility of the direct recognition (*ma'rifah*) of Him, through the recognition of His spiritual and physical *ḥudūd* which are thus necessary intermediaries (*wasā'it*).

RÉSUMÉ

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Cette étude traite du concept de *tawḥīd* dans la pensée de Kirmānī. Celui-ci jouait un rôle actif dans la défense et la propagation de la cause fāṭimide, durant le règne de l'Imām al-Ḥākim. On le considère comme un interprète important de la foi ismaélienne. L'Ismaélisme est une des écoles musulmanes de pensée préconisant une théologie apophatique, fondée sur l'idée de l'incapacité du langage humain de décrire Dieu, comme il mériterait d'être décrit. L'interprétation qu'en fait Kirmānī développe la notion du *tawḥīd* d'une manière bien plus détaillée et plus approfondie. En analysant les deux aspects du *tawḥīd* -- par rapport à l'acte de Dieu et à celui de l'homme, Kirmānī essaie de montrer qu'à cause de sa contingence intrinsèque, l'acte du *tawḥīd* n'est en aucun cas applicable à Dieu. C'est pour cette raison même que le *tawḥīd* se rapporte plutôt à ses créatures. Ainsi, même s'il transmet le sens le plus subtil et la plus noble signification du langage, il ne saurait être applicable à Dieu. De ce fait, en reniant les attributs de Dieu, qu'ils soient spirituels ou physiques, le concept ismaélien du *tawḥīd* atteint son sommet dans la pensée de Kirmānī, et Dieu devient absolument ineffable et inconnaissable directement par ses créatures.

Néanmoins, selon Kirmānī et d'autres penseurs ismaéliens, Dieu a compensé l'impossibilité de le connaître directement (*ma'rifah*) par la reconnaissance des *ḥudūd* spirituels et physiques qui sont dès lors des intermédiaires (*wasā'it*) nécessaires.

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NOTE ON TECHNICALITIES

The definite article (*alif-lâm*) in *nisbah* names is not used throughout this dissertation except for *Kirmânî* at the beginning, and is dropped thereafter. The transliteration system used is that of the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, with the following exceptions:

- 1) *q*, *dh*, *th* and *w*, instead of *z*, *z*, *s* and *v* (in Persian).
- 2) The French cedila under the letters, instead of dot.
- 3) 'ayn (ع) is represented by a superscript open bracket (') instead of (').
- 4) Long vowels as well as *alif maqṣûrah* are denoted by circumflex instead of a bar.
- 5) Non-English words are italicized instead of underlined.
- 6) *Tashdîd* in *wâw* and *yâ'* is represented with double *wâw* and double *yâ'* instead of *ûw* and *îy*.

Abridged Names and Abbreviations

a) Abridged Names

<i>Biobibliographische</i>	<i>Biobibliographische Notizen zur islamischen Theologie</i> ; see Van Ess.
<i>Biobibliography</i>	<i>Biobibliography of Ismâ'îlî Literature</i> ; see Poonawala.
<i>Chiliastische Erwartung</i>	<i>Chiliastische Erwartung und die Versuchung der Götlichkeit der Kalif al-Hâkim (386-411 H.)</i> ; see Van Ess.
<i>Fihrist</i>	<i>Fihrist al-kutub wa-al-rasâ'il</i> ; see al-Majdû'.
<i>Fyzee Coll.</i>	<i>A Descriptive Catalogue of the Fyzee Collection of the Ismâ'îlî Manuscripts</i> ; see Goriawala.

Guide	A Guide to Ismaili Literature; see Ivanow.
Hebräische	Hebräische und syrische Zitate in Ismâ'îlîschen Schriften; see Kraus.
Histoire	Histoire de la Philosophie Islamique; see Corbin.
History	History of Ismâ'îlî Da'wat and its Literature during the last phase of the Fatimid Empire; see H. Hamdânî.
Ism. Lit.	Ismaili Literature; see Ivanow.
Al-Kâmil	Al-Kâmil fî al-Ta'rîkh; see Ibn Athîr.
Kashf	Kashf al-Mahjûb; see Sijistânî.
Al-Muntaẓam	Al-Muntaẓam fî Ta'rîkh al-Mulûk wa-al-Umam; see Ibn Jawzî.
Al-Nujûm	Al-Nujûm al-Zâhirah fî Mulûk Miṣr wa-al-Qâhirah; see Ibn Taghrîbirdî.
Râḥat	Râḥat al-'aql.
Rise of the Fâtîmids	The Ismaili Tradition concerning the Rise of the Fâtîmids; see Ivanow.
Al-Majâlis	Al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah; see al-Mu'ayyad.
Majmû'ah	Majmû'at Rasâ'il al-Kirmânî; see Kirmânî.
Some Unknown	Some Unknown Ismâ'îlî Authors and their Works; see H. Hamdânî.
Al-Şulayḥiyyûn	Al-Şulayḥiyyûn wa-al-ḥarakah al-Fâtîmiyyah fî al-Yaman; see H. Hamdânî.
Ta'rîkh	Ta'rîkh-i Fâtîmiyyîn-i Miṣr; see

Tanbîh

Zâhid 'Alî.

Tanbîh al-hâdî wa-al-mustahdî; see Kirmânî.

Tuhfat

Tuhfat al-mustajbibîn, see Şijistânî.

b) Abbreviations

AIED

Annals de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales de l'Université d'Alger.

AS

Arabian Studies.

EI2

Encyclopaedia of Islam, 2nd edition.

ER

Encyclopaedia of Religion.

GAL

Geschichte des arabischen Literatur.

GAS

Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums.

JAOS

Journal of American Oriental Society.

JBBRAS

Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

JRAS

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

MW

The Muslim World.

SEI

Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam.

SI

Studia Islamica.

ZDMG

Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is an attempt to study Abû al-Ḥasan Ḥamīd al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Abd Allāh b. Muḥammad al-Kirmānī's¹ concept of *tawḥīd*.² Kirmānī lived during the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries.³ He is regarded as one of the most important Ismaili dā'īs and thinkers. Since most of Kirmānī's works are in defence or elaboration of the Ismaili faith,⁴ this dissertation can also be considered as an attempt to further the study of Ismailism, or Ismā'īliyyah⁵ (the Arabic form), in general. In the following pages, an attempt will be made to show the reasons for the importance of undertaking such a study towards arriving at an objective and impartial understanding of Ismailism.

Ismailism, a Shiite subsect, which was able to realize its theocratic Islamic ideals during the Fāṭimid caliphate,⁶ despite the fierce opposition and persecution of the 'Abbāsīd caliphs, has played an important role in the history of Islam. Its vitality has attracted the attention of a number of scholars in the past as well as in the present.

Unfortunately, till recently, most of the studies undertaken have been based on hostile sources,

which have made the subject more complex and obscure, instead of helping us to understand it. To quote but one example of such a hostile source, 'Abd al-Qâhir Baghdâdî (d.429/1037) writes in his *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*:

The harm of the Bâtînis against the sects of Islam is greater than the harm of Jews, Christians and Magians; nay, greater than the harm of the Materialists and all kinds of infidels and unbelievers; nay, greater than the harm of the Anti-Christ who will appear at the End of Time (*âkhir al-zamân*), for those who have from the appearance of their *da'wah* until today gone astray are more than those who will go astray through the Anti-Christ at the time of his appearance, because the temptation of the Anti-Christ will not last more than forty days' time. Thus the ignominies of the Bâtînis are more than the number of the particles of sand and the drops (of rain).'

Further he says:

The most plausible explanation to my mind is that they (the Bâtînis) are *Zindîq* Materialists who profess a belief in the eternity of the universe, and disacknowledge the apostles and all the prophets of Law, because they are disposed to permit everything to which one's natural desires incline.'

Regarding the critical value of such accusations, W. Ivanow remarks:

Many a time have I read the section dealing with Ismailism in the well-known work by Baghdâdî, *al-Farq bayna'l-Firaq*, with the feeling (which, I am sure, is shared by many other students) that much in it is fundamentally wrong. The author ... was apparently a Persian who for the most part lived in Nîshâpûr, and died soon after 429/1037. In his note he rabidly attacks the Fâtimid caliphs and Ismailism in general, and, writing in an excited tone, collects all scandalous untruths about them on which he can

lay his hands.'

This kind of anti-Ismaili propaganda, although it could not eradicate the impact of Ismaili teachings and thought upon the spiritual and intellectual circles of the Muslims, greatly reviled Ismailism in the eyes of the general public, because it was the voice of the majority. While the propaganda and polemics were never one-sided,¹⁰ nonetheless the voice of the anti-Ismaili majority was able, in the course of time, to greatly suppress the Ismaili voice. The hostility against the Ismailis was further compounded when early Western scholarship, coming into contact primarily with Sunni Islam, considered it the sole representative of Islam, and took the Sunni stand against Shiism for granted, as has been observed by Josef Van Ess:

... the hostile Sunni approach reached Europe first and was largely taken for granted.¹¹

C. J. Adams also points out:

One result of considering the Shī'ah heterodox has been a relative neglect of their contribution to Islamic history by Western scholars, who for the most part look upon the Sunnis as the main line of Islamic development.¹²

This Western approach impaired the Shiite position so profoundly that even today, to consider Shiism a heterodox movement against orthodox Islam - represented by Sunnism - is an attitude not uncommonly met with in Western

scholarship.¹³

However, the appearance of Ismaili literature in recent years and the research carried out by scholars such as W. Ivanow, H. Corbin and others has proved the futility of such accusations against this Shiite faith. W. Ivanow remarks:

Only since a portion of genuine Ismaili literature had 'leaked out' from the unrelenting secrecy in which it was always kept, can we to our great astonishment, see for ourselves how enormous amount of fiction, misunderstanding, misconception and especially deliberate lie, formed our supposed to be reliable and generally accepted knowledge of the history of Ismailism still two to three decades ago.¹⁴

Joseph Van Ess also writes:

For a long time research on Ismā'īlism has been handicapped by a lamentable lack of primary sources. Here again the hostile Sunni approach reached Europe first and was largely taken for granted. It was only after the Second World War that an increasing number of the texts became available to the scholars, thanks to the editions by Muhammad Kāmil Ḥusayn ..., by Husein Hamdānī, by 'Arif Tāmīr, by Muṣṭafā Ghālib, by A.A.A. Fyzee, by H. Corbin and others.¹⁵

It is quite clear from the above discussion that to identify Sunnism with Islam and to ignore Shiism in general and Ismailism in particular is no longer a tenable stand, and hence to study Shiism or Islam in general only through Sunni sources will mostly lead to a biased and partial understanding. Thus for a balanced and impartial study of Islam, we need more and more Shiite primary

sources, and we need to translate these sources into Western languages.

The present work is an attempt in this direction. In choosing the present topic -- Kirmânî's concept of *tawhîd* -- three main reasons have been taken into consideration:

- a) Islam is a monotheistic religion and *tawhîd* is its most fundamental principle of faith. Therefore, in order to study and evaluate the position of any Islamic sect, in juxtaposition to others, it is of prime importance to study its concept of *tawhîd*. In Ismailism *tawhîd* is of additional importance, for it is not a mere confession of the oneness of God, but it also comprises all the sciences and hence it is the key to comprehending all the systems and orders of the physical, spiritual and religious worlds.
- b) Kirmânî belongs to a period in which Ismaili theology was elaborated quite systematically. The systematization and interpretation of the Ismaili creed, in the language of the philosophy in vogue, had begun long before him with Abû al- Ḥasan or (Abû (Abd Allâh) Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Nasafî (or Nakhshabî) (d. 331/942),¹⁶ Abû Ḥâtim (Abd al-Raḥmân (or Aḥmad) b. Ḥamdân Râzî Warsinânî (Warsanani) (d. after 322/933-4),¹⁷ Abû Ya'qûb Ishâq b. Aḥmad

Sijistānī (or Sijzī) (d. after 360/970),¹⁸ Abū
 al-Qāsim Jaʿfar b. al-Ḥasan b. Faraj b. Ḥawshab
 (Jaʿfar b. Manṣūr al-Yaman) (d. 365/975 or
 380/990),¹⁹ al-Nuʿmān b. Muḥammad b. Manṣūr b.
 Aḥmad b. Ḥayyūn Tamīmī (d. 363/973),²⁰ and other
 dāʿīs, but it seems that there were some acute
 controversies among them.²¹ Kirmānī came after them
 and tried to reconcile their controversial
 interpretations regarding the Ismaili faith, in his
 al-Riyāḍ²² and systematized it in his Rāḥat al-ʿaql.
 Thus his Rāḥat al-ʿaql became the standard work on
 theology for later dāʿīs, particularly for the
 Mustaʿlawī dāʿīs, who regard it as one of the four
 fundamental works on Mustaʿlawī Ismailism.²³ In
 Nizārī Ismailism, however, there is no such
 tradition of giving fundamental importance to Rāḥat
 al-ʿaql or to any other work written by a dāʿī.²⁴
 This, however, does not decrease the importance of
 Kirmānī. He has been held in high esteem by both
 branches and praised in glorious words. A Mustaʿlawī
 dāʿī, Imād al-Dīn Idrīs (d.872/1468), considers him
 "the foundation of the (Ismaili) daʿwah on which its
 pillars rest, through whom its reputation is exalted and
 its minaret erected."²⁵ A Nizārī dāʿī, Nūr al-Dīn
 Aḥmad (d.849/1445), says: "Had the Ismaili daʿwah not

produced any (*dāʿī*) other than Kirmānī he alone would have been sufficient for its pride and glory."²⁶ Further, Kirmānī's position can also be seen from the fact that he was the chief of the *Dār al-Ḥikmah*, besides being in charge of the *daʿwah* in two regions during Imām al-Ḥākim's time (375/985-411/1020).²⁷

All this shows Kirmānī's high position within Ismailism. To study Kirmānī, therefore, means to study the mainstream of the Ismaili *daʿwah* approved by the Imām.

c) Since Kirmānī has touched on most of the prevalent philosophical ideas, which he tries to interweave with the Ismaili faith, it seems important to study him even from a purely philosophical point of view. His dealing with philosophical issues such as emanation versus creation, the relations between the *mubdīʿ*, *mubdaʿ* and *ibdāʿ*, and the place of the ten intellects in his cosmology and their similarity to those of Fārābī (257-339/870-950) will thus also be briefly discussed in the third chapter.

However, despite his prominent position in the development of Ismaili, as well as Muslim thought, although his important work *Rāḥat al-ʿaql* and most of his other extant works have been published, except for

a few brief articles and sporadic references, no substantial work has as yet been done on his life and work.²⁶ Therefore, this study, it is hoped, will serve as a modest contribution towards further detailed studies of Kirmânî's thought.

CHAPTER I

The Life and Works of Kirmânî¹

Life

Very little is known about Kirmânî's life. His surname indicates that he hailed from the province of Kirmân in Iran. Kirmânî himself mentions in *Râḥat al-ʿaql* that he was the *dāʿī*² in the *jazīrah* (region)³ of Iraq and its neighbouring areas on behalf of Imām al-Ḥākim.⁴ Regarding his training in Ismaili sciences, it is said that he first studied under Sijistānī and then, for further studies, he went to Cairo,⁵ the centre of the *daʿwah*⁶ at that time. On completion of his studies, he was appointed the *ḥujjah*⁷ in the two Iraqs, *al-ʿIrâq al-ʿArabī* (Mesopotamia) and *al-ʿIrâq al-ʿAjamī* (Media), which led to him being known as *ḥujjat al-ʿIrâqayn* (i.e. the *ḥujjah* of the two Iraqs).⁸ However, since this title is not mentioned in Kirmânî's own works, it has been suggested that it may have been ascribed to him at a later date.⁹

Political Activities of Kirmānī as a dā'ī

The conflict between the Fāṭimids and the 'Abbāsids regarding the legitimacy of their respective caliphates in Islam is well known.¹⁰ After the Fāṭimid conquest of Egypt in 358/968, the conflict grew more intense, as both dynasties strove to gain political and religious power.¹¹

Since both dynasties had resorted to a *da'wah* in order to attain power, their respective dā'īs played a major role in the struggle that ensued.¹² Regarding the political activities of Kirmānī, although there is no direct mention in the available works of his contemporaries, from his own works, such as *al-Majālis al-Baṣriyyah wa-al-Baghdādiyyah*,¹³ it appears that he was actively engaged in this struggle. He was moving between Baghdād and Baṣrah, the two main intellectual centres in the area at that time, holding gatherings to propagate Ismailism and to rally people to the cause of the Fāṭimids. It has been suggested that he may have participated also, at this time, in the compilation of the *Rasā'il Ikhwān al-Ṣafā'* (the Epistles of the Brethren of Purity), thought to have been compiled in the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries, though there is very little evidence for this.¹⁴ In time, Kirmānī's efforts were rewarded when some of the governors of the 'Abbāsids transferred their loyalties

to the Fāṭimids and had the *khuṭbahs*¹⁵ read in their names, in the principalities over which they governed. In 382/992, the governor of Mawṣil, Abū al-Dardā' Muḥammad b. al-Musayyib (Uqaylī (d. 386/996), declared his loyalty to the Fāṭimid Imām al-ʿAzīz bi-Allāh (344/954-386/996).¹⁶ In 391/1000, his brother and successor, Muqallad (Uqaylī, was said, according to Ibn Ṣābī' (d.448/1056), to be making plans to attack Baghdād and to overthrow the ʿAbbāsids, but his sudden death prevented the plan from being carried out.¹⁷

In 401/1010, the *khuṭbah* was proclaimed in the name of Imām al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, by Mu'tamad al-Dawlah Qirwāsh b. al-Muqallad (Uqaylī (d.444/1052), in the entire area under his jurisdiction, in places such as Mawṣil, Anbār, Madā'in, Kūfah etc.¹⁸ In the same year, ʿAlī b. Mazīd Asadī (d.408/1018), the chief of the Banū Asad, also declared his allegiance to al-Ḥākim and had the *khuṭbah* read in Ḥillah and the districts under him¹⁹ in al-Ḥākim's name. Further, it appears that even in Baghdād itself, a strong current of support was generated by Kirmānī's activity. According to Ibn Jawzī (d.597/1200), the Shiites of Baghdād (including the Twelver Shiites) sought help from al-Ḥākim, during a quarrel between the Sunnis and Shiites in 398/1007.²⁰ Because of the secrecy surrounding Kirmānī's role, partly perhaps due to the

practice of *taqiyyah*,²¹ most historians have been unable to throw much light on his role, to the extent, sometimes, of being totally unaware of his involvement. However, it is undoubtedly to Kirmânî's activity that credit must go for the overwhelming success of the *da'wah* in Iraq. Had it not been for the sudden death of Muqallad, it is not inconceivable that a concerted attack on Baghdâd would have led to Ismaili success in that area. Nevertheless, Kirmânî's role was a crucial one in paving the way for future *dâ'is* such as al-Mu'ayyad (d. 470/1078), who, having converted Basâsîrî²² (d. 451/1059) to the Ismaili cause, was successful in seizing Baghdâd and having the *khuṭbah* proclaimed in the name of the Fâṭimid Caliph, Imâm al-Mustanşir bi-Allâh (427/1035 - 487/1094).²³

From the 'Abbâsid point of view, it seems that they were extremely hard put to, in coping with the success of Kirmânî and his colleagues and thus their only recourse was to prejudice public opinion by vilifying the ancestry of the Fâṭimid Caliphs. To this end, the 'Abbâsid Caliph, al-Qâdir bi-Allâh (381/991-422/1031), issued a manifesto in 401/1011, which was signed by several jurists attacking Fâṭimid claims to possessing an 'Alid genealogy.²⁴

This does not seem to have adversely affected the success of the Fâṭimid *da'wah* immediately, for in 450/1058 Baghdâd did eventually come under the sway

of the Fâṭimids, though this was to last only for a year.

Religious Activities of Kirmānī

As suggested earlier, it does not seem unlikely that Kirmānī was engaged in serving the Fâṭimid cause from the time of Imām al-ʿAzīz, but his role becomes conspicuous only in the time of Imām al-Ḥākim. Kirmānī in all his available works, mentions only the name of Imām al-Ḥākim. Al-Ḥākim's reign has probably been one of the most controversial and enigmatic in Islamic history and has generated a wide range of views about him, from ascribing insanity, on the one extreme end, and divinity, on the other, to him. There were all kinds of upheavals in his time: political, social and religious, which will be discussed later.

However, during al-Ḥākim's time, the Ismaili *daʿwah* was very successful. His reign is considered the golden age of the Ismaili *daʿwah*.²⁵ In 395/1004, al-Ḥākim had established the *Dār al-Ḥikmah* or *Dār al-ʿUlūm* (House of Wisdom or House of the Sciences)²⁶ for the propagation of the Ismaili *daʿwah* and to provide an intellectual milieu for systematizing Ismaili thought and doctrine. This was not to be without its difficulties, however, as in fact it had to be temporarily closed by al-Ḥākim because of the

controversial debates generated among the *dā'īs*.²⁷ The closure of the *Dār al-Ḥikmah* caused great perplexity among the people of the *da'wah*, which in turn led them to conflicting and extreme views. This situation has been described by Kirmānī himself in his epistles. As he says in *Mabāsīm al-bishārāt*:

When I reached the Prophetic sanctuary, as an emigrant and the (Alawite threshold, as a visitor, I saw that the sky was overcast with an all-pervading cloud and the people were under a great trial. The bond of the previous customs was broken. He (Imām) had turned away from the people of religion, owing to what they had earned and had refused to continue the practice (*rasm*) of holding the assembly of wisdom, which used to be held among them as a favour. The high among them had become low and the low high. And I observed that the people of the guiding *da'wah*, may God spread its lights, and those who were growing under the protection of the imamate and those who were devoted to it were bewildered by these conditions, which were befalling them and which were causing their forelocks to turn white, and they were overwhelmed by the recurrence of the causes by which only the hypocrites and sinners perish. They were colliding against each other and each one of them was accusing his companion of sinfulness and breach (of faith). Ruinous thoughts were making a mockery of them and destructive insinuations were in circulation amongst them. They did not know what caused the manifest smoke to cover them, nor did they know what caused them the open trial. Thus some of them climbed the peaks of extremism and some others, in retreat, abandoned the refuge of religion and its handles, and the pillars of belief of a small number of them and what they had accepted of the religion by their own choice and search, were violently shaken, and they were on the brink of disintegration, deviation and deterioration...²⁸

In such a perplexing situation, around 407/1016, at the request of *dā'ī* Khatgīn al-Ḍayf, (d. after 411/1020)²⁹ the then *bāb* (or *bāb al-abwāb*),³⁰ Kirmānī was summoned by al-Ḥākim to reorganise the *da'wah*, and reopen the *Dār al-Ḥikmah*. Kirmānī came to Cairo to undertake this task.³¹ Fortunately, most of Kirmānī's epistles, addressed to the dissenting *dā'īs*, on controversial issues and elaborating other obscurities, have survived. Kirmānī reopened the *Dār al-Ḥikmah* and tried to reorganise the *da'wah*. Although a group of *dā'īs* persisted in holding extremist views and eventually parted with the mainstream and formed the Druze movement,³² by his efforts a considerable degree of unity prevailed and the solidarity of the *da'wah* was restored. *Dā'ī* 'Imād al-Dīn Idrīs, commenting on Kirmānī's role, says:

He came as an abundant rainfall to the pasture after its being barren. By his explanation the black and gloomy darkness vanished and by his clear knowledge and light of guidance the superiority of the *imāms* became evident.³³

Kirmānī's death

The date of Kirmānī's death, like that of his birth, is obscure. Zāhid 'Alī thinks that Kirmānī died between 408/1017 and 425/1034.³⁴ In another place, he writes that in 434/1043, al-Mu'ayyad arrived in Egypt and went through

the higher stages of Ismaili *da'wah* under Kirmānī.³⁵ Ḥusayn Hamdānī also, on the authority of Dā'ī 'Imād al-Dīn Idrīs, writes that al-Mu'ayyad was a 'spiritual descendant' of Kirmānī,³⁶ in which case Kirmānī must have been alive at least until 434/1043. It is doubtful, however, that al-Mu'ayyad actually studied under Kirmānī, because he would have done this under his own father, who was the *ḥujjat al-jazīrah* of Fārs and after him, he himself continued the post of *ḥujjah* very efficiently.³⁷

According to W. Ivanow, the latest definite date mentioned in his works is that of the completion of *al-Wa'izah*, 408/1017.³⁸ However, the date of compilation of *Rāḥat* -- in which *al-Wa'izah* is referred to -- shows that it was compiled in 411/1021.³⁹ This means that Kirmānī was definitely alive at least until 411/1021.

It is also difficult to determine where Kirmānī died. From the accounts of 'Abbās Hamdānī and Zāhid 'Alī, it appears that he died in Cairo as *bāb al-abwāb* or chief dā'ī, replacing Khatgīn al-Ḍayf.⁴⁰ However, if *Rāḥat* was compiled in 411/1021, in Iraq,⁴¹ as stated in the text itself (p.20), this would pose certain difficulties. For if he was *bāb al-abwāb*, he would have remained in Cairo, but if he was in Iraq at that time, it seems unlikely that he died in Cairo, as *bāb al-abwāb*.

It is more likely that Kirmānī did not replace Khatgīn

al-Ḍayf as *bâb al-abwâb*, but rather, only came to Cairo to help him to reorganise the *da'wah*. After restoring it, he went back to Iraq to resume and continue his post as *ḥujjat al-'Irâqayn*. This can also be surmised from the many laudatory statements, such as "*bâban li-rahmatihi* (i.e. the door for his (al-Ḥâkim's) mercy)", used by Kirmânî for Khatgîn al-Ḍayf in his *al-Risâlah al-Durriyyah*.⁴²

Thus it is most probable that Kirmânî died in Iraq, in the position of *ḥujjat al-'Irâqayn*, rather than in Cairo in the position of *bâb al-abwâb*, as some scholars have thought.⁴³ This, however, does not necessarily exclude the possibility of Kirmânî's death having taken place in Cairo, nor his being appointed to the rank of *bâb al-abwâb*. In that case, he would have been appointed *bâb al-abwâb* sometime after 411/1021, particularly if it is true that al-Mu'ayyad studied under him, and he could have died there, but the present available materials do not support such a view.

Against the background of these meagre details, Kirmânî emerges as a figure of great stature in the intellectual life of the Ismaili *da'wah* of the time and it is important, therefore, to look at his writings. To facilitate an evaluation of his significant contribution in this regard, an annotated summary of his writings is given

here below.

Kirmânî's Writings

A. Extant Works

Kirmânî is considered one of the most learned and talented Ismaili writers of the Fâṭimid period. He was a prolific writer, and although a number of his works are lost, several have survived to give us an idea of his intellectual contribution.⁴⁴ In the following list, I have gathered all the titles of Kirmânî's works mentioned in one place or another. I have also given a translation of the contents of his important works, particularly in the case of *Râḥat al-ʿaql*, which is the culmination of his erudition in the rational and traditional sciences.

1. *Râḥat al-ʿaql*.⁴⁵

This is regarded as Kirmânî's *magnum opus*. It consists of seven *aswâr* (sing. *sûr* -- wall, enclosure, castle), the first six of which are divided into seven *mashâriʿ* (sing. *mashraʿ* -- crossroad, way, street) while the final is divided into fourteen *mashâriʿ*.

The details of the contents follow as under:-

1. On the Introduction to the Book, the Explanation of That which is Necessary for its Reader, and the Reason for the Arrangement of the Aswâr and Mashâri' as they have been arranged. 46

1. On what is necessary (to do) before reading this book, such as the refinement (education) and preparation of the soul to accept it, and that which refines and prepares it.

2. On what is necessary to acquire, such as seeking (spiritual) assistance (istizhâr) by reading religious books and following the (religious) teachers and the definition of this our book.

3. On what is necessary to read and to make it the focus of attention (qiblah) in the constant reflection on what it contains.

4. On the intended goal in the arrangement of the aswâr of this book as we have walled its mashâri'.

5. On the glad tidings of salvation and felicity in the abode of eternity and immortality (baqâ') to the one among the worshippers of God, may He be exalted, who,

through the true religion, reads it according to the path of religion and according to the arrangement of the paths of worship.

6. On the declaration of the eternal excruciating punishment to the one among those who do not deem action necessary and fail in straightening the soul, who reads this book neither according to the path of religion, nor according to the order of worship.
7. On what benefit the soul attains in acquiring perfection by reading this book and comprehending what it contains and conceiving (its contents).

II. On the Tawhîd -- the Sanctification (taqdîs), the Exaltation (tahmîd) and the Glorification (tamjîd) of God, which is the Crown of Intellects.

1. On Allâh, besides Whom there is no other God, and the falsity of His being non-existent.
2. On the falsity of His being existent.
3. On (Allâh), the exalted, Whom no attribute can

describe; He is neither a body nor in a body; neither can He be conceived by an intellect nor perceived by a sense.

4. On (Allâh), that He, the exalted, is neither form nor matter, nor does there subsist with Him, as such, something analogous to matter upon which He acts.

5. On (Allâh), that He has neither a contrary nor an equal.

6. On (Allâh), that there is nothing in the languages through which He can be described as He deserves.

7. On that the truest doctrine in the *tawhîd* is through the negation of the attributes existing in the existents from Him.

III. *On the Pen, which is the Prime Existent.*⁴⁸

1. On the establishment of the *mubda'* (Originated Being), which is the First Existent (*al-mawjûd al-awwal*); and that its existence is not by itself. It is the cause at which all things come to an end. It is neither a

body (read *jism*) nor a force in a body. It is beyond the physical world.

2. On the existence of the First Existent from God, the exalted, that it is not through emanation (*fayd*), as the philosophers say, but through *ibdâ'* (instauration), and to try to comprehend the nature of its existence is impossible.
3. On the First Existent, that it is self-identically *ibdâ'* (instauration), and self-identically the *mubda'* (Instaured), self-identically *waḥdah* (oneness) and self-identically *wāḥid* (One). It is the First Existent which is not preceded by anything nor is there anything prior to it in existence.
4. On its being perfect and eternal. It does not alter from that upon which its existence is based. It is *wāḥid* (One), and nothing is like unto it. And that it does not comprehend anything other than its essence.
5. On the quiddity of its substance; what are the necessary attributes inseparable from it; what is that which necessitates it to be subject (*ḥāmil*) to predicates resulting from that which its essence

consists of, and what is that which becomes predicate. Furthermore, it is united (*mutawahhid*) in one respect and multiple (*mutakatthir*) in the other.

6. On the fact that its glory, brilliancy, beauty and happiness by itself, is greater than can be comprehended by any description, and that it is impossible to comprehend it through that which is out of it and has its existence from it. It longs to do so, but is baffled by it. It is the greatest name (*al-ism al-a'zam*) and the greatest named (*al-musammâ al-a'zam*).

7. On its being the Prime Mover of all movable things, whatever way it moves. It is the cause of the existence of whatever is other than itself. It does not need anything other than its essence to act upon. It is intellect, intellecting and intelligible.

IV. *On the Existent from Ibdâ' which is the First Mubda' through Inbi'âth, "such as the Pen, the Tablet and the Noble Principles which are the Higher Letters."*

1. On the characteristics of *inbi'âth*.

2. On the First *munba'ith* which is the Second Intellect (*al-'aql al-thânf*), called in the Divine Law 'the Pen', and its establishment as the Second Existent. It is like the First with respect to perfection. It is neither a body nor in a body and that its existence is not by the primary intention.⁵¹
3. On the Second *munba'ith* the first potential, namely, the Primordial Matter (*hayûlâ*), called (in the Divine Law) 'the Tablet'. Its existence from the First *mubda'* is not by the primary intention. It does not resemble the First, nor that which unites it to it like the first *inbi'âth*; what is the reason for it? It is the source (*aql*) of the physical world and its position among the instaurated (*ibdâ'iyyah*) existents is analogous to number three among the numbers.
4. On the cause due to which the First *mubda'*, namely, the First Existent, and that which came into existence from it are not from one and the same genus.
5. On the Higher Letters which are the Noble Principles in the world of the first *inbi'âth*. On their number, and what is that which came into

existence out of each of them and the mode of its existence.

6. On the cause, which necessitated the existence of the Higher Letters from the First *mubda'* and the First *munba'ith* as seven immaterial intellects (*mufâriqah lil-ajsâm*, lit. separable from bodies) and the stopping of the existence from *inbi'âth* at them.

7. On that the existence of the existents which came into existence through *inbi'âth* from *ibdâ'*, which is the First *mubda'*, is not in time. Except Primordial Matter, all of them are pure forms, which on the one hand are one and on the other, many. They do not think of anything except their own essences and whatever precedes them in existence. Their form is the human form which they do not exceed. Their lights penetrate bodies and souls and act in them and the existence of the existents depends upon them.

V. *On the Existent from the Noble Principles which are the Higher Letters, such as Nature and its Heavenly Bodies.*²²

1. On the quiddity of Nature, which, by itself is in the

physical world, is one thing with respect to its substance, and many things with respect to its acts in its matters.

2. On Nature, that it has two ends: the first comprises it inasmuch as it is its cause, through which is (its) first existence, which is the first perfection, and the second is comprised by it inasmuch as it is its effect, due to which is (its) second existence, which is the second perfection. Its place is between the two ends. What are these two ends and what is their place? And since the second end is a centre the movables move from it.
3. On that the Nature has (a kind of) knowledge. What is that knowledge? It is comprehensive of all virtues because of the part which is its second end, and it has richness and perfection through the connection (read (*bi-ittiṣāl*)) of the virtues with each other.
4. On the Pedestal (*kursī*) which is the closest angel¹¹ is the First Movable Mover inasmuch as it is ... the form which causes to move (*al-ṣūrah al-muḥarrikah*) the sphere in which it is: and the cause of its being

both a mover and movable. Also, the fact that it is in the body; what is the cause of its being in the body?

5. On the Throne ('arsh) namely, the highest sphere, which is the closest angel,⁵⁴ is the First Movable Mover inasmuch as it is movable, and the higher bodies which follow it and their numbers and that the spheres in their entirety are at rest, but moving with respect to their parts.

6. On the bodies of the spheres, particularly the Highest Sphere. They are the simplest bodies in the abode of Nature, they are firm and do not perish in any condition, nor do they alter from that upon which they are based, nor do they accept any form other than what they have got.

7. On the states of the sublime bodies, and that according to which they go on in their movements. On their kinds and actions which are the causes of the existence of the natural existents.

VI. *On the Existent from the Higher Bodies, such as the Lower Bodies and their States.*⁵⁵

1. On Prime Matter out of which the bodies come into existence.
2. On the four elements, their states and efficient (active) natural forms (read *şuwar*), the modality of their connection with each other and the difference between them and the higher bodies.
3. On the movements of the four elements; the elements in their centres have neither gravity nor colour. They are the intermediaries of the souls in comprehending (*idrâk*) the sensible things.
4. On the four elements; they are permanent in their essences and conserved in their quantity. They neither increase nor decrease, they are changeable into one another with respect to their sides.
5. On the cause which necessitates the density of the bodies and the multiplicity of their parts.
6. On the Earth, that it is non-globular. What is the reason for it? And which (part) of it deserves to be a centre of circumferential body, and what is its shape? And that its outer parts face the air,

which has a movement through which the water of the ocean is transferred. What is that movement? There is a part of it which coagulates into the lofty mountains. What is its cause?

7. On that the water on the surface of the earth does not surround it. What is its cause? It increases and decreases in the ocean. What is its cause? Its outer form, which faces the air, is in a human form.

VII. *On the Existent from Higher and Lower Bodies (Fire, Air, Water and Earth) such as the Three Kingdoms of Nature (which are Mineral, Vegetable and Animal) and the States of Man in his Perfection.*"

1. On the Second Matter from which the generated things (*mutawallidât*) come into existence by that which is called temperament.
2. On the existents in the domain of air, such as the meteors (*âthar*), inasmuch as they are mixed (*mumtazij*) and their states.
3. On the existents in the earth, such as mineral, vegetable and animal. The (first) in order is the

mineral in as much as it is a body.

4. On the mineral inasmuch as it is a natural soul and it possesses actions and knowledge. What is that action and what is that knowledge?
5. On the vegetable inasmuch as it is a body. It is more composite and more organic than the mineral.
6. On the vegetable inasmuch as it is a vegetative soul and the characteristics of its existence and its state together with its body and its quiddity.
7. On the animal inasmuch as it is a body; and the beginning of its appearance. It is more composite and more organic than the vegetable, and it is the end of the existents beyond which there is no other existent.
8. On the animal inasmuch as it is a sensual soul; its existence, the characteristics of its existence and the existence of its knowledge which it has for the sake of preserving its body. What is its state in its perfection and potentiality? What

is its origin? In what is it analogous to the human species and in what different from it?

9. On the human soul inasmuch as it is sensual. What is its state and what is it? What are the things which take place in it and that which follow them in existence as first perfection through which it acquires the second perfection? What is the end which it attains in its actions? What is in it which is analogous to form? What is that which takes place in it, such as the impressions of acquisition and what is its place among the existents? It is one from one respect and many from the other.

10. On the human soul inasmuch as it is rational. What is its condition in this status? Is it the same sensual soul whose status is transcended, or does the human being possess three souls: vegetative, sensual and rational, as it is said? What is it: a substance or an accident? If it is a substance then does it have the same accidents which the bodies have, or has it its own accidents? Which part of it is analogous to matter and which part of it is analogous to form?

11. On the rational soul. What are its actions? Do the actions occur through the assistance and co-operation of its body, or does it have an action which distinguishes it from the body? What is the difference between its actions and what is the goal which it achieves through them? What is its first perfection and what is its second perfection? What is the nature of its end as a surviving, complete intellect?
12. On the rational soul inasmuch as it is surviving. What is its cause? What is that which makes the soul (strive) to attain survival and bliss and what is that which causes it to have perdition and misery? Does this happen to it from outside of it or does it happen to it from its nature which constitutes its existence? What is misery and what is bliss? What is its (soul's) death and what is its life?
13. On the human soul and the requittal which it gains after passing away from this world. What is resurrection and what is reckoning? What is reward and what is punishment? What is paradise and what is hell? What is the condition in all that? What

is the state of pious people in their return? What is that which indicates their state (text says 'its') in the hereafter, in this world? What are their actions? What is the state of hypocrites, of sinners, of those who go astray and who mislead, and of those who claim authority while they do not believe in God through the true religion ('dīn al-ḥaqq)? Who are they, what are their actions, and what is that which they are going to encounter after death? Do the souls attain their reward or punishment in the state of their passing away or do they attain them altogether on the day of resurrection? When will that be? What is that which gathers both the groups -- the people of paradise and the people of hell -- until the time of that day? Is it a unique form upon which is based the form of their bodies in this world or something else (lit. or how is it)? Do the souls after separation and isolation from their visible forms have any attachment with any other body, as the extremists and transmigrationists maintain, or not? Do they remember the things which they had in this world or not? Does anything from their knowledge become null or not? Does the one who achieves salvation receive a special reward by acting like the separate

(that is, immaterial) intellects, or not? What is that act?

14. On the human soul inasmuch as it is rational and receiving help from the Heaven, and the nature of its connection with the Holy Spirit. Why do not all souls always get divine help? What is the reason for that? What is the revelation through which the soul is helped, how is this done?

How is it connected with the Delegated Souls (i.e. the Prophets)? Is it (revelation) connected with them (the Delegated Souls) in the state of its being in sensual rank or imaginative rank or rational rank? How many kinds of it (revelation) are there?

What is the miracle which appears from them (Delegated Souls)? What is the difference between the miracle and the things which appear from the magicians? Why has the understanding and learning of that which belongs to magic become possible by endeavour, and not possible of that which belongs to miracle?

What is that which unites the virtues for the (divinely) helped soul? What is its state in its actions and ends in their modes, and how is the state

of the companions around it (the Delegated Soul)? What is their status and the status of its successors and of that which he brought from God?

How many cycles and their lords are there through whom the "new creation" becomes complete? What is the status of the lord of the seventh cycle? What are his actions? And what is the means through which the completion of the cycles comes to be known?

Also an account of the doctrine of the philosophers regarding the acquisition of virtue by the soul by (reading) their books, and the explanation of the corruption in it.

2. *Al-Maṣābīḥ fī ithbāt al-imāmah.*"

This work consists of two *maqālāt* (sing. *maqālah*, treatise, article). The first *maqālah* deals with the proofs of the existence of the creator, the soul, divine justice, law, esoteric interpretation (*ta'wīl*) and the necessity of the prophets. The *maqālah* is divided into seven *maṣābīḥ* (sing. *miṣbāḥ*, lamp, light), subdivided into forty-nine *barāhīn* (sing. *burhān*, proof).

The second *maqālah* is entirely devoted to the doctrine of imamate. This is also divided into seven *misbāḥs*, subdivided into fifty-nine *barāhīn*. In this *maqālah*,

Kirmânî deals with the proofs of imamate, necessity of the infallibility of the Imâm, falsity of the choice of the community with respect to Imâm, the validity of being an Imâm according to the *naşş* (the divine appointment) and the choice of the Prophet, that imamate after the Prophet belongs only to 'Alî, that the imamate according to *naşş* reaches Ja'far al-Şâdiq and after him, Ismâ'îl, excluding his brothers.

Finally, Kirmânî deals with the necessity of the imamate of al-Ḥâkim bi-Amr Allâh, and the obligation of obedience to him, and tries to show that the imamate after Ja'far al-Şâdiq continues in the progeny of Ismâ'îl until it reaches to al-Ḥâkim. Thus, according to Kirmânî, al-Ḥâkim was the true Imâm of his time, obedience to whom is obligatory.

3. Kitâb al-Riyâḍ.

The complete title of this book is *Kitâb al-Riyâḍ fî al-ḥukm bayn al-Şâdayn Şahibay al-Işlâḥ wa-al-Nuṣrah*, or *Kitâb al-Riyâḍ fî al-Işlâḥ bayn al-Shaykhayn*, Abî Ya'qûb wa-Abî Ḥâtim fî mâ awradâ Abû Ḥâtim fî Kitâb al-Işlâḥ wa-Abû Ya'qûb fî Kitâb al-Nuṣrah fî sharḥ mâ qâlahu al-Shaykh al-Ḥamîd fî Kitâb al-Maḥşûl.''

This book is an attempt by Kirmânî to reconcile the differing standpoints of Sijistânî and Râzî

regarding Nasaff's views. The book is divided into ten chapters, which consist of one hundred and fifty-seven sections. The contents are:-

1. On what is discussed regarding the Soul (*nafs*), which is the first *munba'ith*, consisting of thirty-eight sections.
2. On what is discussed regarding the First Intellect (*al-'aql al-awwal*) which is the First *mubda'*, consisting of nine sections.
3. On what is discussed regarding the Soul and Matter (*hayûlâ*). Do they resemble the First (Intellect), or not? It consists of six sections.
4. On what is discussed regarding the souls as parts or (read *aw*) traces (*ajzâ' aw-âthâr*), consisting of eight sections.
5. On what is discussed regarding the existence of the human being as the fruit of the world, consisting of seven sections.
6. On what is discussed regarding movement,

quiescence, matter and form, consisting of seven sections.

7. On what is discussed regarding the divisions of the world, consisting of seven sections.
8. On what is discussed regarding (divine) decree (*qaḍā'*) and ordination (*qadar*), consisting of twenty-four sections.
9. On what is discussed regarding the Law of Adam -- may peace be upon him -- and the legatee of Noah -- may peace be upon them -- consisting of thirty-three sections.
10. On what was neglected to correct from *Kitāb al-Maḥṣūl* (by Nasafī) on *tawḥīd* and the First *mubda'*, which is the First Existent, which was more deserving to be corrected from what he had discussed and corrected, consisting of sixteen sections.

4. *Ma'âşim al-hudâ.*²²

The complete title of this book is *Ma'âşim al-hudâ wa-işâbah fī tafqīl 'Alī 'alayhi al-salâm 'alâ al-şahâbah*. This is a polemic -- conducted against al-Jâhiz (d.

255/868) on the issue of 'Alī's worthiness over the first three caliphs. Here Kirmānī tries to refute the views of al-Jāḥiẓ expressed in his *al-ʿUṭhmāniyyah*. The extant part of the book is the second half, the first half being lost. It starts with the thirty-first *faṣl* (section) of the third *bāb* (chapter). In the third chapter, from sections thirty-one to thirty-four, Kirmānī argues in favour of 'Alī's virtues over the other Companions of the Prophet. The fourth chapter is divided into sixteen sections and devoted to establishing 'Alī's worthiness over Abū Bakr. The fifth discusses those characteristics of Abū Bakr which rendered him unworthy of being appointed Imām, and describes 'Alī's nomination to the imamate of the Muslim community.

5. *Tanbīh al-hādī wa-al mustahdī.*⁶⁰

This work is divided into twenty-eight chapters, which are subdivided into one hundred and ninety-six sections, and deals primarily with the two types of worship -- knowledge (*al-ʿibādah al-ʿilmiyyah*) and practice (*al-ʿibādah al-ʿamaliyyah*). It also contains polemics against philosophers, Muʿtazilites, Ashʿarites, Twelvers, Zaydites, Nuṣayrites, Ishāqites, extremists (*ghulāt*) etc.

6. **Al-Aqwāl al-dhahabiyyah fī al-ṭibb al-nafsānī.**¹

This is a defence of Abū Ḥātim Rāzī's book *A'lām al-nubuwwah*, against Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā Rāzī (d. 313/925), and also an elaboration of points Abū Ḥātim Rāzī had neglected to develop in his refutation of Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā Rāzī in the debate over the issue of prophethood and imamate. The book is divided into two *bābs* (parts).

The first part is on the exposition of the continuous error of Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā Rāzī in his *al-Ṭibb al-rūḥānī* and the second, on the elucidation of the established truth about what spiritual medicine is in reality.

7. **Al-Risālah al-Waḍiyyah (or al-Waḍf'ah) fī ma'ālim al-dīn.**²

This epistle also deals with the worship of knowledge and that of practice (*al-'ibādah al-'ilmiyyah wa-al-'ibādah al-'amaliyyah*). It has been divided into two parts. The first part, which deals with the worship of knowledge, is divided into seventeen sections and the second, which deals with that of practice, into eight sections.

8. **Al-Rasā'il al-thalāth al-'asharah, or Thalāthah 'ashar**

risâlah.⁶³

This is a collection of thirteen epistles of which eleven are by Kirmânî, but two of them: *Faṣl fî al-radd 'alâ man yankuru al-'âlam al-rûḥânî* and *Khazâ'in al-adillah* are wrongly ascribed to him.

Kirmânî's epistles are:-

8. Al-Risâlah al-Durriyyah fî ma'nâ al-tawḥîd.⁶⁴

In this epistle Kirmânî deals with a question on *tawḥîd* and expounds the importance of *fard*. (See below Chapter III, sections B and C)

9. Risâlat al-Naṣm fî muqâbalat al-'awâlim.⁶⁵

This epistle is written to explain some difficult points in *al-Risâlah al-Durriyyah* pertaining to the concept of cause and effect and numbers of letters of the '*fard*'. Here Kirmânî further elaborates the numerical importance of the word *fard* in relation to all realms of existence, such as, the world of *ibdâ'* (instauration), macrocosm, microcosm, the world of religion, etc.

10. Al-Risâlah al-Raḍiyyah.⁶⁶

The full title of the epistle is *al-Risâlah al-Radiyyah fî jawâb man yaqûl bi-qidam al-jawhar wa-hudûth*

al-ṣūrah. This is in reply to one who advocates the eternity of substance and origination of the form, arguing that action (*fi'l*) is inconceivable without the existence of matter (*māddah*).

11. *Al-Risālah al-Muḍī'ah fī al-amr wa-al-ʿamir wa-al-ma'mūr.*''

In this epistle, Kirmānī deals with the question of the Divine command (*amr*), and the attribute Commander (*ʿamir*), whether it is eternal or contingent, and he also discusses the views put forward by Sijistānī in his *al-Maḡālīd*.

12. *Al-Risālah al-Lāzimah fī ṣawm shahr Ramaḍān wa-ḥinihi.*''

This work deals with the problem regarding the commencement of the month of Ramaḍān. According to Kirmānī the date of commencement should be fixed according to the calendar and not according to observation of the crescent. In this connection, Kirmānī also deals with the esoteric meaning of fasting during the month of Ramaḍān.

13. *Al-Rawḍah fī al-azal wa-al-azālī wa-al-azaliyyah.*''

This focusses on questions of pre-eternity.

14. **Al-Risâlah al-Zâhirah.**⁷⁰

This is to disprove the authorship of a treatise consisting of six sections on six questions, attributed to Sijistânî. The epistle contains twelve sections, of which the first six are a disproof, on the ground that the style and views held by the author do not belong to Sijistânî, and the second six, an attempt to answer the questions posed in the treatise.

15. **Al-Risâlah al-Ḥâwiyah fî al-layl wa-al-nahâr.**⁷¹

This epistle was written by Kirmânî in 399/1009, on the *taw'îl* of day and night, to his lieutenant in Jîruft, a district of the Kirmân province.

16. **Risâlat Mabâsim al-bishârât bi-al-Imâm al-Ḥâkim bi-Amr Allâh.**⁷²

This deals with the concept of imamate in general and with the imamate of Imâm al-Ḥâkim bi-Amr Allâh in particular. It is divided into sixteen sections.

17. **Al-Risâlah al-Wâ'izah.**⁷³

The complete title of this epistle is *al-Risâlah al-Wâ'izah jawâban 'an masâ'il al-mâriq min al-dîn Ḥasan al-Farghânî al-Ajda' al-Akhram raddan 'alayhi*. It is on

admonitions and answers to the questions put by an extremist *dā'f*, Ḥasan al-Farghānī.

18. **Al-Risālah al-Kāfiyah fī al-munāḍalah raddan (or fī al-radd) (alā al-Ḥasanī (or al-Ḥusaynī) al-Hārūnī.**'

This was composed in Cairo and sent to Kirmānī's lieutenant 'Abd al-Malik b. Muḥammad al-Māzinī, in Kirman. It is a refutation of the Zaydite Imām, Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Mu'ayyad bi-Allāh b. al-Ḥusayn b. Hārūn al-Buṭṭhānī (333/944- 411/1020) who had challenged al-Ḥākim's claim to the imamate. It also contains a critique of Zaydite beliefs in general.

19. **Al-Risālah al-Waḥīdah fī al-na'ād wa-al-taqdīs.**'

This epistle deals with the concept of eschatology and resurrection.

20. **Risālat Usbū' dawr al-satr.**'

This short treatise gives the *ta'wīl* of the seven days of the week, beginning from Sunday. Each day signifies the role played by Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muḥammad and the Qā'im respectively.

Doubt has been cast on the authorship of this work by Poonawalla, and indeed the style does not seem to be that of Kirmānī. Moreover, a standard feature in all of his extant

works is the mention of Imâm Ḥâkim, which is omitted here.

B. Non-Extant Works

21. Al-Risâlah al-Layliyyah.⁷⁷

22. Risâlat al-Fihrist.⁷⁸

23. Al-Majâlis al-Baṣriyyah wa-al-Baghdâdiyyah.⁷⁹

24. Mizân al-ʿaql or al-Riyâḍ wa-Mizân al-ʿaql.⁸⁰

25. Tâj al-ʿuqûl.⁸¹

26. Iklîl al-nafs wa-tâjuhâ.⁸²

27. ʿÂlim al-dîn.⁸³

28. Kitâb al-Maqâys raddan (or fî al-radd) ʿalâ al-ghulât wa-ashbâhihim.⁸⁴

29. Risâlat al-Shiʿrâ fî al-khawâṣṣ,⁸⁵ a treatise on the star Sirius.

30. Al-Rasâ'il al-ta'wiliyyah.''

31. Risâlah fi ma'rifat al-ḥudûd wa-al-ma'âd.''

32. Kitâb al-Mafâviz.''

33. Kitâb al-Nafdh wa-al-ilzâm.''

34. Risâlat al-Ma'ârij.''

35. Faṣl al-khitâb wa-ibânat al-ḥaqq al-mutajallî 'an al-irtiyâb.''

36. Al-Maqâdir wa-al-ḥadâ'iq.''

37. Maydân al-'aql.''

38. Al-Waṣiyyah fi al-ma'âd.''

39. Kitâb al-Khasâ'in fi funûn al-'ilm wa-al-ta'wîl.''

CHAPTER II

The Classical Ismaili Concept of Tawḥīd

A. Shaping of Classical Ismaili Thought

Tawḥīd is the most fundamental article of faith in Islam and in all monotheistic religions. The word *tawḥīd* is derived from the radical letters w-ḥ-d on the measure of the second form (*tafʿīl*), which literally means "making one" or "asserting oneness" and technically, "the belief in One God alone, Who has no partner (*al-tawḥīd al-imān bi-Allāh waḥdahu lā sharīka lahu*)."¹

In dealing with religious thought we have to bear in mind that the Scriptures do not contain cut and dried definitions of beliefs and concepts. When attempts have been made to systematize religious thought, recourse has been taken to philosophical systems.²

As is well known, Muslim theology in the course of its elaboration during the Middle Ages encountered much the same problems as its Jewish and Christian counterparts.

The various approaches to the concept of *tawḥīd* inevitably reflect the concerns of the various schools that developed subsequent to the end of the first century A.H.

The Ismaili concept should be understood as being one among other such approaches. It seems to represent first of all a reaction to the existing Muslim theological concepts or interpretations. This is very clear from the way two major Ismaili thinkers -- Abû Ya'qûb Sijistânî and Nâsir Khusraw (394 - ca. 481/1004 - ca. 1088) -- classify the schools and thereby identify their own positions.

According to Sijistânî those who believe in and obey God, are divided into four groups:

1) The group of the idol-worshippers (*'ibâd al-awthân*) who carve a block of stone or wood with their own hands and make it an idol with hands, feet, eyes and ears, and approach God humbling themselves before it and prostrating to it.³

2) The group of the anthropomorphists (*mushabbihah*) who hold that their God has a form with a body, limbs, organs, movements, transitions and states of happiness, anger, laughter, etc.⁴

3) The group of the people of justice (*ahl al-'adl*), as they claim of themselves, such as the Mu'tazilites, the Khârijites, the Râfidites, who believe in the negation of attributes, states and organs from God, but fail to know that their negation is not sufficient in the recognition of God (*ma'rifat al-ma'bûd al-ḥaqq*). For the one who has been negated from attributes, states and organs is one of His creatures who does not deserve to be compared with Him.⁵

4) The group of the people of realities (*ahl al-ḥaqâ'iq*) who examined the beliefs of others and shared with them in their beliefs in what is proper and befitting.⁶

A similar but more detailed classification may be found in Nâsir Khusraw's *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*. Thus in the section *On the Establishment of the Creator*, he says:

We say that the creatures in their entirety with their numerous manners and beliefs are divided into two groups:

One is the group of Dahrites who are the people of *ta'ṭīl*. They say: The world is eternal and has no creator. Rather, the creator of generated things (*mawālīd*), such as vegetables and animals, is the spheres and celestial bodies themselves (read *khud*) which have always been there and will always be (*hamīshah bâshad*).⁹

The other group believe in a creator, but they are also divided into two groups:

One of them is those who say that there are more than one creator; such as Christians, who say that there are three (creators): the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; or such as the dualists, who say that there are two (creators): Yazdân and Ahriman. And they say that light and darkness are eternal.¹⁰

The other group say that there is only one creator. And they, although they believe in one creator, are divided into five groups:

1) One of them say: the creator is one but (those) worthy of worship are more than one. These are the idol-worshippers who believe in God, but they say: we worship idols that they may bring us near unto God. As God says: "And those who choose protecting friends beside Him (say): We worship them only that they may bring us near unto Allah" (XXXIX: 3). The people of *ta'wīl* said that (this) statement is a parable for those of the *ummah* who say: we should befriend some people other than Muḥammad and his progeny so that through them our nearness unto God may increase.¹¹

2) The other group is that of the Christians, who say that God is three (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) and that all three are

one and worthy of worship.¹¹

3) Another is that of the dualists (*thanawiyân*, sing. *thanawf*) who believe that there are two eternal, but the one worthy of worship is Yazdân.¹²

4) The fourth is that of the philosophers who hold that the worship of God is not obligatory upon the people, rather it is the knowledge of God, His power, grandeur and kingdom which is so.¹³

5) The fifth is that of the unitarians (*muwahhîdân*, sing. *muwahhîd*) who say that there is only one God and He alone is worthy of worship.¹⁴

Nâsir further classifies the *muwahhîds*, who according to him, are the Muslims. He says that despite their numerous differences, they may be divided into three groups:-

1) The conformists (*ahl al-taqlîd*) who follow only the *ẓâhir* or the exoteric aspect of the Book. They say: "We ascribe to God that which He has ascribed to Himself and an attribute which does not befit Him but is found in the Book and we do not know about it, we say nothing about it, for its *ta'wîl* is known only to God, as He says: 'None knows its *ta'wîl* save Allah' (III:7)." They do not add to it (i.e. they do not continue the sentence into *al-râsikhûn fî al-'ilm*, but stop at Allah).¹⁵

2) The theologians (*mutakallimân* sing. *mutakallim*), such as the Mu'tazilites, the Karrâmites, who say: "Speculation (*naẓar*) in *tawhîd* is necessary and thus through arguments and reflective speculation, we negate the *tashbîh* (affirmation of creaturely attributes) from God".¹⁶

3) The Shiites (followers, partisans) of the progeny of the Messenger (*shî'at-i khândân-i rasûl*). They say: "The Book of God has *ta'wîl*. And thus -- they say -- we through the

rational *ta'wfl*, (*ta'wfl-i* (*aqlī*)) negate the attributes of creatures from the Creator." They say: "Our *tawḥīd* lies in a place between *tashbīh* and *ta'ṭīl* (negation of creaturely attributes)." And (concerning this), they report from Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who was asked: "Is truth *ta'ṭīl* or *tashbīh* (*ḥaqq ta'ṭīl ast yâ tashbīh*)?" He said: "It is between the two positions (*manzilah bayna al-manzilatayn*)."¹⁷

The above classifications show that when the Ismaili concept was formed, there were two main trends towards the description of God given in the Qur'ân: (i) affirmation of the attributes in a literal sense; (ii) negation of the attributes from God through speculative reasoning. Ismaili thinkers such as Sijistānī and Nāṣir claim to have a middle position. Their position, however, seems to be in a predicament, as we will see later on. On the one hand, they accuse even the Mu'tazilites, who were considered by other Muslim schools as going too far in negating attributes from God,¹⁸ of insufficient negation of *tashbīh* from God. And on the other, they claim to hold a concept which lies between *tashbīh* and *ta'ṭīl*. That is to say, they maintain a kind of *tashbīh* in their *tawḥīd*. This is also evident from Sijistānī, who says that the people of *ḥaqā'iq* share something with all sects, including the idol-worshippers.¹⁹ In the following, we will attempt to analyze the formulation of their concept of *tawḥīd* and the factors which were involved in it.

Numerous elements and factors have been suggested

in recent studies on the formulation of classical Ismaili thought.²⁰ However, the main factor around which Ismaili thought revolved seems to be the problem of reason and revelation. This problem was not a new one. It was only the recurrence of an old problem from Judaism and Christianity, which had come into existence owing to the encounter of Hellenism and the revealed religions. The problem of reason and revelation in Islam was, perhaps, first realised by the Mu'tazilites. They tried to reconcile reason and revelation in Islam. This attempt seems to have influenced almost all Islamic sects in one way or the other, including the Ismailis, as we will see later on. The problem of reason and revelation had caused different trends among the Muslim schools of thought before the appearance of the Ismailis. Hence, the Ismailis were influenced by or reacted to all these trends. The Mu'tazilites' realization of the importance of reason was apparently due to their contact with Greek thought,²¹ but at the same time it appears that they also realized its importance in the very nature of the Islamic practices. In Islam, religious practices are obligatory only upon those who have attained the rational faculty and those who have not attained it or have lost it are exempted from them. Arguing on this basis, the Mu'tazilites maintained: "God has made us worship Him

through the intellect and the one who has no intellect is not obligated (to worship Him)."²² The Mu'tazilites, extending the role of the intellect, also asserted that they could recognize God through the intellect, even without a prophet.²³ This meant that the intellect could lead to the recognition of God, just as did the revelation. The Mu'tazilites thus, partly due to the influence of the philosophical works and partly due to the significance of reason inherent in revelation, placed reason on an equal footing with revelation.

The growing influence of philosophy did not stop at equating reason with revelation. Some of the adherents of philosophy considered revelation to be inferior to philosophy due to the former's symbolic approach to the truth, which changed from religion to religion, whereas the latter approach was considered to be universally accepted.²⁴ Still others even considered revelation or prophecy harmful to society, as a cause of strife and bloodshed.²⁵ On the other hand, there were the Literalists, who were totally opposed to philosophy.²⁶

Ismaili thought, during its formative process, was thus surrounded by such diverse trends concerning reason and revelation. All these elements have affected it in one way or the other. However, the most important and unifying factor seems to be its distinctive doctrine

of the continuity of the prophetic mission through the institution of prophethood and imamate. The doctrine was based on the permanent need of a divinely guided leader, whose knowledge is not acquired by speculation, but is directly given.²⁷ It is considered that the main aim of the Ismaili dā'īs was to make this doctrine comprehensive, coherent and appealing to all strata of people, whether a philosopher or a peasant.²⁸ It was with this motive that Ismailism assimilated and integrated into itself all relevant elements from all sources and rejected what was irrelevant to its doctrine,²⁹ as we will see in the following.

The Ismaili dā'ī al-Mu'ayyad, agreeing with the Mu'tazilites says:

It is known that the Prophet did not enjoin religious obligations except on those who have intellect. Thus how could he enjoin upon someone who has intellect something which is not based on the intellect? For what is not based on the intellect is more befitting for those who do not have it.³⁰

However, Ismaili thinkers differ with the Mu'tazilites on the nature and definition of the intellect. According to the Mu'tazilites, any individual who has a sound mind and has acquired enough knowledge, is entitled to interpret the symbols and allegories of the revealed Book. They have thus an egalitarian approach towards the human intellect, with no essential differences between human

beings.³¹ For the Ismailis, although the essential innate intellect (*'aql-i gharfzfi*),³² which has the capacity of receiving knowledge, is the same in all human beings, this intellect by itself is imperfect, and perfection is attained through the teachings of the Prophet or the Imâm,³³ in a hierarchy at the apex of which is the Intellect of the Prophet or the Imâm, which is inspired (*mu'ayyad*) by God.³⁴ Thus, according to them, the intellect on which the *sharf'ah* is based and which can interpret it, is not the ordinary uninspired intellect, rather the inspired intellect of the Prophet or the Imâm. Hence, the meanings of the symbols and allegories can be revealed only through the *ta'wîl* of the Imâms from the progeny of the Prophet. As al-Nu'mân says:

God... has made the exoteric aspect (*ẓāhir=tanzîl*) of the Book, the miracle of the Prophet; and the esoteric (*bâṭin=ta'wîl*), the miracle of the Imâms, from the people of his house. ... As nobody except Muhammad, the Messenger of God, can bring the exoteric aspect of the Book, so nobody except the Imâms from his progeny, can bring the esoteric aspect of it.³⁵

Similarly, they agree with the philosophers that the source of philosophical knowledge and of revelation is the same. As al-Mu'ayyad says:

The philosophers claim (to know) the rational sciences (*al-'ulûm al-'aqliyyah*) and the real things (*al-umûr al-ḥaqiqiyyah*), but in spite of that due to their detachment from the mediation of messengership (*sabab al-risâlah*) the Muslim charge them with unbelief. And they (philosophers) say

that in knowing the signs of their salvation they dispense with the prophets. Their need is only in governing the worldly matters by protecting blood and property, and by restraining the strong from (harming) the weak. But the belief of the upholders of the truth (*muhiqqîn*) is that all sciences, including the rational sciences (*'aqliyyât*) which they claim (to know), are united in the sciences of the prophets (*'ulûm al-anbiyâ'*) and were spread out from there.³⁶

Further, if the Ismaili concept of *tanzîl* and *ta'wîl* is compared to the philosophers' concept of revealed symbols and their philosophical meaning,³⁷ they come very close to each other. Nonetheless, as in contrast to the Mu'tazilites, they maintain that the intellect on which the *shari'ah* is based, cannot be other than the inspired intellect of the Prophet or the Imâm; similarly, a philosopher who can attain ultimate knowledge cannot be other than the Prophet or the Imâm.³⁸ Thus, according to them, the true philosopher can only be the Prophet or the Imâm. Needless to point out, this exposition is linked with the doctrine of Prophecy and Imamate. If they were to accept someone as being superior or equal to the Prophet or the Imâm, then this would, according to them, nullify the necessity of the continuity of divine guidance.

This attitude of the Ismailis towards philosophy can be more clearly seen in many of their contradictory statements. On the one hand, they attack the

philosophers for their misleading ideas and on the other, in order to substantiate their own views, they refer to them as *ḥukamâ'*. For instance, Abû Ḥâtim Râzî says:

Now we will discuss ... their (philosophers') contradictions in their views and their abominable and ignominious doctrines and expose the absurdities and superstitions which they have invented in their principles.³⁹

Sijistânî says:

As for the so-called philosophers (*mutafalsifûn*), they kept their doctrines secret regarding the *mubdi'* (Instaurator) and they concealed their doctrines about *ta'ṭîl* when they said God ... is a substance or that He is a cause.⁴⁰

Kirmânî says:

The philosophers and those who preceded them, although they were the learned people of their own time, yet the sway of error continued over them in many of the matters they spoke about concerning the intelligible world (*'aqliyyât*).⁴¹

On the other hand, the same Abû Ḥâtim Râzî says about the philosophers:

The ancient true sages who drew these correct traces in astronomy, medicine, geometry and other natural sciences were ... the imâms of their ages and the proofs of God over the people in their time, whom God had helped with revelation and taught this wisdom. ... They had different names. For instance, Hermes who was known among the philosophers by that name, was known by the name Idrîs in the Qur'ân, and in the rest of the revealed Books, as Akhnûkh.⁴²

Kirmânî's *al-Riyâḳ* shows that Sijistânî, in order to substantiate his own point of view, refers to Empedocles.⁴³ Kirmânî himself, in his epistles, quotes the

ḥukamā' (sages) several times to substantiate his point of view.⁴⁴ Above all, there is Nāṣir Khusraw's *Jāmi' al-ḥikmatayn* (Compriser of Two Wisdoms), in which he tries to harmonize the two wisdoms. Nāṣir says that although the treasure of wisdom is the heart of the Prophet, there is some wisdom in the books of the ancients (*qudamā'*) too.⁴⁵

These statements show, on the one hand, that according to the Ismailis, the ideal philosopher is the Prophet and, on the other, that they were eclectic in borrowing philosophical ideas from antiquity. Their assimilation or rejection of ideas seem to depend on this conviction. For instance, they accepted the concept of the absolute transcendence of God, the concept of the intellect and the soul, from Neoplatonism, which were compatible with their view of the necessity of mediation, but they rejected the concept of emanation and the concept of God being the prime cause of the world and the concept of the five eternals, which make mediation and prophecy superfluous. In upholding prophecy in this way, as H. Corbin points out, the Ismailis were not alone, for there were other Muslims who held a similar view,⁴⁶ but what distinguished them is that they held that this source continues through generations of prophetic off-spring in the person of the Imām, as Nāṣir says:

*Hikmat az haqrat-i farzand-i nabi bāyad just
Pāk-u pākizah za tashbih-u za ta'ṭīl chū sīm*

From the presence of the Son of the Prophet should
Wisdom be sought
Pure and unsullied as silver from tashbih and ta'ṭīl.⁴⁷

Thus, Ismaili thought, due to its emphasis on the role of the Prophet in providing the true knowledge and leading to the truth, may be identified as a kind of "prophetic philosophy",⁴⁸ in contradistinction to other philosophies, which do not take recourse to a higher agency other than the ordinary human intellect; or revelational theology⁴⁹ in contrast to the rational theology of the Mu'tazilites, who maintained that God can be recognized by the human intellect, without the guidance of a prophet. In fact, if we take into account also their emphasis on the esoteric aspect, then it should be called prophetic-esoteric philosophy.

Finally, it should also be mentioned here that in part they agree with the Literalists, in the sense that they do not, like the Mu'tazilites, put aside the anthropomorphic attributes imputed to God; rather, they take them in the sense of the Prophets and Imāms.⁵⁰ Further, contrary to the Mu'tazilites, they also accept taqlīd (conformity) partially, as an introduction to the truth (*muqaddamah-i*

ḥaqq).⁵¹ However, the question, as in the case of reason, is whose *taqlīd* should be followed? According to them, if the *taqlīd* is that of the Prophet and his successor, then this leads to the truth. If not, then it is not valid.⁵²

This brief account of the formation of the Ismaili thought shows that it has utilized all kinds of philosophical and non-philosophical ideas and beliefs congenial and compatible to its doctrine and synthesized them. It is in the light of this background that we will try to study the formulation of the classical Ismaili concept of *tawḥīd* prior to Kirmānī.

B. Main Features of the Ismaili Concept of Tawḥīd prior to Kirmānī

Given that the classical Ismaili theologians placed the concept of *tawḥīd* between *tashbīḥ* and *ta'ṭīl*, it is clear that these concepts had already been coined before the formation of their own concept. As pointed out earlier, it was inevitable for the Muslims to reflect upon the nature of God as described in the Qur'ān in the light of reason, and it seems that the gradual and growing influence of philosophical works compelled them to formulate a logically consistent and coherent concept of God. This

attempt materialized in the speculation of the Mu'tazilites, who tried to negate anthropomorphic attributes from God. They, however, were not consistent in their negation of attributes nor in the explanation of the meanings of attributes and their manner of existence. The founder of the Mu'tazilites, Wâsil b. 'Aṭṭā' (80/699-700-131/748-49), as Shahrastānī reports, advocated the total negation of attributes from God, by saying: "Whoever establishes the meaning of an eternal attribute, establishes two gods". But his followers, Shahrastānī continues, went more deeply into this question after studying the works of the philosophers. They concluded by reducing all the attributes of God to knowledge and power, which they maintained were His essential attributes. According to Jubbā'ī (d.303/915-16), these attributes are aspects (*i'tibārān*) of the eternal essence; according to Abū Hāshim (d.321/933), they are its modes (*ḥālān*). Abū al-Ḥusayn Baṣrī, on the other hand, tended to reduce all the attributes to one, namely, knowledge. They, denying the eternal attributes, said that God is 'knowing' by His essence, 'powerful' by His essence, 'living' by His essence: not by 'knowledge' or 'power' or 'life' as eternal attributes or entities (*ma'ānī*), subsisting in Him. For, if these attributes shared in the eternity of God, which is His special

characteristic, they would also share in His godhead.⁵³

The Mu'tazilite view, however, was rejected by various groups on different grounds and for different reasons. The "Literalists" according to Shahrastānī, rejected it on the ground that the attributes are mentioned in the Qur'ān and the Traditions and they called them the *mu'aṭṭilah* (Deniers of the attributes or the existence of God).⁵⁴ The Mu'tazilites in retaliation, called the "Literalists" the *ṣifātiyyah* (Attributists) or the *mushabbihah* (Anthropomorphists),⁵⁵ due to their adherence to the anthropomorphic attributes. In this pro- and anti-attributes controversy between the Literalists and the Mu'tazilites, the silencing objection is regarded by Shahrastānī to be that of Abū al-Ḥasan Ash'arī (d. 324/935). He contended with the Mu'tazilites:

By the establishment of the proof you agreed with us that He (God) is knowing and powerful. Then it is inevitable that either the meanings of the two attributes are one (*wāḥid*) or superadded (*zā'id*). If they were one then it necessitates that He knows by virtue of His being powerful, and is powerful by virtue of His being knowing and thus he who knows (His) essence absolutely knows (*ipso facto*) that He is knowing and powerful. But this is not the case. Thus it is evident that the two aspects (*i'tibārayn*) are different.⁵⁶

He continues:

(Now) it is inevitable that the difference either falls back on the word alone, or the mode (*hāl*) or the attribute. It is false to say that it falls back on the word alone, for the intellect by the difference of two meanings (*mafḥūmayn*) demands two

concepts. Even if the words are supposed to be non-existent altogether the intellect does not doubt in what it conceives. It is (also) false to say that the difference falls back on the mode, for the establishment of an attribute which is described neither with existence nor with non-existence is the establishment of an intermediary between existence and non-existence and of affirmation and negation (simultaneously), which is absurd. Thus it is determined that the difference falls back on an attribute which subsists in the essence.⁵⁷

The Ismailis, who as Sijistānī claims, "take the best from all religions", seem to be well aware of the implications of both the total affirmation and the total negation of the attributes. They appear to take advantage of the mutual criticism of the Mu'tazilites and the Literalists. The Ismailis, as it appears from the *Tanbīh* of Kirmānī⁵⁸ and the *Jāmi' al-Ḥikmatayn* of Nāṣir Khusraw,⁵⁹ agreed with Ash'arī's argument that, without conceiving of a self-subsistent meaning, even the essential attributes cannot be ascribed to God, emphasised however that the term essential attributes cannot help to avoid the duality of the attribute and the essence. The Ismailis thus used, Ash'arī's argument for their own purposes, not, however, for the affirmation of the essential attributes, as Ash'arī did, but to show that the ascription of any attribute, essential or otherwise, leads to *takthīr* (plurality of eternals) and *tashbīh* (anthropomorphism). In addition to Ash'arī's argument, which leads to the

plurality of eternals, the Ismailis pose two more objections to the Mu'tazilite negation of attributes. Firstly, they argued that the negation is incomplete, in the sense that they ascribe the attributes of knowledge, power, life etc. to God, in which the creatures also share. The ascription of any of the attributes, for instance, knowledge, leads to two consequences. If it is accepted that the knowledge of God and a human being has the same nature, then it is, confessedly, association of man with God. If it is held that God's knowledge differs from that of man, then this leads to a more absurd result. Kirmânî says: "If it is argued that God's knowledge differs from that of the creatures, then this would lead to a still worse conclusion. That is, if a sword (*sayf*) is a sword according to us, it would be a mat (*ḥaşır*) according to God."⁶⁰

Secondly, even if it is accepted that the attributes of creatures are negated from Him, this would, according to Ismaili thinkers, be only an incomplete negation. For, according to them, to have attributes is the characteristic of the physical creatures and not to have attributes that of the spiritual entities. Sijistânî says:

The so-called 'people of justice' (Mu'tazilites, Khârijites and Râfidites) believed in the negation of attributes, states and organs, but

they did not know that their negation is not sufficient for the recognition of the True Worshipped (*al-ma'būd al-ḥaqq*), for the one from whom they have been negated is (also) someone of His creatures and it is not befitting for the glory of the True *mubdī* to be like him.¹

The *tawḥīd* of the Mu'tazilites, thus, in the eyes of the Ismailis, despite their agreement on the principle of *via negationis*, is not totally free from *tashbīḥ*. That is to say, even if it is considered free from the *tashbīḥ* of the physical creatures (*makhḷūqāt*), it cannot be free from the *tashbīḥ* of the spiritual creatures (*mubda'āt*), whose characteristic is not having attributes.² The Ismailis thus go a step further, rather to the extreme limit possible, in the purification of *tawḥīd* by employing the twofold negation of the attributes of the physical and the spiritual creatures from God, and rendering Him beyond existence (*ays, ḥastf*) and non-existence (*lays, nistf*) and absolutely unknowable, ineffable and not subject to any predicate.³

Traditionally, the Ismailis claim to base their concept of *tawḥīd* on the teachings of their imāms, particularly, on the famous sermon of Imām 'Alī on *tawḥīd*. The sermon reads:

The foremost thing in religion (*awwal al-dīn*) is recognition (*ma'rifah*) of Him; and the perfection of recognition of Him is affirmation (*iqrār*) of Him; and the perfection of affirmation of Him is unification (*tawḥīd*) of Him; and the perfection of unification of Him is purification

(*ikhlaṣ*) of Him; and the perfection of purification of Him is the negation of attributes (*nafy al-ṣifāt*) from Him. For every attribute (*ṣifah*) witnesses that it is other than the subject (*mawṣūf*) and every subject witnesses that it is other than the attribute. Therefore, he who ascribes an attribute to God -- may He be exalted -- associates Him (with something); and he who associates Him (with something), doubles Him; and he who doubles Him parts Him; and he who parts Him points out to Him; and he who points out to Him confines Him; and he who confines Him counts Him. And he who said: Wherein is God?, he includes Him (in there). And he who said: Whereupon is God?, he excludes Him (from there)."

The sermon obviously lays emphasis on the negation of attributes from God, or the *via negationis*, indicating the implicit duality in the ascription of these to Him, on the basis that every attribute witnesses that it is other than the subject and vice versa. However, for the manner in which they have developed their exposition of *tawḥīd* on the basis of double negation and considering Him beyond existence and intellect, the source for this goes far beyond Islam to the Neoplatonic apophatic or negative theology.

We have seen how the Mu'tazilites, before the Ismailis, had developed their concept from the simple negation of anthropomorphic attributes into the attribution of complex essential attributes, after studying the Hellenic philosophical works. Their source seems to be the Peripatetic concept of the Divine Intellect as the

first principle, which, despite being one, was considered intrinsically multiple due to its three modes: intellect, intellecting and intelligible. Plotinus (d. 270 A.D.), realizing this, had come to the conclusion that the first principle, in order to be free from all determination and limitation, had to be beyond intellect, for in the thinking process it could not be free from the duality of the subject-object relation and hence, from an internal limitation. Further, since the first principle, the One or the Good, was beyond the intellect, any analytic description of it was impossible. Although he used the same One for the first principle, he still regarded it as equally inadequate as other names; however, it was preferable to the others, because it had the power of lifting the mind beyond limitation.⁶³

We often find this expressed in the exposition of the Ismaili concept of *tawhīd*. Hence it is obvious that, in addition to the arguments of the Muslim *mutakallimūn*, the Neoplatonic concept of the One has helped Ismaili writers both in the analysis of the Mu'tazilite concept of *tawhīd* and in the formulation of their own.

Among the Ismaili writers who have propounded the concept of *tawhīd* along these lines, the pioneer seems to be Nasafi. He is regarded as the first among the Ismaili *dā'īs* to introduce Neoplatonism into Ismailism.

According to Nasafi, "God is the Originator of thing and nothing (*mubdi' al-shay' wa-al-lâ-shay'*)."" However, since most of Nasafi's works are lost, we will turn to Sijistâni, who is considered the greatest Ismaili Neoplatonist and whose main works are available, for a detailed exposition of the classical Ismaili concept of *tawhîd*.

In formulating the concept of *tawhîd*, Sijistâni supposes three possible relations between God and His creatures. He says that God is not free from either resembling the creatures in all aspects, or in some aspect, or not resembling them at all. In the first case, God would be redundant, for the creatures, owing to their total resemblance, would take His place. In the second case, God would not be able to have absolute power over His creatures. Thus the only befitting relation that remains between God and His creatures is the third one, that He does not resemble His creatures at all, whether they are *makhluqât* (physical creatures), or *mubda'ât* (spiritual beings)."

In order to understand Sijistâni's exposition of the concept of *tawhîd*, it appears that the terms *makhluqat* and *mubda'ât* play an important role. He seems to have coined these terms on the basis of Qur'ânic vocabulary (VII:54) "*alâ lahu al-khalq wa-al-amr* (Verily His are *khalq*

(creation) and *amr* (command))." The term *makhlûqât* is based on *khalq*, by which is meant the physical creatures, created in time and space, and the term *mubda'ât* is based on *amr* or *ibda'*, by which is meant the spiritual beings originated all at once (*daf'atan* or *duf'atan wâhidah*), beyond time and space.

The *makhlûqât*, according to Sijistânî are subject to attributes, finite, while the *mubda'ât* are not subject to attributes and infinite. He further describes the two categories as being radically different:

The finite (*maḥdûd*) among the creatures (*al-khalq*) do not participate with the infinite (*ghayr al-maḥdûd*) among the creatures (*al-khalq*) in their being negated with respect to the limit (*nafy al-ḥadd* (*anhu*)) and they always subsist. And similarly, the infinite among the creatures do not participate with the finite and the infinite always subsists due to the absence of participation between them (*bi-zawâl al-shirkah baynahâ*)."

Thus, according to Sijistânî, while the infinite (spiritual) creatures, being self-subsistent, have nothing in common with the finite (physical) ones, he insists that one must negate the characteristics of both kinds from the creator. Otherwise, the negation of *tashbîh* from God will be an incomplete negation. He says:

Whoever removes from His Creator description, definition and characteristic falls into the hidden *tashbîh*, (just) as the one who describes Him, defines Him and characterizes Him falls into the obvious *tashbîh*."

The *tanzih* (absolute transcendence and otherness) of God thus cannot be attained except by the double negation of the characteristics of both *makhluqât* and *mubda'ât*. He says:

There does not exist a *tanzih* more brilliant and more noble than the one by which we establish the *tanzih* of our *mubdi'* by (using) these words in which two negations: a negation and a negation of negation (*nafyun wa-nafyu nafyin*) oppose each other.¹¹

By the first negation, *Sijistânî* means the negation of physical creatures, which are attributed (*mawṣūf*), finite (*maḥdūd*) and visible (*mar'f*), and by the negation of negation, the spiritual beings which are non-attributed (*lâ-mawṣūf*), infinite (*lâ-maḥdūd*) and invisible (*lâ-mar'f*). It is important to note that in the first negation, 'lâ' is used in the sense of 'is not' and, in the second, in the sense of 'un-, non-' as a prefix of negation. This, he has further explained in his *Sullam al-najâh*, saying:

The third group (i.e. *Ismailis*) believe in negating from Him what is found in the creation: whether attributed or non-attributed, defined or non-defined ... what befits the two categories of affirmation (*ijâb*) and negation (*salb*).¹²

Thus, according to *Sijistânî*, the second negation is not a negation of the previous negation, rather negation of the creatures whose characteristic is not having attributes, as he says:

That which has no attribute, nor definition, nor characteristic, is not God Himself, but

the Universal Soul, the Universal Intellect and all the simple substances (*al-jawāhir al-basīṭah*), such as angels.⁷³

Otherwise, he would have been led to self-contradiction. Sijistānī, realising this danger himself, tries to justify his position and says:

Sometimes an adversary may think that the one who is not defined or non-defined has no proof by any means, therefore we need to explain that the real proof is that which is neither defined, nor non-defined. For we see in the defined and non-defined the state of pairedness of some with others so that by their pairedness, the causes and condition ordained for them by their Creator become straight. Thus the pairedness belongs to what He has created and originated. When the removal of pairedness from the true *mubdī* is established, His proof is beyond the defined ones and non-defined ones.⁷⁴

The Ismaili concept of *tawḥīd*, thus, in establishing God to be beyond both affirmation and negation, ends up in an absolute unknowability and unpredicability of God. This, however, poses two serious problems. One is the problem of worship or prayer which God has enjoined through His beautiful names, for such a formulation does not leave room even for the loftiest name by which He may be predicated. The other is that if God has no resemblance whatsoever with His creatures, then how did they come into existence?

As for the first problem, it is true that double negation leaves no room for any personal link or prayer, as they say "no verbal expression or mental idea"

can be attributed to Him. However, the statement ascribed to Imâm Ja'far al-Şâdiq that "the true *tawhîd* lies between *tashbîh* and *ta'ţîl*" and further, Sijistânî's view that the people of *ḥaqâ'iq* share something with all the other sects, not only with the anthropomorphists and the attribute-deniers, but also with the idol-worshippers, shows that there is a kind of personal relation with God. The relation is however, not a direct one, but an indirect one, through the intermediaries (*wasâ'iţ*) between God and His creatures. These intermediaries are called *ḥudûd* (sing. *ḥadd* -- limit, rank, definition). As Sijistânî says:

Praise be to Allah who has appointed His *ḥudûd* as intermediaries (*wasâ'iţ*) between Himself and His creatures and has granted to each of them a share of His Word (*kalimah*) so that it may have power over the one which is made dependent on it.⁷⁵

As it appears that the lower *ḥadd* depends on the higher and the higher has a greater share of the Word, therefore, it is called the Lord (*rabb*) of the lower *ḥadd*. And the *ḥadd* from which other *ḥudûd* descend or the ultimate *ḥadd* at which the other *ḥudûd* come to an end, is called the supreme *ḥadd*, at which God rises from His abyss of absolute incognisability. In other words, at this *ḥadd*, He reveals Himself as a person. It is therefore called His Primordial Epiphany or *maẓhar* or *Deus determinatus*. Thus the concept of *ḥudûd* conveys the concept of *maẓhariyyah* and a personal link is possible through this

Epiphany (*maẓhar*) or succeeding Epiphanies (*maẓâhir*) from it.

This supreme Epiphany, however, rests at the apex of the spiritual world, and it is not possible for every individual in the physical world to have access to it. Therefore, there are physical *hudûd* corresponding to the spiritual ones, through which an individual or a member of the initiatory *da'wah* may ascend to it. However, in the physical world, access to the spiritual *hudûd* or to their *ta'yîd*, (spiritual assistance) is confined to the Prophet or the Imâm; the focus in the material world is on the Prophet or the Imâm or in technical language, on the *nâṭiq* (Enunciator) and *asâs* (Foundation) or the *imâm* and the *hujjah* (Proof), in their respective times. Since the *hudûd* play a vital role in the recognition of *tawḥîd*, let us attempt to shed some more light on their system.

There is an elaborate system of *hudûd* in Ismailism. However, since it is not possible to deal with the system and its terminology in detail, we will try to touch only upon its salient aspects.' The Ismailis base the concept of *hudûd* on Qur'ânic verses such as LXV:1, "And whosoever transgresses the limits (*hudûd*) of God, does verily wrong to himself," and Prophetic Traditions such as "There are five intermediaries (*wasâ'it*) between me and my Lord (*rabb*):) Jabrâ'il, Mikâ'il, Isrâfil, the Tablet

(lawḥ) and the Pen (qalam)," and "I received (the revelation) from the five and handed it over to the five."

In accordance with this Prophetic Tradition, the Ismaili thinkers such as Sijistānī, Kirmānī, al-Mu'ayyad and Nāṣir broadly agree that there are five higher ḥudūd (al-ḥudūd al-ʿāliyah) and five lower ḥudūd (al-ḥudūd al-dāniyah), which are also called the spiritual ḥudūd (al-ḥudūd al-rūḥāniyyah) and the physical ḥudūd (al-ḥudūd al-jismāniyyah) respectively. The spiritual ḥudūd are mentioned in the above Tradition in ascending order. Their physical counterparts are the nāṭiq (Enunciator), asās (Foundation), imām (Guide), bāb (Gate) and ḥujjah (Proof) in descending order. The spiritual ḥudūd are also given philosophical names, such as al-ʿaql al-kullī (Universal Intellect), al-nafs al-kulliyyah (Universal Soul), jadd (Glory), fath (Opening) and khayal (Imagination), corresponding to the Pen, the Tablet, Isrāfīl, Mikāʾīl and Jabrāʾīl respectively." Ismaili writers are not consistent in the usage of terminology and in the number of ḥudūd specified, nonetheless, they all agree upon the central and pivotal role played by these in the recognition of tawḥīd.

According to them it is these ḥudūd which are the source of the recognition and worship of God. They are the

real names through which He is invoked. As al-Mu'ayyad says:

The names are distinct signs (*a'lâm*) through which access to the named (*musammâ*) is obtained, and they are of two kinds: the names which are spelt and composed (*asmâ' muhajjâh mu'allafah*) of letters which a writer writes and erases and the names which are living, speaking, rational and noble (*asmâ' hayyah nâtiqah sharifah*), such as the infallible prophets, legatees and the imâms, who are the signs of the hereafter, the guides of *tawhîd* and the intermediaries between the worshipper and the Worshipped One.⁸⁰

Al-Mu'ayyad continues: "Thus when God says: 'To God belong the most beautiful names; so call Him by them,' (VII:180), He means 'Seek access to Him through His names.'⁸¹ Thus the *hudûd*, through their mediation, provide an indirect personal link between God and His creatures. For this reason the Ismailis apply all the names and attributes ascribed to God to the *hudûd*, for they can be applicable only to His Epiphanic aspect.

We come across numerous sayings attributed to their imâms which signify this view. For instance, it is attributed to Imâm (Alî that he said: "I am the First and I am the Last and I am the Manifest and I am the Hidden and I know everything."⁸² Also he said: "I am the Face of God and I am the open Hand of God on the earth and I am the Side of God"⁸³ In the *Ta'wîl al-Shari'ah*, it is attributed to Imâm al-Mu'izz that, concerning the *ta'wîl*

of "Lâ ilâha illâ Allâh," he said that it means: "Lâ imâm illâ Imâm al-zamân (There is no Imâm except the Imâm of the time)." 44 Also it is attributed to Imâm Ja'far al-Şâdiq that he said: "Through us God is worshipped and through us He is obeyed. Thus he who has obeyed us, has indeed obeyed God and he who has disobeyed us, has indeed disobeyed God." 45 Thus although a personal relation with the Supreme Godhead is not possible, there is a personal link with His Epiphany or Epiphanies, in the spiritual world in the form of the Universal Intellect, and in the physical world in the form of the Prophet or the Imâm. This view has been very succinctly expressed by Ismaili writers. For instance, Ja'far b. Manşûr al-Yaman says: "kull qâ'im fî 'aşrihi ism Allâh (Every Resurrector (i.e. Imâm) in his time is the name of God)." 46 Ibn Hânî Andalusî (d. 362/973), the famous Fâtimid poet, praising Imâm al-Mu'izz li-dîn Allâh says:

*mâ shi'ta lâ mâ shâ'at al-aqdâr
fa'ḥkum fa-anta al-wâḥid al-qahhâr*

It is what you will, not what the fates will;
Thus rule! You are the One, the Overpowering. 47

The application of the divine names and attributes to the Prophets and Imâms is undoubtedly very often articulated and unequivocal in Ismailism. Nonetheless, this practice is not confined to Ismaili writers, but as indicated

earlier, is a general Shiite characteristic. Further, the concept of *mazhariyyah* has also appealed to many Sūfi writers. In their case, the divine names and attributes are applied to the Perfect Man as the *mazhar* of God. In this way the concept of *ḥudūd* or *mazhariyyah* has been used to try to solve the problem of worship or of establishing a personal link with God.

As for the second problem, of the One and the Many, namely, if God or the First Principle has no resemblance with His creatures and is unique, pure and simple, devoid of multiplicity, then how did the universe with all its diversity and multiplicity come into existence? The classical solution adopted by Neoplatonic philosophy of late antiquity was, of course, to assume that being originated as a process of emanation from the One. Emanationism is defined as "the process of derivation or mode of origination, immediate or mediate, of multiplicity of beings whether spiritual or material from the eternal source of all beings, God, of Whose being consequently they are a part and in Whose nature, they somehow share."*

The Ismaili thinkers adopted the Neoplatonic concept of emanation, but with modifications according to their concept of creation. They basically agreed with the emanationist tenet that "nothing can come from the One

but the one",⁹ i.e., from the First Principle can come only the First Intellect (*nous*). However, the First Intellect according to Neoplatonism proceeds from the One by the process of emanation, whereas according to Ismailism, it comes forth through His Command (*amr*) or Word (*kalimah*) in the act of *ibdā'*.¹⁰

The reason for this modification is obvious. If Emanationism was understood in the above sense, it could have contradicted their concept of *tanzih*, the absolute transcendence and otherness of God from His creatures. For, in the case of emanation, as we will see later, some kind of homogeneity or *tashbih* between God and His creatures cannot be excluded. Thus the Ismaili thinkers have taken recourse to a creationist concept -- the concept of *creatio ex nihilo* or *ibdā'* -- which upholds the otherness of God from His creatures.¹¹ Yet their concept of *ibdā'* applies, strictly speaking, only to the First Existent which is identified with the First Intellect.

In Islamic thought, as far as the term *ibdā'* itself is concerned, it is derived from "*badī'*", which is one of the beautiful names of God, mentioned twice in the Qur'ān (II:117; VI:101). Etymologically, it is the IV form of *bada'a* (from the root *b-d-'*), in which form it is not used in the Qur'ān. However, Muslim lexicographers hold that *bada'a* and *abda'a* can be used interchangeably.

As Abû Ishâq says: "Badf' is derived from bada'a and not from abda'a, which is more in usage in speech, but if bada'a is used, it is not wrong."'' Literally, it means "to create something without a prior pattern or example."'' Technically, its meanings in various disciplines depend on their respective weltanschauungs. In theology it is used in the sense of temporal creatio ex nihilo," i.e., everything is created directly by God Himself. In Muslim philosophy perhaps it was Kindî (d.873 A.D.) who for the first time defined it as "izhâr al-shay' (an lays (i.e., to make appear a thing from nothing),"'' or "ta'yîs al-aysiyyât min lays (i.e., the existentialisation of existents from non-existence)."'' Kindî's definition, however, does not differ much from that of the mutakallimûn. The later philosophers such as Fârâbî and Ibn Sînâ used ibdâ' in the sense of Neoplatonic emanation or eternal creation.'' As Fârâbî in his 'Uyûn al-masâ'il says:

Ibdâ' is the preservation of the perpetuality of the thing whose existence is not by itself (li-dhâtihi); the perpetuality which is not linked with anything from among the causes except the essence of the mubdi'.''

According to Ibn Sînâ:

Ibdâ' is the becoming of existence from a thing for another thing, depending only on it without an intermediary of matter, instrument or time.''

According to both Fârâbî and Ibn Sînâ, by *ibdâ'* is meant the emanation of the First Intellect from the First Cause, which, according to the former, is the First Existence (*al-wujûd al-awwal*) and according to the latter, the Necessary Being (*al-wâjib al-wujûd*). From the First Intellect emanates multiplicity. This multiplicity, however, is not in its essence, but takes place by accident (*bi-l-ʿaraḍ*), i.e. by its relations. In Fârâbî's view, the First Intellect has two relations: its contemplation and comprehension of the First Existence and its contemplation and comprehension of its own essence. By the former, the second intellect emanates and by the latter, the highest sphere (*al-falak al-aʿlâ*) with its matter and form which latter is its soul.¹⁰⁰ In Ibn Sînâ's view, the First Intellect has three relations: its comprehension of the Necessary Being, from which the second intellect emanates, its comprehension of its own self as a possible being, by which the Farthest sphere (*al-falak al-aqṣâ*) emanates, and its comprehension of its own self as a necessary being by something else, by which the soul of the Farthest sphere emanates.¹⁰¹

As for the Ismaili thinkers, as S. Pines remarks, they constitute a border case.¹⁰² They agree with the *mutakallimûn* insofar as *ibdâ'* means the existentialisation of something from nothing through God's

Command, but they do not agree with them with regard to temporal creation and the creating of everything directly by God Himself. Temporal creation entails anteriority or co-eternity of time with God and creating everything directly is against His glory.¹⁰³ Thus *ibdâ'*, according to them, only means the extra-temporal origination of the First Intellect. As Nâşir Khusraw has versified this concept:

ma-kun hargiz ba-dû fi'lî iqâfat gar khirad dârf
ba-juz ibdâ'-i yak mubda' ka-lamh al-'ayn aw adnâ

Never ascribe to Him any act, if you have intellect
 Other than the *ibdâ'* of the one Originated Being
 (the *mubda'*, i.e. the First Intellect)
 Which (act) is like the twinkling of an eye or
 even quicker.¹⁰⁴

Their emphasis on the extra-temporal nature of *ibdâ'*, however, may also align them with the philosophers, at least in upholding the eternity of the world of the intellect, as has been pointed out by some scholars.¹⁰⁵ Like the philosophers, they too, seem to be aware of this consequence and try to show its contingency by demonstrating the trace of pairedness in the very act of *ibdâ'*, which results in the *mubda'*. As Kirmâni says:

Indeed *ibdâ'* turns out single (*fard*) from one aspect and a pair (*zawj*) from another, so that by the existence of pairedness (*izdiwâj*), which is the sign of origination (*âyat al-ikhtirâ'*) in existence, the proof may be established

that *ibdâ'* is not a *parte ante* eternal (*azaliyy al-awwal*), rather it in its existence comes to an end towards its *mubdi'* (may He be purified) i.e. Originator, and by the existence of singleness (*fardâniyyah*) in it, the proof may become evident, that it is the first of origination (*awwal al-ikhtirâ'*).¹⁰⁶

Thus the world of intellect may be considered eternal ontologically; logically it remains contingent, according to them, because its existence is not by itself, rather by its *mubdi'*.

They agree with the philosophers, in that, from the First Principle comes forth only the First Intellect, which is the source of multiplicity, not by its essence, but by its relations.¹⁰⁷ Nonetheless, they differ from the philosophers on the nature of the First Principle. In the case of Fârâbî and Ibn-Sînâ, although they use *ibdâ'*, the manner in which they explain the proceeding of the First Intellect from the First Principle does not differ from the process of emanation. That is to say that, according to them, existence emanates from the Existence (i.e. the First Existence or the Necessary Being).

According to Sijistânî, the ascription of existence (*hastî* = *wujûd*) to the Existentiator (*hast-kun* = God) is not free from two cases: either He does not require existence, or He cannot subsist without it. In the former case existence becomes superfluous and redundant (*afzûn*),¹⁰⁸ in the latter, God becomes equal to the

existentiated (*hast-kardah* = *makhḥlûq*) and hence He Himself becomes redundant.¹⁰ Since both cases do not befit His glory, therefore it (existence) must be negated from Him. According to Him, existence is ascribed (only) to the existents which can be either conceived to be non-existent, or conceived as a thing above them which subdues them (i.e. the "possible" and the "necessary", respectively). These existents fall under three categories: the *Intellect* (there is only one Universal Intellect for *Sijistânî*) which is above them and subdues them, but itself neither becomes subdued, nor non-existent. It is the noblest of the existents brought into existence by God's Command. The second category is the form of the realms of Nature (*mawâlîd-i ṭabî'î*), and the exóteric aspect of the laws (*sharî'at-hâ*), which become both subdued and non-existent, and the third is the human form (i.e. the Soul) which becomes subdued but not non-existent. Since existence is required by that about which it is permissible to conceive of its being non-existent or its being subdued by a subducer above it, (interestingly, the text here avoids mentioning the "subducer", supposed to be the intellect), it is necessary to remove it from God in every aspect. Thus, *Sijistânî* concludes, it is repugnant to ascribe existence to God, for all existents have come into

existence by His Command (*farmân*).¹¹⁰

The Ismaili thinkers, thus, by moving the position of the Creator-Originator beyond conceivable existence apply the higher philosophical category of existence (the "necessary being") to the First Intellect, just as they apply the higher theological categories, the divine names, to the Intellect by removing God even beyond Mu'tazilite transcendence (see above, p.65). Their main disagreement with the philosophers concerns the nature of the comprehension of God by the First Intellect. This, in the emanationist system, is a corollary of the homogeneity between God, as the First Existence, and the existents. —However, in Ismailism and particularly for Kirmânî, since God does not come under the category of existence, His comprehension by the First Intellect is not possible (see below, pp.162-64).

The Ismaili thinkers, in order to avoid the consequences of emanation, which entails the problems of the eternity of the world and homogeneity between God and His creatures, emphasize not only the imperative creative act of God, but also try to show the incompatibility of emanation, as a principle of primordial existentiality, with the concept of *tawhîd*. Kirmânî has devoted ample space in his works to the refutation of the concept that the First Intellect came into being by emanation

(*fayq*).¹¹¹ Prior to Kirmânî, however, it is not known whether any other Ismaili writer had tried to refute it directly. Sijistânî uses the term *ifâdah*¹¹² and its cognates, but from the context of his usage, it appears that he uses them in the sense of *ifâdah*, meaning 'teaching' or the 'giving' by a higher *ḥadd* (rank) to a lower *ḥadd*, and not in the technical sense of *fayq*.¹¹³ He, however, seems to reject emanation indirectly by rejecting God's being substance or cause of the world.¹¹⁴ He also rejects it by saying:

God is more glorious and more exalted than that His action (coming) from Him (*fi'luhu minhu*) may be like the heat of the sun. For when the acts are in this manner, then the act and its agent are one thing. God forbid! (in believing) that His act and His ipseity are the same thing.¹¹⁵

- The Ismaili thinkers are, thus, neither in total agreement with the concept of *ibdâ'* as held by the *mutakallimûn*, nor with that held by the philosophers. The underlying reason is that these concepts not only fail to comply with the conditions deemed necessary by the Ismailis for their concept of *tawḥîd*, but also with their doctrine of the continuity of Divine guidance and the need for hierarchical teaching through *ḥudûd*. If the existents emanate directly from God (in the case of Emanationism) or if everything is created by God Himself directly (in the case of temporal creation) and if in both cases everything

has a direct relation with God, then the concept of the necessity of the *ḥudûd* as intermediaries between God and His creatures loses its value. Thus, keeping in view their basic tenets, the Ismailis developed an interpretation of their own as they did with other concepts, which had a link with the formulations of both the *mutakallimûn* and the philosophers and, at the same time, displayed a distinctive character of its own, as H. Corbin observes:

La théosophie ismaélienne conserve l'émanatisme, mais seulement à partir du premier Être; elle affirme l'acte créateur, mais non pas d'un être qui serait déjà de l'être, voire l'Être suprême. C'est ce qui fait son originalité. Ni créationisme à la manière de l'orthodoxie exotérique, ni émanatisme à la manière des falâsifa néoplatoniciens.¹¹⁶

As for the Ismaili exposition of *ibdâ'*, the Ismaili thinkers basically agree with Kindi's definition of *ibdâ'*. As Sijistânî, who identifies *ibdâ'* with *amr* (command) and *waḥdah* (oneness), says:

It is his *amr* and *waḥdah* from which is the existentiatio[n] of the existents, not from an existent and a thing (*ta'yîs al-aysiyyât lâ min ays wa-lâ min shay'*).¹¹⁷

They also use Kindi's terminology, such as *ays*¹¹⁸ and *lays*. Nonetheless, the Ismailis differ in their interpretation of it from Kindi. Kindi uses *ibdâ'* in the sense of temporal *creatio ex nihilo*,¹¹⁹ while the Ismailis confine its usage to the non-temporal primordial

origination of the First Intellect (*al-'aql al-awwal*). It is attributed to Imâm al-Mu'izz that he, explaining the verse "*wa mâ amrunâ illâ waḥidah ka-lamḥ bi-al-baṣar*" (And Our command is but one, as the twinkling of an eye)" (LIV:50), said: By *mâ amrunâ illâ waḥidah* (Our command is but one), God has made an allusion to the first unity (*waḥdah*) out of which multiplicity (*kathrah*) came into existence... and by *ka-lamḥ bi-al-baṣar* (like the twinkling of an eye), to its existence which was non-temporal (*bi-lâ-zamân*), and this is called *ibdâ'*.¹²⁰ It is also attributed to him:

The Intellect is the originated (*mubda'*) substance brought into existence from non-existence all at once without any time frame.¹²¹

Thus the Ismailis confine the usage of *ibdâ'* to the origination of the First Intellect, with which, however, the Divine Command or *ibdâ'* became one.

The Divine Command, according to them, is the perfect power (*al-qudrah al-tâmmah*). Hence it was all-inclusive and for whatever it was possible to come into existence, came into existence all at once and altogether within the First Intellect. Sijistânî says that the Intellect is the centre of both the worlds (*markaz-i dû jahân*),¹²² and the seed of both the worlds (*tukhm-i dû jahân*)¹²³ is contained in it. Thus according to the Ismailis, the many, or multiplicity, came into existence from the Universal

Intellect through his *amr* or *wahdah*, not directly from God through emanation.

Sijistânî, in order to retain God's transcendence and otherness uses the term *wâḥid* or one in three senses: *al-wâḥid al-aḥad* (the unique one), which is God Who neither multiplies, nor increases nor is compatible (with anything); *al-wâḥid al-maḥq* (the pure one), which is His Command by which He ... originated the creatures; and *al-wâḥid al-mutakaththir* (the multiple one), which increases and is the first originated by His Command, who is not free from the union of the command with it.¹²⁴ The union of the Divine Command and the first originated being -- the First Intellect -- seems to be extremely important in the exposition of how the many came forth from the one. Logically, although the First Intellect and the Command are considered two separate things, ontologically, they cannot be conceived without each other. On the ontological level, the Command is united with the First Intellect and it is because of this unity that the First Intellect has become the "multiple one" and hence the source of multiplicity.

It should be noted here that the concept of the "unique one" and the "multiple one" is attributed to one as early as the Hellenic thinker Anaximenes (6th century B.C.). Abû Ḥâtim Râzî reports that according to

Anaximenes:

The Creator ... is the One Who does not multiply (*huwa aḥad lā yatakaththaru*). He originated the form of the element (*ṣūrat al-ʿunṣur*) and the form of the element also is one (*wāḥidah*) but it multiplies and the form of the intellect emanated from it.¹²⁵

According to Shahrastānī's report:

He is One but not like the one of the numbers. For the one of the numbers multiplies, but He does not multiply.¹²⁶

Rāzī commends Anaximenes' view and considers it close to the doctrine of the people of *tawḥīd*. Here it appears that the Ismailis, in order to establish the prime role of the Command or *ibdāʿ* as the intermediary between the Creator and the creatures without any resemblance between them, have given preponderance to the Anaximenesian concept of the "unique one" and the "multiple one"¹²⁷ over that of Neoplatonic emanation, which, according to them, is not free from the implication of the sharing of the same substance, both by God and His creatures.

CHAPTER III

Kirmānī's Contribution to the Ismaili Concept of Tawḥīd

A. Factors in the formation of Kirmānī's concept of tawḥīd

Although we do not know much about Kirmānī's life and thought from external sources, his own works indicate that he lived in a time which was full of upheavals, which had generated acute religious, political and social problems as mentioned earlier. These problems are reflected in his writings and naturally, have contributed to the shaping of his thinking. They are particularly reflected in his concept of tawḥīd, as we will see later on. Before dealing directly with his concept of tawḥīd, therefore, it would be appropriate to give a brief account of the problems as described in his own works.

a) Religious and Social problems

It has already been noted that Kirmānī's time is considered to be the golden age of the Ismaili da'wah. However, it appears to be an equally chaotic one, full of

controversies and confusions. Kirmânî was given the responsibility of directing the *da'wah* in these times, and therefore was directly concerned with all the issues of safeguarding its interests. On the one hand he was entrusted to make it coherent and on the other, uncontroversial. In this capacity, Kirmânî faced two types of problems: those which he inherited from the previous *dâ'îs*, and those which were created in his own time by the extremist *dâ'îs*. The problems which Kirmânî had inherited from the previous *dâ'îs* were related to controversies between two important *dâ'îs* -- Abû Hâtim Râzî and Abû Ya'qûb Sijistânî -- over the views expressed in Nasafî's *Kitâb al-Maḥṣûl*. Kirmânî referring to these controversies says:

Their dispute did not only pertain to the *furû'* (secondary principles), in which difference of opinion is permissible if their *uṣûl* (fundamental principles) are sound, but also in the *uṣûl*, ... in which it is not permitted.¹

Further, referring to *al-Maḥṣûl*, he says that there were inconsistencies:

... particularly pertaining to *tawḥîd* and the First Intellect ..., which, when the people of the guiding *da'wah* would come to know, would lead them to disagreement and confusion in the paths of *tawḥîd* and recognition of *ḥudûd*.²

Kirmânî considers the *dâ'îs* to be the senses of the body of religion. As in the human body, if one sense fails to perceive one thing, the other senses compensate for it,

and Kirmânî, as a *dâ'î* could not afford to let the controversies be perpetuated. Therefore, he had to make special efforts to clarify the subject and to resolve the controversies.³

Further, the controversies would have been a weapon in the hands of their adversaries with which to attack their mission. This can be inferred from a passage in the *al-Iftikhâr* of Sijistânî:

There are many books attributed to our denomination in which the author has not done justice to the subject matter and has not realized on what grounds he remonstrates against his adversary. He has compiled them devoid of the proofs which protect them from the refutation of the refuters and from the trouble of the disputants. Thus he has mixed the lean with the fat. And the adversary is ready to find entrances for the refutation and ways of troubles. When he finds an entrance for the refutation or a way for the trouble, he rushes towards it and exaggerates it.⁴

Among the problems faced at this time, the most crucial seems to be that of the divinity of Imâm al-Ḥâkim. The problem was not a new one, but a recurrence of the old extremist view. The problem of the divinity of the Imâm has always been a crucial issue in Shiite Islam. According to Shahrastânî, some of the Shiites fell either into the remissness of anthropomorphizing God, or into the error of exaggeration of the deification of some of their Imâms.⁵ Al-Nu'mân, in his *Da'â'im al-Islâm*, mentions numerous such incidents.⁶ Among the Twelver sources, such

as *al-Kâfî* of Kulaynî (d. 329/940), we find material which ascribes some kind of divinity to the *ḥujjah* (Proof) of God, the Prophet or Imâm. For instance, it is attributed to the Prophet that he said:

The *ḥujjah* of God is before creation, with creation and after creation.⁷

It is not difficult to understand that this Tradition implies some sort of divine nature in the *ḥujjah* of God. This has been further clarified by Mullâ Şadrâ (979/1571-1050/1640), in his commentary on *Kitâb al-ḥujjah*, in which he says:

Despite his (*ḥujjah's*) humanity, by virtue of sacred matters and divine favours, he is distinguished from the rest of the human beings; he has two aspects; one belongs to sanctity and divinity (*al-taqdîs wa-al-ulûhiyyah*) and the other to corporeality and humanity (*al-tajsîm wa-al-bashariyyah*). Thus it is almost allowed to worship him after the obedience of God, for he is the vicegerent of God in the terrestrial world.⁸

In Ismailism, we have also seen that the Prophet or the Imâm, each one in his respective time, is the Supreme Name, or the living and speaking Name of God. But by this, however, the main line Ismailis did not mean that the absolute Divinity was incarnated in the Prophet or the Imâm. They considered the Prophet or the Imâm as the intermediary (*wâsiṭah*) between God and His creatures. Thus according to both Twelver and Ismaili sources, the deification of the Imâms has been rejected by the Imâms.

Al-Nu'mân mentions how Imâm 'Alî had those who pronounced his divinity burnt.' He also mentions how Imâm al-Bâqir and Imâm al-Şâdiq exonerated themselves respectively from Mughîrah b. Sa'îd and Abû al-Khaţţâb who had declared their divinity.¹⁰

During Imâm al-Ĥâkim's time, as mentioned earlier, a number of dâ'îs believed in and propagated his divinity. Prominent among them seem to be Abû 'Abd Allâh Muḥammad b. Ismâ'îl Darzî, Ḥamzah b. 'Alî and Ḥasan b. Ḥaydarah known as Akhram (the one with the perforated nose).¹¹ According to some sources, al-Ĥâkim favoured these dâ'îs and therefore, these have accused him of inclining towards the dâ'îs' views.¹² But there are others who reject such a view, such as Rashîd al-Dîn, Maqrîzî and Ibn Khaldûn. Rashîd al-Dîn, referring to al-Ĥâkim's piety, godfearing and strict observance of sharî'ah, says that in 403 A.H. al-Ĥâkim issued the following decree:

(The people) should not kiss the soil of the court of imamate, they should not kiss (his) hand and they should not prostrate (to him) and they should not address him by "Our Lord (mawlânâ)", for this meaning is the prerogative of God. He should be addressed only by "Peace be upon you and Allah's mercy and His blessings (al-salâm 'alayka ' wa-rahmat Allâh wa-barakâtuh)".¹³

The same author also mentions other measures taken by al-Ĥâkim to establish the strict injunctions of the sharî'ah, such as the prohibition of alcohol and other means

of amusement, for example singing and dancing.¹⁴ This shows that the claim of divinity made by some *dâ'is* regarding al-Ḥâkim was against his religious policy.

Nonetheless, whether al-Ḥâkim was inclined toward the views of the extremist *dâ'is* or not, they openly preached his divinity and this had serious repercussions, creating discord and confusion within the *da'wah*. Ḥasan Farghânî wrote a letter to Kirmânî claiming:

He who recognizes the living Imâm of his time is superior to the communities who have passed away, (even) a prophet, or a legatee or an imâm.¹⁵

He who worshipped Allâh, from among the creatures, his worship is for a person (*shakhṣ*) in which there is no soul. And Allâh is a name, of which the *alif* resembles length, the *lâm*, width and *hâ'*, depth, thus He is long, wide and deep. ... This is the attribute of the name "Allâh", which means a person (in which there is no soul).¹⁶

Kirmânî also quotes Farghânî as believing:

The Worshipped One is the Commander of the Faithful.¹⁷

Or,

Your Resurrection has taken place and your cycle of concealment has come to an end.¹⁸

Or,

Sharî'ah, *tanzîl* and *ta'wîl* are superstitions, trivialities and superficialities, upon which salvation does not depend.¹⁹

It is obvious that such teachings were diametrically opposed to the concept of *tanzîl* and *ta'wîl*, or *ẓâhir* and

bâtin and particularly the concept of God as held by Kirmânî. In his *Wâ'îẓah*, he tries to admonish Farghânî, telling him to repent for and abandon such heretical beliefs. Referring to the deification of al-Ḥâkim in particular, he quotes the Qur'ânic verse: "At it the skies are ready to burst, the earth to split asunder, and the mountains to fall down in utter ruin" (XIX:90). So they (Farghânî and his followers) are in the position of those (*kâfirûn*) who declared that al-Raḥmân has children (XIX:88). In other words, Kirmânî likens this belief with the Church dogma of incarnation, which is, of course, unacceptable to the Muslims.

The repercussions of the controversy were not confined to the circle of the *da'wah*. They had serious social consequences too. It is narrated that once a group of the extremists entered al-Jâmi' al-'Atîq and gave the Qâḍî of the mosque a letter beginning with "*Bism Allâh al-Ḥâkim al-Raḥmân al-Raḥîm*" and they compelled him to announce the divinity of Imâm al-Ḥâkim. This action of the extremists caused a quarrel with the people in the mosque, as a result of which the extremists were killed.²⁰

b) Political Problems

The deification of Imâm al-Ḥâkim, in addition to creating problems in the *da'wah* and in the social order, also had political repercussions. The Fâṭimîd state was based on and achieved through the operations of the *da'wah*, which invited people to join their mission on the basis that the Fâṭimîd Imâms were from the progeny of the Prophet and, as his successors, were charged with continuing his mission as the vicegerents of God on earth. However, they did not claim that the Imâm was God Himself, and the activities of the extremist *dâ'îs* made it difficult to convince the Muslims to continue their support for the Fâṭimîd cause.

Further, as referred to in Chapter One, there was a fierce contest between the 'Abbâsîds and the Fâṭimîds for supremacy in the Islamic world. This had resulted in the issuing of a manifesto by the 'Abbâsîds in which they attempted to falsify the genealogy of the Fâṭimîds and accused them of propagating heresies. The manifesto was signed by both Sunni and Twelver Shiite scholars.

Another conflict at play was that between the Fâṭimîds and the Zaydites. Kirmânî's *al-Risâlah al-Kâfiyyah*,²¹ which he had written in refutation of Zaydism and the claims of the Zaydite Imâm, Abû al-Ḥasan al-Hârûnî, shows that the Zaydite Imâm had attacked the imamate of al-Ḥâkim and the

Ismaili faith as a whole as an unbelief and heresy. This had also caused great damage to the da'wah in the region of Kirmân. Thus Kirmânî, in addition to undertaking the rectification of the internal problems of the da'wah was also pressed by the political problems.

c) Intellectual Issues

It is not possible to give a detailed account here of the intellectual issues current during Kirmânî's time. Nonetheless, it will be useful to touch upon those which seem to have contributed to the formation of his thought.

It is well known that one of the dominant issues, in the domain of both philosophy and religion, has always been how to attain eternal happiness (sa'âdah, eudaimonia).²² Kirmânî, being a philosophically-minded theologian, was also preoccupied with this issue. However, since there were different approaches to it, it would be appropriate to mention them briefly in order to clarify Kirmânî's position.

The different approaches with respect to the attainment of eternal happiness, for the convenience of our study, may be divided into three categories:

- (i) through acting upon the injunctions of the sharî'ah in the literal sense without being

concerned with understanding of wisdom (*ḥikmah*) or philosophical meanings hidden in them;

(ii) through philosophical comprehension of the meanings or realities of the existents without being concerned with acting upon the injunctions of the *sharī'ah*; and

(iii) through acting upon the injunctions of the *sharī'ah* and understanding the wisdom contained in them.

These approaches were represented by the literalists, the philosophers and the *mutakallimūn* respectively. In this respect, the Ismaili thinkers essentially fall into the third category. However, they attach to it an additional prerequisite that both the form of the practice and the wisdom contained therein cannot be comprehended without their being taught by a living, inspired (*mu'ayyad*) teacher; namely, the Prophet or the Imām, as mentioned before.²³ Further, since the knowledge which the inspired teacher imparts cannot be comprehended by every individual of the sodality of the *da'wah* equally, it is necessary to have an intermediary hierarchy between the Imām and his followers, to transmit knowledge and wisdom from him to them according to their capacity. This hierarchy is called the *ḥudūd*, as mentioned before.²⁴

Furthermore, the corpus of Ismaili literature shows that Ismaili thinkers have attempted to demonstrate that the idea of the *ḥudūd* is present in the very nature of the existents and hence it is a cosmic and a perennial institution. In order to demonstrate the validity and legitimacy of this, they seem to have taken recourse to different philosophical systems according to their needs, as we will see below.

Prior to Kirmânî, it has been observed, Sijistânî had attempted to demonstrate the perennial need for this hierarchy by blending Qur'ânic images, such as the Pen and the Tablet, with Neoplatonic terms, such as the Intellect (*nous*) and the Soul.²⁵ These *ḥudūd* are both in the spiritual world as well as in the physical. The spiritual *ḥudūd* are the Pen, the Tablet, Isrâfîl, Mikâ'il and Jibrâ'il, or the Universal Intellect, Universal Soul, *jadd*, *fath*, and *khayâl*, as mentioned earlier. Sijistânî confines the number of spiritual *ḥudūd* to five, but the number of his physical *ḥudūd* far exceeds the number of spiritual *ḥudūd*. The physical *ḥudūd* are, as mentioned in his *Tuḥfat al-mustajîbîn*, in descending order, the *nâṭiq*, *asâs*, *imâm*, *ḥujjah*, *yad*, *dhû al-imtişâş*, *dâ'î*, *ma'dhûn muṭlaq*, *ma'dhûn maḥdûd*, *mu'min* and *mustajîb*.²⁶ It appears that Sijistânî's system, despite some differences in the terminology used and the number of *ḥudūd* specified by

different *dâ'is*, continued till the time of Kirmânî.

On the issue of *ḥudûd* Kirmânî's position is problematic. In his *Waḍiyyah* (and in some cases in the *Râḥat* also) he adheres to the pentad system of the *ḥudûd*.

He says:

Know that between us and the True Worshipped One - may His Grandeur be exalted - there are ten *ḥudûd*. Five of them are spiritual in the world of the Intellect, such as the Pen, the Tablet, Jibrâ'il, Mîkâ'il and Isrâfîl, and five of them are physical, such as the *nâṭiq*, *asâs*, *imâm*, *ḥujjah* and *dâ'î*.²⁷

But on the other hand, in his *Râḥat*, he advocated very clearly the necessity of the ten intellects or the ten spiritual *ḥudûd* and their corresponding ten physical *ḥudûd*. This seems to be an obvious attempt to harmonize the Ismaili system of *ḥudûd* with the ten intellects of Fârâbî which, in turn, was an amalgam of the Peripatetic and Neoplatonic concepts of the Intellect.²⁸

Kirmânî, explaining the cause of the existence of the ten intellects, says :

Since the blessing (*barakah*) which pours forth from the Holy Abode (*dâr al-quds* = world of *ibdâ'*), and which is the food of the souls, by which they become actualized in the domain of existence and transferred to the ranks of the intellects, was in such a glorious state that the souls were not able to receive it, nor were they able to benefit from it due to their not being (read *bi-mâ*) from its genus, nor could they come close to it due to their imperfection, the divine providence (*al-'inâyah al-ilâhiyyah*) out of mercy (*raḥmatan*) for them decided to make it (i.e., divide it) into ten grades.²⁹

This principle which he calls 'The Balance of Religion (*mîzân al-diyânah*),' according to Kirmânî, comprises all aspects of existence: the world of *ibdâ'*, macrocosm, microcosm, etc. And it is this principle upon which the institution or the world of the physical *hudûd* is based. Since the physical *hudûd* lead the souls to the world of *ibdâ'*, the world of bliss and eternal happiness, Kirmânî compares them with an all-inclusive self-sufficient city (*madînah jâmi'ah mustaghniyah*),³⁰ which is the abode of eternal peace and happiness. In his *Râḥat*, which he has written on the explanation of the principle of *mîzân al-diyânah*, Kirmânî also indicates how the intellect attains peace and happiness by attaining the knowledge of *tawḥîd* through the recognition of the spiritual and physical *hudûd*.³¹

The purpose of this brief description is to indicate what were the major intellectual issues in Kirmânî's time and how he attempted to deal with them. As far as Fârâbî's influence is concerned, the impact of at least three of his ideas -- The Attainment of Happiness (*Taḥṣîl al-sa'âdah*),³² The Virtuous City (*al-Madînah al-Fâḍilah*)³³ and The Ten Intellects (*al-'Uqûl al-'ashar*)³⁴ can be easily discerned in Kirmânî's thought. The very title of his magnum opus, *Râḥat al-'aql*, his concept of an all-inclusive, self-sufficient City and the Ten Intellects

as the higher *ḥudūd* along with the ten corresponding lower *ḥudūd*, are indicative of the impact of the influence of the above ideas.

Nonetheless, it can also be noticed that although Kirmânî employs these concepts of Fârâbî, there is a profound difference in their implications. According to Fârâbî, happiness can be attained by pure philosophical thinking, while according to Kirmânî, it cannot be attained by sheer philosophical thinking without the worship of both knowledge and practice (*al-ʿibâdah al-ʿilmiyyah* and *al-ʿibâdah al-ʿamaliyyah*).³⁵ Fârâbî's Virtuous City and its chief (Imâm), following Plato's ideal city and the philosopher-king are perhaps not more than philosophical postulates and there is a longing for their actualization.³⁶

Kirmânî's all-inclusive self-sufficient city, on the other hand, is an actual city, in the form of the Ismaili *daʿwah*, and its chief is the Imâm of the time as the head of the *daʿwah*, who is actually living and is present among the sodality of the *daʿwah*. Nor does Fârâbî establish a correspondence of the ten incorporeal intellects respectively in the corporeal world, while Kirmânî does so, investing these corresponding intellects in the corporeal world with the function of bringing potential intellects into actualization.³⁷ Further, as was seen earlier, according to Fârâbî, God is the First Existence

and the intellects come forth from Him through emanation, while according to Kirmânî, God does not fall under the category of existence and the intellects come forth from Him through *ibdâ'*.³⁸ This shows that while Kirmânî employs Fârâbî's ideas, he does not follow him in all aspects but modifies and adjusts these ideas according to his needs. In order to substantiate his system of the ten intellects, Kirmânî refers to the Ten Commandments of the Taurah.³⁹ He may have also derived his system from the Qur'ân itself, where ten is called the perfect number (See II:196).

The above discussion shows that there were diverse factors contributing to the formation of Kirmânî's thought. Therefore, while dealing with his systematization of the *da'wah*, it will be necessary to take into consideration the different factors involved.

B. Kirmânî's Sources

a) Internal Sources

Kirmânî, unlike many writers, mentions his sources faithfully. According to him, the main source of knowledge is the Imâm of the time. Kirmânî says:

I have attained complete grace due to what the Friend (wâlî) of God in His earth has granted me from his blessings (*barakât*).⁴⁰

Further, referring to the compilation of *Râḥat*, he says:

It is the *zakât* of our wealth which we have received from the blessings (*barakât*) of the Friend of God in His earth when he helped us (*ayyadanâ*) by his power.⁴¹

Nonetheless, since religious sciences, according to Kirmânî, exceed that which can be comprehended and preserved by a single person, other than the Imâm, the *dâ'îs* assist each other in the comprehension and preservation of the religious sciences. Thus Kirmânî, although he was in the highest position of knowledge after the Imâm, does not consider himself free from the help of other *dâ'îs*. He says:

We the group of *dâ'îs* ... our predecessors are the helpers of the successors and the successors are the supporters of the predecessors.⁴²

It is thus obvious that Kirmânî benefitted from the works of the previous *dâ'îs*. Among those whom he mentions are Nakhshabî (or Nasafî), Râzî, Sijistânî, al-Nu'mân, Ja'far b. Manṣûr al-Yaman, and he stresses that their works must be studied before reading his *Râḥat*. Among the works mentioned by him are *Da'â'im al-Islâm*, *al-Iqtiṣâr wa-al-Ikhtiṣâr*, *al-Maghâzî*, *al-Ṭahârah*, *Sharḥ al-Akḥbâr*, *al-Manâqib wa-al-Mathâlib* all by al-Qâḍî al-Nu'mân and the

Ta'wîl al-Sharî'ah of Imâm al-Mu'izz.⁴³

As for the sources for Kirmânî's concept of *tawhîd*, although he does not mention specific works which he has used, from the available sources it appears that he has followed Sijistânî's works to a great extent, particularly his *Kashf al-Mahjûb*. Sijistânî divides this work into seven *maqâlât* (sing. *maqâlat*, discourse), and each *maqâlat* into seven *justârs* (sing. *justâr*, search). Following Sijistânî's schema, Kirmânî has divided *Râhat* into seven *aswâr* (sing. *sûr*, wall) and each *sûr* into seven *mashârî'* (sing. *mashra'*, way), except the last *sûr*, which he divides into fourteen *mashra'*s. Sijistânî divides the first *maqâlat* on *tawhîd* into the following seven *justârs*:

1. On the negation of Thingness from the Creator.
2. On the negation of Definition from the Creator.
3. On the negation of Attributes.
4. On the negation of Space.
5. On the negation of Time.
6. On the negation of Existence.
7. On the negation of that which is contrary to Thingness, Definition, Attributes, Space, Time and Existence.⁴⁴

Kirmânî divides the second *sûr* on *tawhîd* into the

following seven *mashra's*:

1. On the refutation of God being non-existent.
2. On the refutation of God being existent.
3. On God's being beyond description by any attribute; He is neither intelligible nor sensible.
4. He is neither form nor matter, nor is there something analogous to matter with Him upon which He acts.
5. He has neither a contrary nor an equal.
6. There is nothing in languages with which God can be described as He deserves.
7. The truest doctrine in *tawḥīd* is through the negation of the attributes of the existents from God.⁴⁵

However, despite the similarity in the formal division of the sections of *tawḥīd* in *Kashf* and *Rāḥat*, the titles of the contents differ in certain respects, such as thingness, time, incapacity of languages. We will attempt to analyze later whether these indicate any radical differences in the views of the two *dā'īs*.

There are "other works of Kirmānī in which al-Nu'mān's influence can be vividly discerned. For

instance, his work *al-Waḍiyyah fī ma'âlim al-Dīn*⁴⁶ seems to be a summary of *Da'â'im* or a paraphrase of *Kitâb al-Iqtiṣâr*.⁴⁷ These are just a few examples of how Kirmânî was indebted to previous *dâ'is*.

b) External Sources

In mentioning Kirmânî's external sources, the purpose is not to give a detailed account of them, as this would prove to be an almost impossible task. The manner in which he has cited examples from the different sciences, such as mathematics, medicine, geometry, astronomy, and the way in which he has criticised the philosophers and the different schools of thought and sects in Islam, show that he was well acquainted with the physical, speculative and religious sciences of his time.

As is the case with other Ismaili writers, the polemical tone is quite conspicuous in Kirmânî's writings. Here we will refer specifically to only three of his works, which show somewhat the extent to which external sources have contributed to the formation of his thinking and his writings. These are *Ma'âṣim al-hudâ*,⁴⁸ *Aqwâl al-dhahabiyyah*,⁴⁹ and *al-Risâlah al-Kâfiyyah*,⁵⁰ which were written in an attempt to refute, respectively,

the views of al-Jâhiz in his *al-Uthmâniyyah*,⁵¹ of Muḥammad b. Zakariyyâ Râzi in his *al-Ṭibb al-rûḥânî*⁵² and the views of the Zaydite Imâm Aḥmad Hârûnî in his refutation of Ismailism and in particular, the imamate of Imâm al-Ḥâkim, as referred to earlier.

C. Kirmânî's exposition of *tawḥîd*

From the preceding chapter, it is evident that prior to Kirmânî, the Ismaili concept of *tawḥîd* was quite systematically developed by other Ismaili writers. Kirmânî openly acknowledges his indebtedness to them. Nonetheless, due to the factors mentioned above, Kirmânî was compelled to make certain modifications to the structure of the *da'wah* in general, and to the concept of *tawḥîd* in particular. Kirmânî expresses this in the introduction to *Râḥat*, saying:

In addition to what they had conveyed in their works there was something (omitted), which the people of religion need in order to ascend to the summit of the angelic world (*malakût*), and the people of excellence yearn to attain the abode of honour and glory by conceiving the existents and knowing the causes and the effects of them ... I decided to write on the principles of existence and their grades in it.⁵³

We have also seen such a statement, earlier, made by Sijistânî. In Sijistânî's case, the problem was the

rectification of errors carelessly made by the Ismaili writers prior to him in order to protect the doctrine from the external attacks of the *da'wah's* opponents.

In the case of Kirmânî, the battle was more complex and more dangerous. It was both external and internal. Sijistânî, who had complained about the carelessness of other writers, was himself to become subject to the corrections of Kirmânî, along with two other eminent writers, Nasafî and Râzî. However, the more dangerous battle was within the *da'wah* itself, viz. the divinity of the Imâm al-Ḥâkim publicly proclaimed by the extremist *dâ'îs*. It was because of the latter issue that Kirmânî had to make special efforts to subdue this internal revolt, which however, he was not able to suppress. The traces of this internal strife are quite visible in his exposition of the concept of *tawḥîd*. Kirmânî vehemently rejects the divinity of Imâm al-Ḥâkim in his *al-Wâ'iḏah*, emphasizing rather his corporeality and his being a servant of God,⁵⁴ and demonstrating the absurdity of considering God to be a body or within a body. Kirmânî's emphasis on the servitude of Imâm al-Ḥâkim to God seems to have stemmed as a direct reaction to the attitude of the extremist *dâ'îs*, who emphasized his divinity. Otherwise, like Sijistânî, who, as seen previously, seems to admit that obedience to the Prophet,

his legatee and the imâms, functions in the 'true religion' as a substitute for the anthropomorphous God of the Anthropomorphists, Kirmânî asserts that the Imâm is in the place of the light of God (*maḥall nûr Allâh*),⁵⁵ and stands in the place of God and that of His Prophet. His command is God's command, his pleasure is God's pleasure and his displeasure is God's displeasure.⁵⁶ Even *shirk* (which in the exoteric sense means to associate someone with God) does not mean to associate someone with God, rather, to consider someone equal to the Imâm who has been appointed by His Command.⁵⁷

Nonetheless, despite the visible colour of the interests of the Ismaili *da'wah*, or the Fâtîmîd cause, Kirmânî's concept of *tawḥîd* seems to be also concerned with the wider and deeper perennial intellectual problem of the human understanding of the nature of God, known as negative or apophatic theology. Apophatic theology, which is primarily based on the ineffability of God and the incapacity of language to describe Him, takes on a new dimension in Kirmânî's exposition of *tawḥîd* by showing that the act of *tawḥîd* is not concerned with describing the nature of God, rather, with the nature of the existence of His creatures. Kirmânî has dealt with the inappropriateness and the incapacity of language to describe God in most of his works, and particularly in the *Râḥat* and *al-Durriyyah*.

However, before analysing the subject, in order to facilitate a direct perusal of Kirmânî's exposition on *tawhîd*, we will first give here detailed summaries of the second *sûr* of *Râḥat* and *al-Duriyyah*, and then endeavour to show his contribution.

a) Summary of Sûr II: On Tawhîd, from Râḥat al-‘aql

First Mashra‘: On the falsity of God's being non-existent (lays)

Since no effect has existence without its cause, upon which it depends for its existence, therefore, had the existence of the cause not been there the effect would not have come into existence. Since some of the existents, in their existence, depend upon others, the existence of the latter would be impossible without that of the former. When it is established that some of them cannot exist without the others, then this shows that in the chain of effects and causes the one towards whom the existents come to an end, and by whom and from whom they have existence and upon whom they depend for their existence, is God, Whose non-existence is impossible and Whose non-ipseity is false. Had He been non-existent, the existents also would have been non-existent.

It is the nature of contraries that they cannot exist without the loss of their contraries. But there are contraries in the existents, which despite their contrariety are preserved under the existence. This shows that the one through whom the nature of the contraries has been nullified, and the contraries are preserved from each other, is God, Whose non-existence is impossible. Had He been non-existent, the contraries also would have been non-existent.

Second Mashra' : On the falsity of God's being existent (ays)

Since the existent, as such, in its existence, is in need of its cause upon which it depends, and God, as such, is free from need and dependence, it would be absurd to say that God is an existent. If God were an existent, He would not have been free from either being a substance or an accident. If He were a substance, he would not have been free from either being a body or a non-body. If He were a body, then the division of His essence into that which constitutes its existence, necessitates the existence of someone who precedes Him, as every multiple is preceded by something which is not multiple. But God transcends being preceded by someone else. If He were a non-body,

then He would not have been free from being either potential, like souls, or actual, like intellects. If He were potential, His need of that which actualizes Him, necessitates something which would precede Him. If He were actual, then He would not have been free from being either an agent in Himself, or an agent in other than Himself, through which His act becomes complete. If He were an agent in other than Himself, then imperfection in His act and His need of something through which His act becomes complete, necessitates something which precedes Him. If He were an agent in Himself, then His essence's capacity for having different relations with the multiplicity of different meanings, by virtue of His being an agent in and an object by Himself, necessitates something from which is His existence. If He were a substance, He would not have been free from these divisions, then by virtue of His being free from need and multiplicity, it is false to say that He is a substance.

If He were an accident and the accident depends on the substance, then by virtue of His being free from dependence, it is false to say that He is an accident.

If the existent is not free from being either a substance or accident and He transcends being both of these, then it is false to say that He is an existent.

If He were from the existents, but something other

than a substance or an accident, then He would have been a species of the genus of the existent, and He would have a common property with them on the one hand, and on the other, a specific property. This would have rendered His essence a multiple consisting of two parts. In this case His multiplicity would have necessitated the precedence of something which is not multiple and His specificity, something upon which His ipseity depends. But since He transcends multiplicity and the need of something upon which His ipseity depends, therefore, His being an existent is false.

If He were an existent, He would not have been free from being existentiated either by Himself or someone else. It is false to say that He existentiated Himself, for this would necessitate that He was not there, then He came into existence, and this is the sign of transformation and contingency. Further, if someone has no essence in the existence in the categories of substance and accident, it is impossible for him to come into existence without an agent upon whom his existence depends.

And it is also false to say that someone else existentiated Him. Thus His being an existent is false. His ipseity is supposed to be only beyond the existents whose existence depends on His origination.

Third Mashra' : On the impossibility of God's comprehension by an attribute.

Since God is concealed from the means of the comprehension of the existents and is beyond the intelligibles and the sensibles, which the human organs can comprehend, by virtue of His not being from their genus, therefore, He cannot be described by any attribute. For, however perfect and glorious the attribute, it befits only that which is either a substance or an accident. Thus, if He is described by an attribute, it is only borrowed from the originated existents. If the attributes do not belong to Him but to His originated things then to describe Him with any of them would be a lie against Him.

Further, it is not possible to comprehend God by an attribute or with a description due to the impossibility of the intellect to conceive and of the soul to imagine something which does not exist in creation.

Furthermore, there are only two ways of comprehension of things: the five senses through which perceptibles are comprehended, and definition, division, analysis, synthesis and demonstration, through which intelligibles are comprehended. Since God, being neither a body nor a non-body, is beyond both

perceptibles and intelligibles, it is impossible to say about Him what can be said about them.

Fourth Mashra': On the impossibility of God's being form or matter, and of something analogous to matter (being) with Him, upon which He acts.

God transcends being a form because the form in its existence is in need of that to which it belongs and need is the characteristic of the creature. He also transcends being matter or something analogous to it, because of their being inseparable in their existence, from that to which they belong and accept acts therefrom. He also transcends being form and matter together, for this would render His essence divided into form and matter which, for their existence, are in need of something which precedes them and is more self-subsistent than both of them. Nor is it possible for there to be, with Him, matter through which comes into existence what comes into existence from Him. Had it been so, He would have been imperfect in His act. But God transcends being imperfect in His act.

Further, form is divided into intellectual, natural and artificial. What is intellectual is intellecting for itself, intelligible by itself and intellect in itself with different relations and aspects. What is

natural is the mover of that in which it is and movable by accident, and its essence has that which is intellecting and that which is intelligible. And what is artificial is the perfection of that in which it is and without that it has no existence. All these aspects of the form necessitate something which precedes them and God transcends being preceded by something else. Therefore, He is neither form, nor matter, nor form and matter together, nor is matter with Him upon which He acts.

Fifth Mashra': On the impossibility of His having a contrary or an equal.

It is the nature of contraries that they negate each other and one cannot exist without the loss of the other. And they take turns in existence in what belongs to them and one becomes weak in relation to the other and whatever weakness occurs to one of them, it becomes null from the very existence, therefore, it is not possible that God has a contrary.

If He had a contrary, He would not have been free from being either self-subsistent (*qâ'im al-'ayn*) or non-subsistent (*mafqûd al-'ayn*). If He were non-subsistent, then the loss of His contrary would have been the cause of His existence. If the contrary were

self-subsistent and both were equal in existence, then their existence without the loss of one of them necessitates a protector, who protects their existence. For two contraries cannot come together without a protector protecting their existence from outside.

Further, if He had a contrary, this would have necessitated something in which God and His contrary would take turns in existence, each of them taking his/His ample share from it. If it were so, then that thing would have preceded Him and He transcends such a cause, therefore, it is false to say that He has a contrary.

Again God does not have an equal. Had there been any, there would have been two gods; and by virtue of their being two, each one of them would have a specific property to be distinguished from the other and this would have caused duality. Thus the existence of each one of them would have a common part and a specific part, necessitating someone who precedes them. But God transcends being preceded by someone else. Thus God has neither a contrary, nor an equal.

Sixth Mashra': On the impossibility of expressing Him through languages.

Since the existence of things, in spite of their difference and contrariety, is based on the dependence of some of them on the others, by virtue of similarity (*mushâkalah*, *tashâkul*) and compatibility (*munâsabah*, *tanâsub*) between them. And that which has no compatibility and similarity between itself and the others, keeps away from, does not revolve around and does not affirm them. Since the names and words signify things which affirm them, it necessarily follows that what exists between the signifying names and words, the signification and the things signified by them, is compatibility. Had it not been there, they would not have been affirmed, nor would there have been a way to know the things with their realities.

Since names, attributes and words are compatible with what they signify and they are composed of simple letters, and the letters out of which languages are made are contingent, then what they signify and affirm has also to be contingent like them. And since what the compound letters signify is contingent, and God is not, therefore, it is not possible for the compound letters to signify something which befits Him, by virtue of His being different from and incompatible with the contingent

things and not being from their substance. Thus He can be expressed neither by an expression of speech, nor a concept of mind.

Seventh Mashra': On establishing the truest tawhîd through the negation of the attributes of existents from Him.

Since the intellects yearn to establish His truest tawhîd and in order to do so there are two ways: by affirming and ascribing to Him the most noble attributes, and by negating them from Him; and since attributes belong to His creatures and hence ascription of any attribute to Him leads to telling a lie about Him, therefore, the reliable way of establishing His tawhîd is to negate them from Him. Thus, in this way, His tawhîd is established without aiming to describe Him through assimilation, analogy or definition. And negating from Him all that which belongs to the domain of creation, by saying "He is not this, not this ...", it is established that He is the One to Whom attributes are not applicable and that all existents are different from Him.

(This kind of tawhîd is considered by some theologians as ta'tîl. Kirmânî, by analyzing the doctrine is trying to show that this is not ta'tîl.)

This affirmation by negation is, not *ta'tîl*. *Ta'tîl* takes place only if the particle "*lâ* (is not)" is directed towards His ipseity by saying only "*lâ huwa* (He is not)" or "*lâ ilâha* (There is no God)", but in this doctrine the particle "*lâ*" is directed toward the attributes to negate them from Him. For instance, in saying "*innahu lâ mawşûf wa-lâ huwa lâ-mawşûf* (He is neither subject to attributes, nor is He not-subject-to-attributes)," in the first part the particle "*lâ*" is directed towards things subject to attributes (*mawşûf*), namely, the physical things, and in the second part towards souls and intellects, which transcend being described by the bodies and their attributes. And in both cases by saying "*innahu*" and "*huwa*" the referent, i.e. God, is established and only the physical attributes and the non-physical entities are negated. Therefore, there is nothing in it which can be subject to the accusation of *ta'tîl*. The purpose of this negation is to establish a pure affirmation of the one who transcends both the physical and non-physical existence.

(Kirmânî, then, summing up, describes how the affirmation of an attribute, in a real non-figurative sense, leads to an absurdity which is not permissible and to infinite regress, which necessitates the non-existence of existents. For, the one upon whom the existents depend

in their existence, is not established independently of others (such as attributes), and depends for the proof of His ipseity on someone else, and so on and so forth, then it will not be possible to establish the existence of others.)

Further, if we accept that God can be described with an attribute, such as existence, in a real sense, then this attribute is not free from being necessitated by His essence, or by something other than His essence. If it were His essence which necessitates this attribute for itself, then the necessitation depends on the proof of the essence first necessitating the proof of essence free from this attribute. Or, that the act of necessitation does not occur from the essence. But the proof of the essence necessitates its independence from any obstacle in being proven.

When the essence is established free from this attribute and independent of what diverts it from the proof; and existence is an attribute upon which the proof of the essence does not depend, then this attribute is not needed by the essence; the ipseity of the essence being a self-subsistent ipseity; nor is the essence in need of necessitating it for itself to have something thereby, which it did not have. Therefore, its necessitation to

God is clearly absurd.

This is the result when the necessitation of the attribute is ascribed to His essence, which precedes the necessitation of the proof. But if it is ascribed to His essence on an equal basis, then this would necessitate someone who has specified the essence to be non-attribute and the attribute non-essence, by their being inseparable from each other. Since this attribute is not necessitated by the essence, rather by someone other than His essence, and when someone other than His essence is established, then this leads to infinite regress, which is obviously impossible and unacceptable to the intellect in the presence of the proof of existents. Thus God transcends the attributes which are subsumed under the category of His origination.

Nonetheless, the existence of God is spoken about, it is due to the compulsion of expression, which is impossible for the soul except through (taking recourse to) the originated things. Otherwise, existence is among the attributes of the Act which came forth from God into existence known as the First Existence or the First Intellect,

b) Summary of al-Risālah al-Durriyyah by Kirmānī

This epistle was written by Kirmānī in response to a question asked by one of his co-religionists regarding *tawḥīd*, which if understood in a literal sense, implies multiplicity in the divinity. In his reply, Kirmānī tries to show, by virtue of God's being beyond and independent of the existents, that language in a literal sense is inapplicable to Him, and then he goes on to explain what is meant by *tawḥīd*.

The question: What is *tawḥīd*? It is known in our doctrine that it means making a "*muwaḥḥad* (unified, one)" and the *muwaḥḥad* is the object of the *muwaḥḥids* (unifiers). But it is not permissible to say that God is the object of the *muwaḥḥids*, for *tawḥīd* or "making one" is applicable only to what is made *wāḥid* or one out of multiplicity; but in divinity there is no multiplicity from which to make *wāḥid* or one. Please explain.

Kirmānī replies: First of all, God (= *al-mubdi'*), by virtue of His having no similitude, does not depend on the *tawḥīd* or unification of the *muwaḥḥids*. He does not have similitude, whether the *muwaḥḥids* unify Him or not.

Further, it is in the nature of speech that it

cannot denote that which is not from its substance and cognation, and hence by virtue of God's being beyond comprehension by any description, it is not possible even for the most noble meanings of speech to denote His reality.

Nonetheless, according to the rudiments of the intellect, affirming and speaking about an agent from whom existing actions came forth is inevitable, and in order to do so, the speaker has no alternative but to resort to speech, (and) then he is compelled to speak with the most noble, most sublime and most subtle meanings of speech. And in this case, there is no more noble and more subtle meaning than the meaning of *wâḥidiyyah* (being *wâḥid*), and no more sublime meaning than that of *fard*, with which to speak about Him. For the meaning of *fard*, in the meaning of *wâḥidiyyah*, by virtue of its being *ṣamad* (one to whom people resort in their needs; self-sufficient), comes close to the meaning of *wâḥid* (one), *aḥad* (unique) and *waḥîd* (alone). Further, the meaning of *fard* is distinguished from that of *wâḥid*, because of its being the cause of *wâḥid*.

Thus *tawḥîd* does not mean the precision or specification of a meaning by which He may be established to be *fard*.

Tawḥîd, which is an infinitive on the measure of

taf'îl and which the philologists use for the act which is abundantly done, has two aspects in its meaning: One related to the *ibdâ'* of God, which requires a *muwahhîd* in the sense of the agent of the *wâhîd*, and a *muwahhad* in the sense of *wâhîd*, the object of the *muwahhîd*; and the *wâhîd* is used in many ways, such as:

- i) A *wâhîd* is *wâhîd* by virtue of the limitation of its unit (*dhât*) regarding the sides by which it is separated from others, such as the physical bodies. And the limitation of such a *wâhîd* shows that it is contingent.
- ii) A *wâhîd* is *wâhîd* in the sense that it has a specific meaning which is not found in others, such as the attraction for iron in the magnet. This specific meaning of such a *wâhîd* necessitates it to be contingent.
- iii) A *wâhîd* is *wâhîd* in the sense of essence (*'ayn*), such as the essence of whiteness. And this *wâhîd* who has essence in the existence, depends for its existence on someone else preceding it. And this necessitates that it is contingent.
- iv) And the *wâhîd* is *wâhîd* in the absolute sense. The absolute *wâhîd* speaks about its essence of having pairedness (*izdiwâj*), which consists of the *wahdah* (oneness) and its subject (*hâmil*). All these aspects

necessitate that the absolute *wâḥid* is contingent. Since *tawḥīd* means "making *wâḥid*" and *wâḥid* pronounces contingency of its essence, it does not befit the glory of God. Therefore, He (is not *wâḥid* but) *muwaḥḥid*, in the sense that He is the *mubdi'* (Originator) of *wâḥid*. And the aspect of the meaning related to the act of the *mu'min*, (believer) who is a *muwaḥḥid*, changes from its previous meaning, as the meaning of the verb "*raghiba*" when followed by the particle "*'an*" changes from "like" to "dislike". Thus the meaning of *tawḥīd* related to the act of the *mu'min*, becomes "to divest a certain meaning from the *wâḥid*" instead of "making *wâḥid*", as it is said: "*waḥḥadtu al-shay'a 'an al-shay'* (I isolated a thing from another thing)".

Since divinity is a necessity which cannot be denied and each of the existents, because of the traces of contingency subsisting in its essence, bears witness that it is not God, the *tawḥīd* of the *mu'min*, as a *muwaḥḥid*, changes from "making *wâḥid*" which is related to God, to "divesting the divinity from the *wâḥid*", so that, thereby, divinity may be affirmed as belonging to someone other than it. Thus God is *muwaḥḥid* in the sense that He instaurated the *muwaḥḥad*, and the *mu'min* is *muwaḥḥid* in the sense that he divests the *muwaḥḥad* from divinity.

As for the meaning of multiplicity, again *tawḥīd* stands

in two aspects: with respect to the *fard* (Single) -- God -- it is the *ibdâ'* of multiplicity, which is multiple singles (*afrâd*) and units (*âḥâd*), and with respect to the *mu'min*, it is to divest all these singles and units from divinity one by one.

As for the doctrine that the *fard* is the cause of the *wâḥid*, Kirmânî says, as nothing exists in the effect which does not exist in the cause, we find that *fard* by virtue of the letters, their conjunction, disjunction, signs, kinds, multiplication, calculation hidden in it, comprises and indicates the ranks of all existents. And corresponding to these ranks are the letters "*lâ ilâha illâ Allâh*" which show the *ḥudûd* (religious hierarchy) upon whom the heavens and the earth are based and upon whom the light of oneness (*wahdah*) pours forth.

The proof of this is that the seven letters in it, vis-à-vis the lords of the cycles, through them and what they pour forth over the souls, the purpose of the spiritual form which is created in their cycles, becomes complete. And their numerical values according to the calculation of the *jummal*, stand vis-à-vis the three hundred and sixty-five days of the sun in one revolution, the result of the multiplication of the rank four into rank seven stands vis-à-vis the twenty-eight mansions of the moon in one revolution, the result of the numerical

values of the letters of the fourth rank stand vis-à-vis the fifty-one lords of *ta'yîd* (divine help) of the *hudûd* of every cycle and the result of the multiplication of the seventh rank into itself, together with the number of the *hudûd* of every cycle, except the supreme of them which is the one, stand vis-à-vis the ninety-nine names of God, which he who counted them entered paradise.

Kirmânî concludes: It is evident that the *fard*, which is the cause of *wâḥid*, contains in it the ranks of all the existents. And *tawḥîd* related to God means the *ibdâ'* of the *wâḥid* (one) and *âḥâd* (units), and related to the *mum'in*, to divest the divinity from them one by one.

c) Discussion

From the preceding discussion and the summaries of the second *sûr* of *Râḥat* and of *al-Durriyyah*, it appears that although Kirmânî follows his predecessors in the *via negationis* in the exposition of the concept of *tawḥîd*, yet he also gives it a positive character. This latter position can be adduced from his *al-Durriyyah*. According to it, the very act of *tawḥîd* is not concerned with the divinity of God, but rather with the nature of the existence of His creatures. This is so particularly when Kirmânî defines *tawḥîd* as not only the origination

of *wâhid*, namely, the First Intellect, by God, but also as the origination of multiplicity by Him. Further, his bipartite division of *tawhîd* into the act of God and the act of the *mu'min* also seems to be unique. In our discussion we will therefore try to focus mainly on the views advanced in his *al-Durriyyah*, which distinguish his position from those of his predecessors, in particular, those outlined in Sijistânî's *Kashf*.

Nonetheless, it also appears to be necessary to touch upon Kirmânî's exposition of *tawhîd* in his *Râḥat*. A comparison of the contents of the sections dealing with *tawhîd* in *Râḥat* and *Kashf* reveals certain differences in the adoption of the titles of the section, to which we have already referred. It will be useful to determine whether this is merely a question of emphasis or of any radical difference concerning the subject they have discussed. For instance, Sijistânî has devoted the first *justâr* of the first *maqâlat* on *tawhîd* to the negation of the thingness (*chîzî*) from God. He uses thingness in the sense of form (*şûrah*) and he divides it into three kinds: spiritual, natural and artificial.⁶⁰ Further, Sijistânî argues that things are either substances or accident and substance is in turn either a body or a soul.⁶¹

Kirmânî does not devote a separate *mashra'* to the negation of thingness from God. Nonetheless, he covers

this while discussing the impossibility of God's being a form or an existent (*ays*) in the fourth and second *mashra'* respectively. The difference between Sijistânî and Kirmânî is that Kirmânî instead of spiritual (*nafsânî*) form uses intellectual (*'aqlî*) form.⁶² Further, just as Sijistânî divides things into substance and accident, Kirmânî deals with the existent in the same way, whereby existent is either a substance or an accident and the substance is again either a body or a non-body. Here instead of soul, Kirmânî uses non-body, by which he means both soul and intellect.⁶³

Another point of difference seems to be the negation of God's being in time, to which Sijistânî has devoted a *justâr*,⁶⁴ whereas Kirmânî does not mention it at all in his discussion of *tawhîd*. Nonetheless, when Kirmânî discusses the First Intellect, he asserts that it is beyond time.⁶⁵ This means that if the First Intellect is beyond time, then obviously time cannot be related to God.

Similarly, Kirmânî devotes a *mashra'* to the incapacity of languages to describe God as He deserves,⁶⁶ whereas Sijistânî does not mention it in his *Kashf*. However, while dealing with *tawhîd* in *al-Iftikhâr*, he expresses the same view by saying that God can neither be described by a verbal expression (*lafẓ qawl*) nor by a mental concept (*'aql qamîr*).⁶⁷ In fact, Kirmânî uses

Sijistânî's very words while dealing with the incapacity of languages."

These are a few instances which indicate that as far as the exposition of *tawhîd* in *Kashf* and *Râhat* is concerned, apart from formal differences, there does not appear to be any radical difference in the meaning aimed at. However, Kirmânî's elucidation is detailed, whereas Sijistânî's statements are terse and sometimes abstruse requiring further elaboration. Kirmânî's main contribution to the Ismaili concept of *tawhîd*, which distinguishes his position from his predecessors, lies in his exposition in *al-Durriyyah*, and therefore we will try to analyze and elaborate upon it in the following section.

Al-Durriyyah was written by Kirmânî in answer to a question posed by one of his brothers-in-faith, concerning *tawhîd*. The question runs like this:

"What is *tawhîd*?" The obvious meaning of our word (*qawl*) *tawhîd* is the 'act of a *muwahhid* (unifier) (*fi'l al-muwahhid*)' and the *muwahhad* (unified, one) is the object of the *muwahhids*. Further, *tawhîd* (in this sense) is not possible without imagining a multiplicity; it being applied to that which is made *wâhid* (*wâhid* = *muwahhad*) out of the totality of multiplicity. But there is no multiplicity in divinity to make a *wâhid* out of it. Explain this for us!"

According to Kirmânî, this was one of the questions asked by some members of the *da'wah* as "a means of testing and a way of spreading discord."¹⁰ The emphasis of the questioner on the literal meaning, which means "to unify" or "to make *wâḥid* (one)," appears to suggest such a motive.

It is also possible that the question may have been made up by Kirmânî himself to serve as a subtle criticism of the literalist understanding of *tawḥîd*, which in the sense of "declaring" or "making" One always implies a humanly conceived concept and is therefore, not applicable to God.

However, in the case of Kirmânî, such an understanding would have been a self-contradiction due to the negation of the attributes from God. It was obvious to him that the question of God's being the object of the *muwahḥids*, and of multiplicity in divinity, arose from a purely literalist interpretation of the term *tawḥîd*. Therefore, in order to avoid the consequences of the question, he tries to show the impossibility of using speech in a literal sense and then he explains the figurative sense or senses in which *tawḥîd* may be meaningful. Before giving his exposition of *tawḥîd*, Kirmânî establishes certain premises to demonstrate the impossibility of using speech to describe God and the

justification for figurative speech. The premises are:

- i) Nature of God
- ii) Nature of Speech
- iii) Compulsion of the use of the speech in a figurative sense.

Since Kirmânî's exposition is based on these premises, we will first try to present them in order that a clear understanding of the characteristics of his concept may be reached.

i) Nature of God

Kirmânî has discussed the nature of God in almost all of his existing works. Describing the nature of God in *al-Durriyyah*, in a highly concise and terse way, he says that *tawhîd* or unification does not mean that first there were *muwahhids* who unified Him and made Him *wâhid*, or that there were purifiers before Him who purified Him. Rather, He is there independent of His creatures. He says:

The *mubdi'*, may He be glorified, Who has no similitude does not depend on the *tawhîd* or unification of the *muwahhids*, nor on the purification of the purifiers (*tajrîd al-mujarridîn*), so that He would leave His having no similitude if the *muwahhids* do not unify Him, or that He would leave (His being transcendent of) the characteristics of His originated things (*mubda'ât*) if the purifiers do not purify Him. Rather, He, may He be exalted and glorified, has no similitude, whether the

muwahhids unify Him or not, whether the purifiers purify Him or not.⁷¹

Thus according to Kirmânî, since God is independent of the *muwahhids* and purifiers, therefore, their act of unification or purification is not applicable to Him.

It is due to this aspect of the nature of God that when he tries to describe Him, he uses words which do not infringe and condition His absolute independence, such as *huwiyyah muftariqah* (an assumed ipseity), *aniyyah ghayr mawṣûfah* (an is-ness which is not subject to attributes) and *huwa* (He is).⁷² These words also, according to Kirmânî, do not befit God's glory, by virtue of their contingency and their being used for His creatures. However, they serve the purpose to some extent, in the sense that they indicate that there is someone who is beyond description and comprehension and independent of them. The absolute independence and transcendence of God leads to a crucial question: Even if it is accepted that God is independent and transcendent of creatures, why should He not be described through the most noble and sublime attributes and names? Kirmânî tries to deal with this question in the second premise: the nature of speech and its relation to God.

ii) Nature of Speech

In this premise, Kirmânî shows that in addition to the impossibility of describing God, due to His independence and His transcendence of His creatures, it is also in the very nature of speech that it cannot describe Him as He deserves. He says:

It is the element and nature of speech that its meanings become narrow and small, when someone intends to inform about the traces and essences which transcend sensory perception, let alone those which the propositions of the intellect and the soul fail to inform about. Thus speech is unable to denote that which is not like it (i.e. of its element and nature). And as there is nothing in word or speech composed of the letters, which can denote the desired reality in *tawhîd*, due to the fact that what is intended to be known about the *mubdî* through a description is beyond the extremely noble meanings which the composed letters (may) convey.⁷³

Kirmânî discusses this in detail in *Râḥat* as well.

Concluding the discussion, he says:

Since the names, attributes and words are similar to those things which they denote and they are composed of simple letters out of which are made all the languages, while the letters are contingent, then what they denote and what they necessitate is also contingent. And when in all languages what the composite letters denote is contingent, like them, ... and God, may His grandeur be exalted, is not contingent, then it is evident that it is impossible for the composed letters, out of which all languages are created, to have a way of denoting that which befits His grandeur, by virtue of His being different from and incompatible with the contingent things and not being from their substance. And when He is

different from the contingent things then there is a total despondency that the words and expressions may denote something which may befit Him.⁷⁴

From the above discussion, it is clear that there is no room left for even the loftiest name or attribute to be used for God, due to their inherent contingency. And it is due to this that even the most noble and lofty names, such as Allâh, *mubdi'*, *khaliq*, are not applicable to God, but to the First Intellect. For, the expressions come to an end with the First Intellect and they cannot go beyond it. Therefore, they denote only the characteristics of the First Intellect, not those of God as such. For instance, Kirmânî, analysing and explaining the etymology of the name 'Allâh', shows how even this supreme name, due to its inherent meanings, does not befit God's glory. He says:

Since the names whereby He, the exalted, is sanctified and invoked in the physical world, namely, the abode of nature, are many, and the greatest of the names which nobody deserves and whereby He stands alone, is Allâh. And (since) the appropriate of the names, with which a thing is named, is that which corresponds to the meaning which conveys that which is found in the named (*musammâ*) and which speaks about its nature and denotes its state. And (since) this name i.e. Allah by its meaning conveys *ulhâniyyah* (yearning, longing) and *walah* (bewilderment), as it is said: *alaha fulânun ya'lahu ulhâniyyatan* when someone yearns; and *waliha fulânun yawlahu walahan*, when someone is bewildered. Thus this name, by these meanings which it conveys is befitting for the *mubda'*, namely, the First Existent, due to the meanings of

longing for and bewilderment in Him from Whom it came into existence. And, when this name, owing to the meanings found in it, befits the *mubda'*, while this name is the greatest name and the named therewith is the greatest named, and yearning and bewilderment subsist in it, then God, may He be glorified, transcends the attributes of His creatures.⁷⁵

That is, He transcends the meaning of 'Allâh' -- yearning and bewilderment, -- which abide in the First Intellect.

Continuing in the same spirit Kirmânî in *al-Risâlah al-Waḡiyyah fî ma'âlim al-dîn* says:

When it is said that He is *wâḥid* (One), *âlim* (Knowing), *qâdir* (Powerful), *ḥayy* (Living), etc., it does not mean that He possesses oneness, knowledge, power and life with which He has been attributed. Rather, it means that He is the agent (*fâ'il*) of the one, knowing, living, powerful (*fâ'il al-wâḥid wa-al-âlim wa-al-ḥayy wa-al-qâdir*), etc., just as a king who has built a certain city, or has struck the neck of a certain person is called a builder and a striker. But these are not his personal attributes in the sense that he personally executed these (actions). Rather, these are the attributes of the one whom he commanded and enabled to do so. He personally built and dealt the blow, and by his (i.e. the king's) command became a builder and a striker. But everything is attributed to the king. For it is due to his command that the building and the striking took place. Thus when we say something about God we say it in this manner.⁷⁶

Kirmânî has elaborated upon this view further in *al-Muḡî'ah*, substantiating it with the Qur'ânic verse: "*shahida Allâhu annahu lâ ilaha illâ huwa* (Allah witnesses that there is no God but He (*huwa*))." (III.18). He says that by 'Allâh' here is meant the First Intellect.

Explaining the verse, Kirmânî says that the First Intellect does not long for, nor is bewildered by, anything; for nothing is beyond its knowledge and comprehension, "except for Him and in Him Who is beyond it (*illâ huwa alladhî huwa khârijun 'anhu*)".⁷⁷

Similarly, Kirmânî discusses the inadequacy of the application of the name "*mubdi'*". This inadequacy, according to him, lies in that the *mubdi'*, in its composition and meaning, is not free from contingency and need. First of all, since the name is composed of contingent letters, it denotes only a contingent essence. Further, the *mubdi'*, in its ultimate meaning, is an agent (*fâ'il*), and by being an agent, it is essentially an act (*fi'l*). For, the agent in an object (*maf'ûl fîhi*) is the act which, in its essence, is caused by someone else. Thus the *mubdi'*, being an agent, denotes the essence of an act (*dhât al-fi'l*), not the True God (*al-ilâh al-ḥaqq*) from Whom the act (= *ibdâ'*) came forth. As in the case of beating (*qarb*), which is an act, it is the beating which is the "beater" (*qârib*); not the one from whom the beating comes forth. That is to say, it is the beating which causes the pain, not the person from whom the beating comes forth. Had the "beater" (*qârib*) been the person from whom the beating comes forth, then by stopping the person from beating, the pain would have stopped in the beaten object

(*maqrûb*). But it is not so. This means that the *mubdi'* does not denote the True God (*al-ilâh al-ḥaqq*), rather the essence of the act (*dhât al-fi'l*), which came forth from Him Who cannot be called an agent.⁷⁸

Kirmânî continues:

Had the name of *mubdi'iyah* (being *mubdi'*) been applicable to Him, then He would not have been free from being either an act which is an agent, or an agent from whom the act comes forth. By His being an act, like beating, which denotes an act which is an agent, and His "being agent (*fa'iliyyah*)" being dependent on the existence of the object in which He acts, He would not have deserved divinity due to His need of someone else in His being the agent, as the beating, which is the beater depends in its existence, on the object in which it acts. Further, by His being an agent and in His being an agent, an act of someone other than Himself, as the beating is caused by someone else, He would not have deserved divinity. For, in this case, He being an agent, would be contingent, as the beating in being an agent is contingent.⁷⁹

If this is the case then, Kirmânî concludes, it is evident that the name of "*mubdi'iyah* or being *mubdi'*", is applicable to the one who is "*mubda'* (Originated)" by his being the act of Him who cannot be called the "*mubdi'* (Originator)", nor *ṣâni'* (Creator), nor *khâliq* (Creator), nor *fâṭir* (Maker).⁸⁰

Kirmânî thus excludes the possibility of using even the loftiest name or meaning in speech, composed of letters, to describe God in the real sense, due to their inherent contingency. This characteristic of speech leads

to the third premise, namely, the need to use speech in a figurative sense.

iii) Need to use speech in a figurative sense:

The need to use speech in a figurative sense, according to Kirmânî, arises from the fact that although the comprehension of God, due to His absolute transcendence and otherness, is not possible, nonetheless, His affirmation as the agent of existing acts is inevitable. In this vein he says that although the *mubdi'* is beyond the description of the most noble meanings, which the composed letters convey, "it is inevitable to speak and affirm that which the principles of the intellect necessitate, namely, an agent from whom the existing acts came forth."⁸¹ In another place he says:

The Divinity is a necessity whose existence cannot be rejected and the proof of the agency is a force which cannot be repudiated.⁸²

Kirmânî has explained this view in detail in the first *mashra'* of the second *sûr* in *Râḥat*, under the heading "the falsity of God's being non-existent". Here he tries to establish this divinity and agency on the basis of two premises. One is based on the dependence and causation of existents. According to this premise:

Since some of the existents depend on the others and those others still on others and this necessitates that finally there has to be a source or an agent, otherwise, the existents would not have existed. But since they exist therefore, there has to be an agent towards whom all existents come to an end.⁸³

The other one is based on the contrariety found in the existents. He says that there are contraries among the existents, and the nature of contraries is such that some of them cannot exist without the loss of the others. Despite this, contraries exist. This shows that there is a protector beyond these contraries, who has preserved them from each other. Had He not been there, the contraries would not have been there. But since contraries exist, the affirmation of a protector, who protects them from each other, is inevitable.⁸⁴

Thus, by using logical and ontological arguments indiscriminately, Kirmânî establishes that the existence of the existents, which on the one hand, depend on one another and on the other hand, are contrary to each other, is not possible without a principle or an agent upon which they depend and are protected from each other thereby. The principles of the intellect compel (us) to accept and affirm such an agent. However, despite the compulsion of the intellect to affirm such an agent, it is not possible to describe Him in any positive sense. This impossibility of describing Him is due, on the one hand, to His own nature,

in that He does not fall under the category of existence, and on the other, due to the nature of speech. Speech is composed of simple letters and they cannot describe that which is not of their element and substance. Thus Kirmânî, while establishing this agent, does not give any positive description, except as "an assumed ipseity (*huwiyyah muftariḡah*)" or "a pure is-ness (*anniyah maḡḡah*)".

However, when the speaker has to speak about the "assumed ipseity" in a positive way, out of necessity and compulsion, then he has to have recourse to the most noble and subtle meanings, not, indeed, in a real but in a figurative sense. Thus, according to him, *tawḡid* is used in this figurative sense and hence its literal meaning is not applicable to the "assumed ipseity" or God.

In justifying the use of the term *tawḡid*, which means 'making *wāḡid* or *muwaḡḡad*' in the figurative sense, Kirmânî concentrates on the meaning of *wāḡid* and its cause *wāḡidiyyah* (= *waḡdah*, oneness) or *fard*. According to Kirmânî, *waḡdah* or *fard* is the cause of *wāḡid* and in turn, of all spiritual and physical existents. As he says:

Indeed the cause of all existents, whether visible or invisible, is *waḡdah*, which is designated with *fard*. Each of them has a share of the *waḡdah*, otherwise, it would not have deserved to have the name of being *wāḡid* and *fard*.⁵⁵

Kirmânî is not always precise in using terms such as *fard*, *fardiyyah*; *wâḥidiyyah*, *waḥdah*. For instance, in *al-Durriyyah*, he uses *wâḥidiyyah* and *fard* as synonyms,⁶⁶ and in *al-Naẓm*, *wâḥidiyyah* and *fardiyyah*.⁶⁷ Further, in the former, he equates *wâḥidiyyah* and *fard* and in the latter, *waḥdah* and *fard*. But, on the whole, it seems that he uses *wâḥidiyyah*, *waḥdah* and *fard* in the same sense.

Regarding the importance of the One, we have seen Plotinus saying that it is as inadequate a name to apply to the First Principle as other names, 'but preferable to others because it has this power of lifting our minds beyond limitation'.

Kirmânî appears to follow Plotinus' argument in preferring *fard* for God over other names. His preference is based on three grounds:

- (a) It implies His absolute independence and the absence of limitation and determination. Therefore, he prefers it even over *mubdi'*, although he frequently uses it for God; for, according to him the name '*mubdi'iyyah* (being *mubdi'*)', as we have seen, can be applied after *ibdâ'*, which implies a kind of dependence, while He is *fard* because of the impossibility of His having a similitude.⁶⁸

b) Secondly, *fard* is also *ṣamad*, which means "the chief, whom the people resort to in their needs; the one who is independent of others upon whom others depend; that which has no hollowness. All these meanings indicate the absolute independence and the ultimate limit of the meaning of *fard*; beyond which there is no way to go further. Therefore, the meaning of *fard* in the (sense of) *wāḥidiyyah* transcends the meaning of *wāḥid*, *aḥad* and *waḥīd*." Thus he gives preference to *fard* over *wāḥid* as he does over *mubdi*'.

(c) Thirdly, *fard* is the cause of the *wāḥid* and the cause always precedes the effect.⁹⁰ Thus, according to Kirmânî, *fard* due to these characteristics, is more appropriately used for God, (from among the meanings which the composed letters convey), even though it is also used for His originated creatures.

However, while using *fard* for God, Kirmânî reminds us that *tawḥīd* by no means denotes the careful examination of a meaning (*tadqīq al-ma'nâ*) in informing about God that He is *fard*, such that the one who carefully examines may be a *muwaḥḥid*, nor does it denote the specification of a meaning to Him, so that thereby it may be established that He is *fard*. He is *fard*, rather, due to the impossibility for the

letters to describe Him and due to His transcending rational propositions and physical characteristics.^{'1}

Having established the impossibility of a real or positive description of God in *tawhîd*, based on the literal meaning of speech, Kirmânî proceeds to explain the meaning of *tawhîd* in a figurative or technical sense. He first explains the morphological structure and literal meaning of *tawhîd*, and then he gives its technical meaning. Nonetheless, there seems to be a close correlation between the literal and technical meanings.

Morphologically, *tawhîd* is an infinitive on the measure of *taf'îl*. In the literal sense, the philologists use this kind of quadrilateral verb-form only for the one whose act is abundant.

Technically, according to Kirmânî, *tawhîd* has two opposite meanings: one is related to the act of God which is *ibdâ'*, and the other to the act of the *mu'mim*, which is to divest creatures from divinity.^{'2} In both cases, as we have seen earlier, even *mubdi'*, *khaliq* and other such names are used only for the First Intellect. He illustrates also that the *wâhid* or *muwahhad* is not used for God, rather, it is used for the First Intellect. We have seen that in the question on *tawhîd*, the objection was to God's being made the object of the *muwahhid*; and hence to the implied multiplicity in His divinity, which

the literal meaning of *tawhîd* conveys. In both cases, Kirmânî shows that both the *wâhid* or *muwahhîd*, which is the object of the act of the *muwahhîd* or *muwahhîds* and the multiplicity, are not related to God, but rather to the First Intellect.

In elaborating upon the aspect of *tawhîd* related to the act of God, the *ibdâ'*, which requires a *muwahhîd*, the agent of *wâhid* (= *muwahhîd*) and a *muwahhîd* (= *wâhid*), the object of the *muwahhîd*,⁹³ and demonstrating the contingency of *wâhid*, Kirmânî asserts that *tawhîd* in this sense cannot be applied to God. Demonstrating this, he says:

Since the *tawhîd* is the act of the *muwahhîd*, namely, the agent of *wâhid* and the *wâhid* is used in many senses, such as:

1) The *wâhid* is *wâhid* by virtue of the termination of its unit (*dhât*) towards the directions by which it separates itself from others, such as the bodies of sensible things and in this respect it deserves to be called *wâhid*; its termination towards the directions and the total comprehension of the limits show that this *wâhid* is contingent.⁹⁴

2) The *wâhid* is *wâhid* in the sense that it is distinguished by a meaning which is not found in others, like the property of a magnet in attracting iron, and in this respect, it deserves to be called *wâhid*, and its distinction with this meaning, with the exclusion of the others, necessitates that this *wâhid* is contingent.⁹⁵

3) The *wâhid* is *wâhid* in the sense of essence (*'ayn*), like the essence of whiteness, the essence of blackness, the essence of a substance and the essence of a thing, and all of them in this respect deserve to be called *wâhid*; and this *wâhid* in its existence being dependent

on the existence of someone else, whose existence continues to be always with its existence, as long as it has an essence in the existence, necessitates that it is contingent.'⁶

4) The *wâhid* is *wâhid* in an absolute sense. Now the absolute *wâhid* pronounces about its essence of having pairedness (*izdiwâj*), which consists of the *waḥdah* (oneness) and its receptacle (*ḥâmil*). And all these aspects necessitate that the *wâhid* is absolutely contingent.'⁷ -

Having demonstrated the contingency of the absolute *wâhid*, Kirmânî concludes that what necessarily follows from this is that:

The *tawḥîd*, which is (the act of the *muwaḥḥid*, in the sense of) making the *wâhid* (*fi'l al-wâhid*) which (latter) pronounces the contingency of its own essence, does not befit the glory of God (the *mubdi'*), may He be glorified and His grandeur exalted, therefore, He, may He be sanctified, is *muwaḥḥid*, (only) in the sense that He is the Originator (*mubdi'*) of the *wâhid* and *aḥad*.⁸

That is to say that it is not befitting for God to be the *wâhid*, the object of the act of the *muwaḥḥid* (= *tawḥîd*), rather, He is *muwaḥḥid* of the *wâhid*, in the sense that He originated it through *waḥdah*, namely, His Command. The relation of *waḥdah* and the Command will be elaborated upon further later on.

As for the aspect of *tawḥîd* related to the act of the *mu'min*, who is a *muwaḥḥid*, Kirmânî says that here the meaning of the *tawḥîd* changes from the one related to the act of God, just as the meaning of the verb "*raghiba* (to like)" changes to "dislike", when it is followed by the

particle "(an (off, away, from ...))". He says:

The *tawhîd* which is related to the act of the *mu'min*, who is *muwahhîd*, does not mean that he 'makes the *wâhîd* (*yaf'al al-wâhîd*)', rather, it changes from the previous meaning, 'to make the *wâhîd* (*fi'l al-wâhîd*)' to another one. ... (Here) the *tawhîd* of the *muwahhîd* means 'to divest the *muwahhîd* (*salb al-muwahhîd*)' from a certain meaning. As it is said: '*wahhadt al-shay'a (an al-shay'*' (I isolated a thing from the other)".¹⁰⁰

Kirmânî then concentrates on what is the meaning which the *mu'min* divests from the *muwahhîd*. He tries to show that although the divinity cannot be comprehended and described in a positive way, nonetheless it is a necessity and a power which cannot be denied. It can, therefore, be established only through the way of negation on the basis of the witness of the creatures, who, according to Kirmânî, due to the contingency and pairedness of their essence, proclaim that they are not God. Thus, the *tawhîd* of the *mu'min* is to establish the divinity by negating it from the *muwahhîd*, the First Intellect, and from the rest of the creatures.

He says:

When it is established that the *tawhîd* (of the *mu'min*) means to divest a certain meaning from the *muwahhîd* ..., and the divinity is a necessity whose existence cannot be repudiated and the proof of being an agent (*fâ'iliyyah*) (of existing things) is a power which cannot be denied and the things which fall under the existentiation (*îjâd* = *ibdâ'*) -- from the Originated Intellect to the human intellect -- each of these existents because of the subsistence of the traces (of creaturehood) in it, bears witness against itself that it is not God, then

from this proposition, it follows that the *tawḥīd*, which means to divest the *muwaḥḥid* -- who because of the subsistence of the traces (of creaturehood), bears witness against itself that it is not God -- from the divinity and to negate it (divinity) from it (*muwaḥḥid*) and to isolate it from it and the sustainership (*rubūbiyyah*) and that which is related to it, is the act of the *mu'min* who is a *muwaḥḥid*, so that by this (kind of) *tawḥīd*, it may be established that the divinity belongs to someone else, i.e. the One Who cannot be described by any means.¹⁰¹

Kirmānī tries to justify this kind of affirmation of divinity through negation. He does this by citing examples of mutually exclusive things, such as eternal and contingent, substance and accident, which, upon the negation of one from a thing, necessarily establishes the other. For instance, when the characteristic of substance is negated from a thing, the characteristic of accident becomes inseparable from it. Similarly, since an intermediary between the *mubdi'* and the *mubda'* is inconceivable, therefore, when divinity is negated from the *mubda'*, it is established for the *mubdi'*.¹⁰²

Kirmānī sums up his discussion on the two aspects of *tawḥīd* by quoting a Prophetic Tradition and claims that the Prophet meant it in the very sense in which he has used it. The Tradition is:

The *mu'min* is *muwaḥḥid* and Allāh is *muwaḥḥid* (*al-mu'minu muwaḥḥidun wa-Allāhu muwaḥḥidun*).¹⁰³

That is, the *mu'min* is *muwahhîd* in the sense that he divests the First Intellect of divinity and thereby establishes that it belongs to none but Allâh, and Allâh is *muwahhîd* in the sense that He originated the *muwahhâd*, the First Intellect.

Having dealt with the question of God's becoming the object of the *muwahhîds*, which was based on the assumption that *tawhîd* or the act of the *muwahhîds* is applicable to God, Kirmânî deals with the second question, that of multiplicity in the divinity, which was also raised on the same grounds. In dealing with the first question, he shows its irrelevancy with respect to God, on the basis that the very *tawhîd* or the act of the *muwahhîds* is not applicable to God. Kirmânî deals with the question of multiplicity on the same basis. As in the case of the object of *tawhîd*, he has shown that it is in two aspects; with respect to the act of God and with respect to the act of the *mu'min*, and in both cases, the object or the *muwahhâd* of the act is not God, but the First Intellect. Similarly, he tries to show that in both cases multiplicity is related to the First Intellect, not to God Himself. Kirmânî, succinctly explaining this point says:

As for the meaning of multiplicity which is necessitated by our doctrine that '*tawhîd* is in two aspects', it is either with respect to God (*fard*, Single), which is the origination (*ibdâ'*) of multiplicity, which is numerous singles (*afrâd*)

and individuals (*âḥād*), or with respect to the *mu'min*, which is to divest all these numbers (*a'dād*) and individuals one by one from the divinity.¹⁰⁴

Thus Kirmânî emphasises that God is not subject to multiplicity, rather that multiplicity applies to the First Intellect, who is the *muwaḥḥad*.

However, if Kirmânî's statements on *tawḥîd* are studied in isolation, they seem to contradict each other and it is extremely difficult to comprehend what he wants to convey. For instance, in one place, regarding *tawḥîd* as related to the act of God, we have seen that He is "the *mubdi'* of the *wâḥid*".¹⁰⁵ That is to say, that here, *tawḥîd* means the *ibdâ'* of the *wâḥid*, the First Intellect. In another place, while dealing with multiplicity, he says that it is the "*ibdâ'* of multiplicity, which is numerous singles and individuals."¹⁰⁶ Similarly, regarding *tawḥîd* as related to the act of the *mu'min*, he says that it is the "isolation of the originated *muwaḥḥad* from the divinity",¹⁰⁷ i.e. the First Intellect. And on the other hand, he says that it is "to divest all these numbers and individuals, one by one from the divinity".¹⁰⁸

Nonetheless, when studied together, it becomes clear that Kirmânî does not contradict himself; rather, he explains the two aspects of the *wâḥid* or *muwaḥḥad*: the unity (*waḥdah*) and the multiplicity (*kathrah*).

While dealing with the absolute *wâhid* (*al-wâhid al-muṭlaq*), we have seen that Kirmânî considers it as consisting of two entities: the *waḥdah* and its receptacle (*ḥâmil*). In the third *mashraʿ* of the third *sûr* of *Râḥat*, further explaining the nature of *wâhid*, he says:

The essence of the *wâhid* is paired of two *fards*: one of them is *waḥdah* and the other is its receptacle. The *waḥdah* which is one of the *fards*, is the cause. When it is removed from existence in the imagination then by its removal the *wâhid* is removed and the *wâhid* has no existence. And (similarly) its receptacle, the second *fard*, which is also a *waḥdah* by its being a *fard*, when it is removed from existence in the imagination, the *wâhid* is removed by its removal and has no existence. Thus the *fards* are the cause of the existence of the *wâhid*, and by their being the cause of the *wâhid*, their traces exist in it. Therefore, the *fards* which are the cause of the *wâhid*, are nothing except the *wâhid* (read *al-wâhid*), which is the effect (*maʿlul*). Thus it (the First Intellect) is the essence (*ʿayn*) of the *waḥdah* and the essence (*ʿayn*) of the *wâhid*.¹⁰⁹

From the preceding discussion, it appears that according to Kirmânî, although the *waḥdah* or *fard* is the cause of the *wâhid* and logically they can be considered two separate entities, ontologically, they cannot exist without each other and thus they are one. Kirmânî, in view of these two aspects of the First Intellect, says:

It is one (with respect to) essence and multiple (with respect to) relations and aspects (*dhât waḥidah mutakathtthirah bi-al-nisab wa-al-iqâfât*).¹¹⁰

It can therefore be understood that when he says that the *tawḥîd* related to the act of God is the "*ibdâ'* of the *wâḥid*," he refers to the aspect of unity, and when he says that it is "*ibdâ'* of multiplicity," he refers to its aspect of multiplicity. Sometimes he also refers to both aspects together, by saying that the *tawḥîd* related to God is "the origination of the one and the units (*ibdâ' al-wâḥid wa-al-âḥâd*)".¹¹¹ Similarly, with respect to the *tawḥîd* of the *mu'min*, he says that it is "divesting the *muwahḥad* from divinity" and sometimes, "to divest the individuals and the units from divinity one by one".

To sum up Kirmânî's exposition of *tawḥîd*, the preceding discussion shows that in *Râḥat*, he closely follows the way of double negation, propounded by his predecessors and is more concerned with the negation of the attributes of existents from God.

In *al-Duriyyah*, he explains *tawḥîd* in two different senses: that related to the act of God, which becomes synonymous to *ibdâ'*, the origination of the *wâḥid*, namely, the First Intellect, and that related to the act of the *mu'min*. In the former sense, he still emphasizes the negation of the attributes from God by exposing the essential pairedness and contingency of the *wâḥid*.

In the latter sense, on the basis of the contingency of existents, he emphasizes the negation of divinity from the existents, and by saying: "It is not impossible for an ignorant person to think that divinity lies in some of the existents", accuses all those who ascribe any aspect of divinity to the existents of ignorance.

D. The Problem of the One and the Many

We have already briefly discussed the problem of the one and the many and the attempts to solve it through *fayḍ* and *ibdâ'*, and the Ismaili reaction and approach to them. However, since the main aim of this dissertation is to examine Kirmânî's concept of *tawḥîd*, and the problem is closely related to it, it would be appropriate to discuss this further in the light of Kirmânî's approach and exposition.

It should be noted here further, that the two attempts to solve the problem through *fayḍ* and *ibdâ'* depend on two views concerning the nature of the First Principle or God, i.e., His homogeneity with, or otherness from, the existents. Further, it depends on whether the process of existentiality is involuntary or voluntary. Despite the details of varying interpretation, *fayḍ* basically depends on the homogeneous nature of God with the existents and on an

involuntary process, while *ibdâ'* depends on the otherness of God from His creatures and on His voluntary act. By homogeneity here, we do not mean that the upholders of *fayḍ* identify or equate God or the First Principle with the existents. Rather, despite the quantitative difference or the difference in intensity, elements of the same substance cannot be excluded. With these observations let us proceed to Kirmânî's approach and exposition.

a) Tawḥīd and Fayḍ.

As observed above, *fayḍ* or emanation is based on the homogeneity of the First Principle with the existents, and moreover, is an involuntary process from it. This is clear from Plotinus' statement, to whom emanationism is generally ascribed: "What is full must overflow, what is mature must beget".¹¹² Similarly, among Muslim philosophers such as Fârâbî and Ibn Sînâ, their concept of Necessary and Possible Beings show a kind of homogeneity. Obviously, neither Plotinus nor the Muslim philosophers identify the First Principle with the existents in an absolute sense, but some kind of homogeneity cannot be excluded. The same is the case with volition: a kind of volition is not entirely excluded even from Plotinus'

emanationism,¹¹³ but if the First Principle comes under a necessary process, then this imposes some limitation on the absolute power.

For anyone who maintains a kind of homogeneity of the First Principle with the existents, the solution of the problem of the one and many through the process of emanation seems to be the most logical one. However, Kirmânî's emphasis on the absolute transcendence and otherness of God does not leave any room for any kind of homogeneity. The emanationist solution, therefore, does not appear to be congenial and compatible with his concept of *tawhîd*. Thus, he rejects emanation as the primordial process of existentialisation from God. Kirmânî's rejection of emanation depends on the homogeneity, association and the resemblance of God with the existents, which cause multiplicity in His ipseity and in turn continues *ad infinitum*. Here we give a translation of his argument against emanation as the primordial process of existentialisation, in the second *mashrâ'* of the third *sûr* in *Râḥat*:

- i) It is the nature of emanation to belong to the genus of that from which it emanates, namely, its source, and to share with and resemble it. The emanation thus, with respect to its being emanation, as

such, becomes like the fountain of its source by virtue of the latter's being like the essence of emanation. For, in the source of emanation there is the nature of emanation, just as the nature of its source is in emanation. And in this respect, there is no difference between the two. Just as light, which is an emanation from the fountain of the sun, with respect to its being light, is like the fountain of the sun out of which it emanates, by virtue of the latter's being like the essence of emanation. For, in the essence of the sun, the light is as it is emanated from it. And in this respect, there is no difference between the two. Thus the source of emanation, by virtue of that in which the emanation participates and by virtue of that which exclusively belongs to it, in which the emanation does not participate, becomes multiple and its essence consists of two things: one in which they both participate and are not separate from each other and the other by which separation occurred between the two and otherness was realized. Had it not been there, it would not have been possible to say that, that is other than this, this is other than that. And that which becomes multiple, does so because of the need on the part of those things through which

multiplicity occurs, in its existence, for the other part, without which neither of the two would exist: they both are together in existence, and their existence is due to mutual dependence and they both fall under the power which comprises both of them. This necessitates God to be a multiple and fall under the power of someone else for His existence and to be preceded by someone whose existence is absurd. Since the ipseity of God is not from an ipseity other than itself, therefore, He indeed transcends being attributed with scarcity or multiplicity. It is therefore false to say that He consists of two things. When it is false to say that He consists of two things, then it is also false to say that, that which came into existence from Him is an emanation which necessitates multiplicity in its source which constitutes its essence.¹¹⁴

- ii) Further, it is among the principles and rules of the intellect that, that which is more simple and more devoid of the signs of multiplicity and more subsistent by itself, is more noble than the others. According to this proposition, emanation is simpler than its source by virtue of its being one thing and its source, two things: in one of them it

participates with emanation and by the other it is distinguished and separated from it. This necessitates that emanation, because of the absence of multiplicity in it, is nobler than its source which has multiplicity and therefore, it is more deserving to precede its source. And when it being emanation necessitates it to be nobler than its source, which is God Himself, Who transcends the attributes, then what is a greater absurdity than believing in a thing which is contrary to its own order!¹¹⁵

iii) Further, emanation is not possible without the consummateness (*tamâmiyyah*) of the essence of its source. But God is far above being consummate (*tamâm*) or complete (*tâmm*), so that thereby there may occur any partnership between Him and others in any sense and necessitate the existence of something which would constitute His ipseity. For the consummate participates in the complete and the complete participates in and resembles the consummate and partnership and resemblance between two things necessitates something which precedes them. If God had partnership or resemblance with another in any of the things, this would have

necessitated something which precedes both of them. Again if that which precedes had partnership with something else in any of the things, it would have further necessitated something which precedes them and they would depend on it for their existence. This being the case, this would lead to something which in its end, necessitates the non-existence of the existents (i.e. infinite regress). But, since this is false and absurd, it is false to say that the existent from God is an emanation.¹¹⁶

iv) Had the First Existent, which is the First Intellect, come into existence as an emanation from God, then, those intellects who come forth from it (*al-'uqûl al-khârijah (anhu)*, from potentiality into actuality in the abode of nature (i.e. the physical world), which are the intellects of the prophets, the *asâses*, and the imâms, by virtue of their being (read *bi-kawn* instead of *an takûna*) from the genus of the First Intellect, and (hence) resembling it in their actual arising (*fî qiyâmiḥâ bi'l-fi'l*) and attainment of perfection (*tamâmiyyah*), and by virtue of the First Intellect being an emanation (from God), and emanation being from the genus of God, who is beyond attributes,

then, this would necessitate that the comprehension of God would not have been difficult for them (i.e. the actualized intellects) by informing about Him with those attributes which He deserves, nor would they have been unable to do so; and the (actual) intellects would have (also) been deserving of being purified with those purifications (*tasbîhât*) which are directed (i.e. applied) towards God, with respect to the negation of attributes, by virtue of their (i.e. the actual intellects) being like Him.

But since the intellects which came forth to actuality in the abode of nature, which are the intellects of the prophets, do not deserve having said about them that they transcend attributes, relations and attributed things, by virtue of their being from among those things which are described and characterized, and (since) they confess to their inability to inform about God with that which He deserves, and purify Him through the negation of attributes and of the characteristics of attributed things, from this it follows that the First Intellect is like these intellects in their inability to comprehend God with an attribute which exists in His *ibdâ'*, and is like them in their sanctification and purification of Him from the characteristics of His

ikhtirâ' (origination).

When the First Intellect is in this position and its essence refrained from informing about Him due to its own incapacity -- God being beyond description -- and due to His great names to which belong greatness, glory, power, brilliance, loftiness, beauty, light and nobility, (then) it is false to say that that which came into existence from God came as an emanation. When it is established that an existent from God as an emanation is false, then it cannot be any other thing except through *ibdâ'*.¹¹⁷

b) Tawhîd and Ibdâ'

We have already discussed the Ismaili concept of *ibdâ'* and its relation to the temporal *creatio ex nihilo* of the *mutakallimûn* and the emanative eternal creation of the philosophers. Here we will concentrate specifically on Kirmânî's treatment of *ibdâ'*.

Kirmânî discusses the concept of *ibdâ'* extensively, not only under this term, but also under such terms as *waḥdah* (oneness), *fard* (single), *amr* (command) which to him are in a sense synonymous. Here we will try, first, to briefly describe his exposition of *ibdâ'* and then see how he relates it to the concept of *tawhîd* and the problem of

the one and many.

Having rejected emanation as incompatible with the concept of *tawhîd*, due to the implicit homogeneity of God with His creatures, Kirmânî asserts that except by *ibdâ'*, no other process of primordial existentialization can be conceived, which is in accord with the *tawhîd* free from *tashbîh*.

It has been observed how Ismaili thinkers, by emphasizing non-temporal, immediate and instantaneous origination of the First Intellect from God, through His *amr* (command) or *ibdâ'*, have tried to avoid any possible anteriority or co-eternity of time, or any other means, or homogeneity of creatures with God.

Kirmânî, following his predecessors, asserts more emphatically that since God is beyond all the ranks of perfection and imperfection, unity and multiplicity, therefore, the First Existent (*al-mawjûd al-awwal*) or the First Intellect which came into existence, can only be conceived as:

It did not exist, then it came into existence via *ibdâ'* and *ikhtirâ'*, not from a thing, not upon a thing, not in a thing, not by a thing, not for a thing and not with a thing (*lâ min shay'in wa-lâ 'alâ shay'in wa-lâ fî shay'in wa-lâ bi-shay'in wa-lâ li-shay'in wa-lâ ma'a shay'in*).¹¹⁶

Here, Kirmânî's emphasis on the negation of the co-eternity of matter, pattern, space, time, instrument, need

and partner, is obvious.¹¹⁹ Comparing the First Existent or the First Intellect with the number one, Kirmânî says that just as the number one contains all numbers in itself and they, for (their) existence have to depend on it, whereas the number one itself is independent of all numbers, so, similarly, the First Intellect contains in itself all existents and they, for their existence, depend on it, whereas it is independent of them all. Thus, the First Intellect is the first cause (*al-ʿillah al-ūlâ*) and the first source (*al-mabda' al-awwal*) of the existents.¹²⁰

Further, Kirmânî, following the emanationist tenet "nothing can come from the One but the one", emphasizes that the First Existent has to be one (*wâḥid*), otherwise it would imply plurality in His ipseity. In *al-Muqî'ah* he says:

The First Intellect is the first existent and it is not possible to be an equal of it in existence, nor is it possible to imagine that its existence from God is through something which shares with it in existence, by virtue of its being His act, may He be exalted, and the act being one essence (*dhât wâḥidah*) when it comes forth from the agent. This is the meaning (*ḥaqîqah*) of what the sages (*ḥukamâ'*) have said: 'from the First existence (*al-wujûd al-awwal*) which is the First cause (*al-sabab al-awwal*) nothing comes into existence but one existence (*wujûdun wâḥid*).' And indeed they said this due to the fact that had there been two existences from the First existence, they would have indicated the plurality of His essence and the existence of someone preceding

Him. This can also be substantiated by their saying that 'from the prime mover moves only one movable (thing), even though by the first movable (thing) move many movables.'¹²¹

Kirmânî does not believe in this saying of the *ḥukamâ'* in its totality, rather, he uses it only to establish that the First Existent has to be one. According to him, God is neither the First Existence, not the First Cause, nor the Prime Mover; God transcends all attributes. Rather, these attributes pertain to the First Intellect. This will be discussed further when examining the issue of the one and many. First, let us see how Kirmânî relates *ibdâ'* to *tawḥîd*.

One would expect Kirmânî, in discussing *tawḥîd*, to discuss the unity of God. But Kirmânî's insistence on God's being beyond *waḥdah* (unity) and *kathrah* (multiplicity), makes such an expectation futile. We have seen that according to him *tawḥîd* does not mean the careful examination of a meaning (*tadqîq al-ma'nâ*) concerning God's being *fard* (single), nor does it mean to restrict the meaning (*takhṣiṣ al-ma'nâ*) to Him, establishing thereby that He is *fard*. Rather, *tawḥîd* means the *ibdâ'* of the *wâḥid*, i.e., the First Intellect, by God, and the divesting it of divinity by the *mu'min*.¹²² In both cases, *tawḥîd* concerns the First Intellect, and not God as such. Particularly in the former meaning of *tawḥîd*, it becomes

identical with *ibdâ'*. This identification can be seen more clearly in the third *mashra'* of the third *sûr* of *Râhat*, where Kirmânî uses *ibdâ'* and *waḥdah*, *mubda'* and *wâḥid* synonymously.¹²³

Nonetheless, it is apparent that Kirmânî uses *tawḥîd* in a wider sense, in the sense of a circular function in which the act of God, (*ibdâ'* of the First Intellect) makes up half the circle of *tawḥîd*, while the act of the *mu'min*, (divesting the First Intellect of divinity), makes up the other half. Thus the circle of *tawḥîd* becomes complete in its descending and ascending form. *Ibdâ'* shows a descending process of God's act in the form of the First Intellect and the succeeding existents down to the human intellect, while the act of the *mu'min* shows an ascending process of divesting the existents up to the First Intellect, of divinity, due to their essential contingency and pairedness. As we have seen before, Kirmânî explains these two processes in both singular and plural form: *ibdâ'* of the *wâḥid*,¹²⁴ or *ibdâ'* of *âḥâd* (units, individuals),¹²⁵ and divesting the *wâḥid* of divinity,¹²⁶ or divesting the units and individuals of divinity, one by one.¹²⁷ In any case, Kirmânî does not use *tawḥîd* to describe God; rather, he uses it to describe the nature of the First Intellect, which according to him represents both unity and plurality. As for the aspect

of *tawḥīd* related to the act of God, it is identical with *ibdâ'*.

With respect to the problem of the emergence of multiplicity from unity, in Kirmânî's exposition of *ibdâ'*, unity does not seem to have temporal priority over multiplicity. Rather, God, by virtue of His transcending both unity and multiplicity, brought them into existence together at the same time in the First Existent, the First Intellect, in the act of *ibdâ'*. Thus the First Existent represents unity and multiplicity at the same time and therefore, Kirmânî calls it the compriser of unity and multiplicity (*jâmi' li-l-waḥdah wa-al-kathrah*) or one with respect to essence, and multiple with respect to relations (*wāḥid bi-al-dhât kathîr bi-al-iqâfât*).¹²⁸ As for how the First Existent is both one and multiple, according to Kirmânî, as we have seen before, it consists of two *fards* -- *waḥdah* or *ibdâ'*, and its receptacle -- the *wāḥid* or *mubda'*. However, since there is no intermediary differentiating between them, they cannot be two or multiple except in dimensions or modes. Therefore, although *ibdâ'* and *mubda'* are two in dimension, they are one in essence. Hence Kirmânî insists that the First Existent is self-identically *ibdâ'* (*'ayn al-ibdâ'*) and self-identically *mubda'* (*'ayn al-mubda'*), and self-identically *waḥdah* (*'ayn al-waḥdah*) and

self-identically *wâhid* ('*ayn al-wâhid*).¹²⁹

However, while this kind of unity and multiplicity can be conceived in the abode of *ibdâ'* due to the intellects being undifferentiated in their essences and non-contrary in their substance (*kawn al-'uqûl fî dhawâtihâ ghayr mutaghâ'irah wa-fî jawâhirihi ghayr muta'âddah*),¹³⁰ what about the physical world, where things are composed of different and contrary elements?¹³¹ The cause of multiplicity in the physical world is precisely due to the fact that the First Intellect is both *ibdâ'* and *mubda'*. Although *ibdâ'* and *mubda'* are identical in their essence in the First Intellect, they are not alike (*mutakâfi'*) and equal (*mutasâwin*) in every respect.¹³² *Ibdâ'* is related to God, while *mubda'* is related to itself. That is to say, the First Intellect is intellect ('*aql*') with respect to *ibdâ'* and it is intelligible (*ma'qûl*) with respect to being *mubda'*. Since *ibdâ'* is related to God, and *mubda'* to itself, therefore, the former relation in comparison to the latter is higher or nobler (*al-nisbah al-ashraf*) and the latter, in comparison to the former, lower (*al-nisbah al-adwan*).¹³³ And, with respect to the multiplicity in the physical world, Kirmânî does not view this as the primary or main intention (*al-qaṣd al-awwal*) of the First Intellect, for this would have been a "mean intention (*qaṣd danî'*)" on

its part, which does not befit its perfection and glory. Thus the multiplicity of the physical world is not directly from the First Intellect, rather it is through the existents which came forth from it, not as a result of its primary intention, but as a necessary result of its perfection. Nonetheless, although the intention of the First Intellect is not involved in the creation of the physical world, it indirectly plays the essential role in it, and therefore it may be helpful to know what Kirmânî means by the primary intention of the First Intellect. The primary intention of the First Intellect, according to Kirmânî, is the sanctification (*taqdîs*) of God.¹³⁴ But what does sanctification mean? According to him, since God transcends even the loftiest attributes, the sanctification of God is such that it does not involve any kind of description of God; involving only a kind of analysis of its own essence, which, although it is *fard* with respect to its being *ibdâ'*, with respect to being *mubdâ'*, it is *zawj*, which is the sign of contingency and creaturehood. As he says,

... its intention in comprehending itself is the nobler intention (*al-qaṣd al-ashraf*), which is related to the sanctification of God, from His being like it.¹³⁵

Thus the sanctification of God by the First Intellect, according to Kirmânî, means the realization of the

creaturehood and contingency of its essence by contemplating upon itself and negating itself from being like Him.

Since the sanctification of God is the supreme act on the part of the First Intellect, it generated happiness (*masarrah*) and contentedness (*ightibât*) in it, which produced an actual intellect and a potential intellect, with respect to its higher relation and lower relation respectively.¹³⁶ It is these actual and potential intellects which are the cause of the remainder of the spiritual and physical worlds. The actual intellect is called by Kirmânî "the second intellect" and identified with the "Pen" (*qalam*), while the potential intellect is identified with the "Tablet" (*lawh*) or (prime) "matter" (*hayûlâ*) receiving "form" from the "Pen", or "matter and form", their pairedness (*izdiwâj*) reflecting "the relation from which it came into existence." Thus the actual intellect is the second intellect, which is the first *munba'ith*, while the potential intellect is the third intellect, which is the "second first" *munba'ith*. From the actual intellect, in turn, came forth the rest of the intellects, and from the potential intellect were made the spheres, stars and the rest of the physical world. For the process of origination of the actual intellect and the potential intellect, Kirmânî uses the term "*inbi'âth*".¹³⁷ He compares this to the reflection of the sun in a mirror, or with the

appearance of the red colour of blood on the cheeks of a lover, when he sees his beloved.¹³⁸ By using this simile, Kirmânî perhaps wants to dissociate himself from the process of *fayḍ*, which is not a reflection in a mirror, but rather, a direct radiation from the sun.

c) Kirmânî's views on *ibdâ'* in relation to other views

Like his predecessors, Kirmânî agrees with the *mutakallimûn* on the imperative aspect of *ibdâ'*.¹³⁹ That is to say, he holds that the world is not a necessary emanation of God's perfection, as the philosophers held, rather, it came into existence from non-existence by His Command. However, he disagrees with them on the creation of the physical world in time, which according to him, came into existence from the First Intellect, together with the world of *inbi'âth*, as a necessary result of its perfection.¹⁴⁰

As for the philosophers, he agrees with them on the origination of the First Intellect through *ibdâ'* and on the origination of multiplicity from its relations. Nonetheless, he disagrees with them on the nature of origination. According to the Peripatetic philosophers, the First Intellect emanated from the First Existence as a necessary result of His perfection of being

intellect, intellecting and intelligible (*'aql*, *'âqil*, *ma'qûl*),¹⁴¹ but according to Kirmânî, God transcends having multiple relations, and hence the First Intellect came into existence from non-existence only through His Command. The perfection of being intellect, intellecting and intelligible belongs to the First Intellect, and not to God as such.¹⁴² Further, he also disagrees on the nature of the origination of multiplicity from the First Intellect. According to Fârâbî, as we have seen before, the First Intellect has two relations: its comprehension of the First Existence and its comprehension of its own essence. By the former it emanated the second intellect, and by the latter the highest sphere (*al-falak al-a'lâ*), with its matter and form, which latter is its soul.¹⁴³ In the view of Ibn Sînâ, the First Intellect has three relations: the comprehension of the Necessary Being, from which the Second Intellect emanated, its comprehension of its own self as a possible being, by which the farthest sphere (*al-falak al-aqṣâ*) emanated, and its comprehension of its own self as a necessary being by something else, due to which the soul of the farthest sphere emanated.¹⁴⁴ According to Kirmânî, the comprehension of God by the First Intellect is not possible, therefore, it contemplates only upon itself, and thus multiplicity comes forth from this single act

through its higher and lower relations, as mentioned above.¹⁴⁵ Further, in the case of the philosophers, there is a direct emanation of the farthest sphere and its soul from the First Intellect. In Kirmânî's system, apart from the intellects, there is no mention of souls. Kirmânî agrees with them on the concept of spheres, but again these for him are made from the potential intellect, namely, matter-and-form,¹⁴⁶ and do not directly emanate from the First Intellect.

Kirmânî also disagrees with his own Ismaili predecessors on certain points regarding *ibdâ'* and the process of multiplicity. For instance, according to Sijistânî, *amr* (Command) is the cause of both spiritual and physical creatures, but itself is neither an existent (*mu'ayyas*), nor a thing (*shay'*).¹⁴⁷ According to Kirmânî, this amounts to *amr* being above the First Intellect, which is the First Existent and the First thing, whereas it is inconceivable to think about something above the rank of the First Intellect, except for the rank of God. Thus, to consider that *amr* is neither an existent nor a thing, is not free from considering it God Himself, which is absurd, or co-eternal with God, which leads to *shirk*.¹⁴⁸ According to Kirmânî *amr* or *ibdâ'* and the First Intellect cannot be conceived without each other.

Further, according to Sijistânî, from the contemplation

of the First Intellect came into existence only the Universal Soul, which through its imaginal movement, brought matter and form into being.¹⁴⁹ According to Kirmânî, however, the second intellect and matter and form came forth simultaneously from the First Intellect's contemplation of itself.¹⁵⁰

Another important difference is that for Sijistânî, Soul was attracted to matter and "fell" into it (the gnostic point of view), while Kirmânî tries to eliminate this "dualistic" aspect of the gnostic tradition. This may be one of the reasons why he substitutes for Sijistânî's "Soul" Fârâbî's "Intellects", which are all of the same genus. Yet like Fârâbî, even Kirmânî cannot entirely avoid the implied dualism of Spirit (or Form) and Matter: Fârâbî's twofold contemplation of the Intellect becomes one unique contemplation having two aspects, and the non-intentional though necessary result of the second aspect is the emergence or actualization of Prime Matter.

d) Kirmânî's Originality

Kirmânî himself does not claim to present any new concept in the Ismaili *da'wah*. He asserts that what he presents is from the teachings of the Imâms. Nonetheless, when his exposition of *tawhîd* is compared with that of his

predecessors, there is a clear difference.

The emphasis of the Ismaili thinkers prior to Kirmânî is centred on the negation of the attributes of physical and spiritual existents from God. This double negation, while it explains their position about the nature of God, does not explain the question "What is *tawhîd*?" when it is used in connection with God, if He transcends the application of attributes.

Among the Ismaili thinkers, it appears that it is Kirmânî who for the first time gives a positive description of it. Kirmânî explains *tawhîd* in two different ways: with respect to God and with respect to the *mu'min*. Kirmânî has devoted his epistle *al-Durriyyah* to dealing with this question. A summary of his argument is given in the text. Here we will attempt to present it in a concise manner, since it appears to be a major contribution to the Ismaili concept of *tawhîd*.

The most striking aspect of Kirmânî's exposition of *tawhîd* in this epistle is that, instead of being a description of God, it turns out to be a description of His existents. Kirmânî in analyzing the composition and essence of *wâhid* (one) which is the object of *tawhîd*, shows that although *wâhid* conveys the most exalted, noble and subtle meaning found in speech, it is still contingent in both its composition and essence.

Therefore, it cannot be applied to God. Thus, according to Kirmânî the one worthy of this noble attribute of *wâhid* is the First Intellect, just as with other lofty attributes attributed to Him. *Tawhîd* is applicable to the First Intellect in two senses: in the sense of the act of God, which Kirmânî identifies with His *ibdâ'*, and in the sense of the act of the *mu'min*, which is to divest the *wâhid* -- the First Intellect -- from divinity. The first and foremost *mu'min* in this respect appears to be the First Intellect itself. The First Intellect contemplating upon itself comprehends its contingent nature of being composed of two entities -- *wahdah* (oneness) and its receptacle -- which cannot exist without each other, and thus it divests itself from divinity. By doing so it establishes that divinity belongs to the One Who brought it into existence. This act is the *tawhîd* of the *mu'min*, which is also called sanctification (*taqdîs*), as we have seen, while God is *muwahhîd* in the sense that He originated the *wâhid*, the First Intellect.

Kirmânî goes further and applies these two aspects of *tawhîd* to all existents by saying: "The *tawhîd* of the *mubdi'*, may He be exalted, is the origination of *wâhid* (one) and *âhâd* (units, monads, individuals), and that of the *mu'min* is to divest divinity from them." Thus *tawhîd* becomes applicable not only to the First Intellect, but

also to all existents in which the *waḥdah* (oneness) permeates, making them *âḥād* (units, monads, individuals). These existents, although they are separate entities on the one hand, on the other they are united in the *wāḥid*, as the cause of their existence is *waḥdah* or oneness. As Kirmânî says in *al-Naẓm*:

Know that the cause of all existents, what is visible and what is invisible, is *waḥdah*, which is designated with *fard*. Each of them has a share in it. Had it not been there, none of them would have deserved the name of *wāḥidiyyah* (to be one) and *fardâniyyah* (to be single), despite their existence being from a sum of multiplicity.¹⁵¹

Further, he says:

The *fard*... by virtue of that which it contains, such as the letters, their conjunction, disjunction, signs, divisions, multiplication comprehends all the ranks and indicates all that which God has originated and instaurated.¹⁵²

Thus *tawḥîd* comprises all existents and they, despite their individuality, are contained in the *wāḥid* or the First Intellect in a coherent and systematic hierarchy, just as the numbers are contained in the number one. This relation of *âḥād* with *wāḥid* has been compared with a kind of monadology by H. Corbin.¹⁵³ However, in the instance of Kirmânî the *monas monadum* at its apex is not God, but the First Intellect.

Kirmânî's exposition of *tawḥîd* appears to be an important contribution to the Ismaili concept of *tawḥîd*. On

the one hand it strengthens their principle of double negation that God transcends even the loftiest attributes, and none of the existents, whether spiritual or physical, resemble Him. On the other hand, it serves as a subtle criticism of literalism, suggesting that any ascription to God of even the loftiest attribute, such as *wâḥid*, is not free from rendering Him contingent.

CONCLUSION

Kirmânî's concept of *tawhîd*, by virtue of his being a major exponent of Ismaili theology, represents the Ismaili concept of *tawhîd* in a more sophisticated form. The Ismaili concept of *tawhîd* is one of the various attempts made by the Muslim schools of thought to solve the problem of *tanzîh* or the absolute transcendence and otherness of God from His creatures, and *tashbîh* (anthropomorphism) or His likeness to His creatures.

According to the Ismaili thinkers, it is impossible for man to have direct accessibility to God. And it is because of this that He has sent His messengers as intermediaries between Himself and His creatures to guide them to His *tawhîd*, which is the supreme worship. Had mankind direct access to God, then His act of sending messengers would have been redundant. Therefore, in their concept of *tawhîd* the Ismailis follow the *via negationis*, which they claim to have been taught by their imâms.

Nonetheless, it appears that the Ismaili concept of *tawhîd* has, for its formation and elaboration, also assimilated many relevant elements from other sources. The most conspicuous element appears to be the Neoplatonic First Principle, the One, which is above being and

intellect. Further, it may also be considered a reaction to the Mu'tazilite concept of *tawhîd*.

Among the Muslim schools of thought, the Mu'tazilites were the first to follow the *via negationis*. However, in the view of the Ismaili thinkers their negation of the attributes from God is not free from *tashbîh*. Firstly, due to the ascription of certain attributes such as living, knowing, powerful, to God, it is not a complete negation. Secondly, even if all attributes are negated from God, this does not comprise all existents. This will negate only the attributes of the physical existents whose characteristic is to have attributes, while there still remain the spiritual existents whose characteristic it is not to have attributes. Thus the Ismailis extended the field of negation to the spiritual existents also, by saying that God is neither attributed, finite, visible, nor non-attributed, infinite, invisible. By the former they meant the attributes of the physical existents and by the latter those of the spiritual ones. The physical and spiritual existents are in opposition to one another, but God transcends being opposite to or resembling His creatures. By transcending both kinds of existents He can neither be perceived by the senses, nor can He be comprehended by the intellect.

The Ismaili thinkers hold that since the recognition of God is the foundation of religion, which recognition

cannot be attained by the senses, nor by the ordinary intellect, therefore, the only source of this recognition is the prophets and the imâms who are the *ḥudûd* or intermediaries between Him and His creatures. They are His names, and His anthropomorphic attributes mentioned in the Qur'ân. They are His vicegerents on the earth and they serve as His Epiphanies. That is to say that, they are not God incarnate, but they are His manifestations. According to them there are two kinds of *ḥudûd*, in view of two kinds of the existents, the physical and the spiritual. Sijistânî claims that their belief in the physical *ḥudûd*, the prophets and the imâms is a substitute for the anthropomorphous God of the Anthropomorphists and their belief in the spiritual *ḥudûd*, who are attribute-less, a substitute for the God of the Mu'tazilites, while God, in reality, is beyond the description of both of them.

Kirmânî in his formulation of the concept of *tawḥîd* basically follows the double negation propounded by his predecessors, particularly Sijistânî. He uses the formulas "He is not attributed (*huwa lâ mawṣûf*)", and "Nor is He non-attributed (*wa-lâ huwa lâ-mawṣûf*)," to negate the attributes of the physical and the spiritual existents from Him respectively. He emphasizes the establishment of a "supposed ipseity (*huwiyyah muftariḍah*)", or, a

"non-attributed Is-ness (*aniyyah ghayr mawṣūfah*)" without aiming at an attribute, simile, analogy or definition.

Although Kirmânî follows his predecessors, yet in certain points his exposition of the concept becomes more subtle and more comprehensive. By analysing the *wâḥid* which is the object of *tawḥîd*, in its composition and essence, Kirmânî shows that it is essentially contingent. It consists of two entities -- *waḥdah* (oneness) and its receptacle -- which are interdependent and cannot exist without each other, and therefore, it is not befitting for the glory of God to be the *wâḥid*, i.e. the object of *tawḥîd*. The *wâḥid*, rather, can be more appropriately applied to the First Intellect.

Further, Kirmânî elaborating the two kinds of *tawḥîd*, that related to the act of God, and that related to the act of the *mu'min*, shows that the very *tawḥîd* is a description of His existents, rather than being a description of God Himself. By the act of God, he means the origination of the *wâḥid*, the First Intellect and the rest of the existents, which despite their individuality are contained in the former due to their simultaneous origination as one and many. By the act of the *mu'min* is meant to divest the First Intellect and the rest of the existents from divinity due to their inherent essential contingency.

Kirmânî's concept of *tawhîd* culminates in its assertion of the absolute *tanzîh* of God when he demonstrates the inadequacy of application of even the name "*mubdi'*", which is usually used by his predecessors for God. Kirmânî says that the *mubdi'*, in its ultimate meaning, is an agent, and by being an agent, it is essentially an act. For it is the act which is, in true sense, the agent in the object, and the act is caused by someone else. The *mubdi'*, thus, being an agent, denotes the essence of an act, not the True God from Whom the act "*ibdâ'*" came forth. Since *mubdi'* in its essence is *ibdâ'*, and *ibdâ'* is the essence of *mubda'*, the First Intellect, therefore, in reality, it is applicable to the First Intellect, not to God. The Ismaili concept of *tawhîd* in holding to the absolute *tanzîh* thus culminates in Kirmânî's exposition, in which no conceivable room is left for the direct proximity and knowledge of God.

Consequently, Kirmânî also stresses the necessity of the *hudûd*, the intermediaries between Him and His creatures. They are the actual intellects who bring the potential intellects, that is, souls, into actuality. They are the lamps of *tawhîd* and the guides to it, and therefore one has to depend upon them for the proximity of God. Recognition of them constitutes the worship of God, and for this reason God has enjoined obedience to them. Thus they

constitute a harmonising link between "philosophy" and the "revelationary tradition". He emphasizes the recognition of the Imâm in particular. He says that the Imâm is the place of the light of God (*maḥall nûr Allâh*). He stands in the place of God (*qâ'im maqâm Allâh*) and of His Prophet, and is His friend. His command is God's command, his pleasure is God's pleasure and his displeasure is God's displeasure. Thus the recognition and worship of God is not possible except through His intermediaries: the prophets, legatees and the imâms. Kirmânî emphasizes that this obedience and worship are not aimed at the intermediaries themselves, but are for God, the True Worshipped.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. Usually his name is given as Ḥamīd al-Dīn Aḥmad b. (ʿAbd Allāh al-Kirmānī, (See *Rāḥat al-ʿaql*, p.20). For his kunyah, Abū al-Ḥasan and grandfather's name, Muḥammad, see *al-Muḍīʿah*, MS No.63, Institute of Ismaili Studies (IIS), fol.14a. For the details of these works, see also below note 24 and note 63 in Chapter I.
2. For the lexical and technical meaning of *tawḥīd*, see Chapters II and III.
3. Kirmānī's life, activities and works will be discussed in Chapter I.
4. Titles of his works such as *Tanbīh al-hādī wa-al-mustahdī*, and *Maʿāṣim al-hudā wa-iṣābat tafqīl* (ʿAlī ʿalā al-ṣaḥābah, show this nature of his works. For the detailed description of these books see below Chapter I, note 56, 57.
5. Numerous studies have been done on Ismailism, some of the selected ones are: Bernard Lewis, *The Origins of Ismāʿīlism*, (Cambridge, W. Heffer and Sons Ltd., 1940); W. Ivanow, "Ismāʿīliya", *SEI*, pp.179-83; idem, *Brief Survey of the Evolution of Ismailism*, (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1952); idem, *Ibn al-Qaddāh (The Alleged Founder of Ismailism)* 2nd revised edition (Bombay: The Ismaili Society, 1957); W. Madelung, "Ismāʿīliyya", *EI2*, IV.198-206; idem, "Das Imamāt in der frühen ismailitischen Lehre", *Der Islam* 37 (1961), pp.43-135; S.M.Stern, *Studies in Early Ismāʿīlism* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1983); Henry Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis* (London: Kegan Paul International in association with Islamic Publications Ltd., 1983); Zāhid ʿAlī, *Ḥamāre Ismāʿīlī Madhhab kī Ḥaqīqat awr us kâ Nizām* (Hyderabad, India: The Academy of Islamic Studies, 1954); Heinz Halm, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der frühen Ismāʿīliya* (Wiesbaden, Kommissionsverlag Franz Steiner GMBH, 1978); see also below note 6.
6. On Fāṭimīds some of the selected works are: Ḥasan Ibrāhīm Ḥasan, *Tâ'rīkh al-Dawlat al-Fāṭimiyyah* (Qāhirah: Maktabat al-Nahḍat al-Miṣriyyah, 1958); Zāhid ʿAlī, *Tâ'rīkh-i Fāṭimiyyīn-i Miṣr* (Hyderabad, India:

Dâr al-Ṭab(-i Jâmi'ah-i 'Uthmâniyyah, 1958); Abbâs Hamdânî, *The Fâtîmids* (Karachi: Pakistan Publishing House, 1962); H.F. Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Fâtîmiden-Caliphen* (Hildenheim: Olms, 1976); De Lacy O'Leary, *A Short History of the Fâtîmîd Caliphate* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1923); P.H. Mamour, *Polemics on the Origin of the Fâtîmî Caliphs* (London: Luzac and Co., 1934); W. Ivanow, *Ismaili Tradition concerning the Rise of the Fâtîmids*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1942); M. Canard, "Fâtîmids", *EI2*; idem, "L'imperialisme des Fâtîmîdes et leur Propagande", *AIEO*, 6, (1947) 156-93; W. Madelung, "Fâtîmiden und Bahrainqarmaten", *Der Islam*, 34 (1958), 34-88.

7. 'Abd al-Qâhir Baghdâdî, *al-Farq bayn al-firaq*, ed. M.M. 'Abd al-Ḥamîd (Bayrût: Dâr al-Ma'rifah, n.d.), p.282. The other works of this nature are: Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan Daylamî, *Bayân madhhab al-Bâtîniyyah wa-buṭlânih* from his *Qawâ'id (aqâ'id âl Muḥammad*, ed. R. Strothmann (Istanbul: Maṭba'at al-Dawlah, 1938); Abû Ḥâmid Muḥammad Ghazâlî, *Faḍâ'il al-Bâtîniyyah*, ed. 'Abd al-Raḥmân Badawî (Qâhirah: al-Dâr al-Qawmiyyah, 1383 /1964); idem, *al-Qisṭas al-Mustaqîm*, ed. and trans. into French by Victor Chelhot (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique 1959); English translation *The Just Balance*, by D.P. Brewster (Lahore: Ashraf Printing Press, 1978); idem, *al-Munqidh min al-ḡalâl (Erreur et Délivrance)*, traduction française avec introduction et notes par Farid Jabre (Beirut: Commission Internationale pour la traduction des Chefs-d'oeuvre (UNESCO) 1959); I. Goldziher, *Streitschrift des Gazâlî gegen die Bâtîniyya - Sakte. Veröffentlichungen her de Goeje - Stifting*, No.3 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1916); Muḥammad b. Mâlik Ḥammâdî Yamanî, *Kashf asrâr al-Bâtîniyyah wa-akhbâr al-Qarâmiṭah*, ed. Muḥammad Zâhid Kawtharî, (Qâhirah; 1375/1955).
8. Baghdâdî, *al-Farq*, p.294.
9. Ivanow, *Studies in Early Persian Ismailism*, p.161.
10. There are - numerous works by both Ismaili and Twelver scholars, which contain the polemics entirely or partially. For instance, see: 'Alî b. Muḥammad al-Walîd's *Dâmigh al-bâṭil wa-ḥatf al-munâḡil*, ed. M. Ghâlib, 2 vols., (Bayrût: Mu'assasat 'Izz al-Dîn, 1983), see also Henry Corbin, "The Ismâ'îlî Response to the Polemic of Ghazâlî", in *Ismâ'îlî*

Contributions to Islamic Culture, ed. Hossein Nasr (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1977), pp.67-98; see also above note 4.

11. J. Van Ess, Introduction to *Bist Guftâr* of M. Mohaghegh. (Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Tehran Branch, 1976), p.11.
12. C.J. Adams, "Islam", in *A Reader's Guide to the Great Religions*, 2nd edition, ed. C.J. Adams (New York: The Free Press, 1977), pp.449-50.
13. Ivanow, *The rise of the Fâtîmîds*, p.2; Mamour, *Polemics on the Origin of the Fâtîmî Caliphs*, p.12.
14. Ivanow, *Ibn al-Qaddâh*, p.i.
15. J. Van Ess, Introduction to M. Mohaghegh, *Bist Guftâr*, pp.11-12.
16. Ivanow, *A Guide to Ismaili Literature* (London: The Royal Asiatic Society, 1933), pp.23-24; Ismail K. Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismâ'îlî Literature* (Malibu, CA: Undena Publications, 1977), pp.40-43; Stern, *Studies in Early Ismâ'îlism*, pp.30-43.
17. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, pp.24-26; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, pp.36-39; S.M. Stern, "Abû Hâtîm al-Râzî", *EI2*, I, 125.
18. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, pp.27-31; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, pp.82-89; S.M. Stern, "Abû Ya'qûb Ishâq b. Aḥmad al-Sidjî", *EI2*, I, 160; Paul Walker, *Abû Ya'qûb al-Sijistânî and the Development of Ismâ'îlî Neoplatonism*, Unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of Chicago, 1974; M.A. Alibhai, *Abû Ya'qûb al-Sijistânî and Kitâb Sullam al-Najât, A Study in Islamic Neoplatonism*, Unpublished Doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 1983.
19. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, pp.21-22; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, pp.70-75.
20. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, pp.32-37; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, pp.48-68.
21. Regarding the controversies, see Ivanow, *Studies in Early Persian Ismailism*, pp.115-59; Stern, *Studies in Early Ismâ'îlism*, pp.30-46.

22. Kirmânî, *Kitâb al-Riyâḍ*, ed. (ʿArif Tâmir (Bayrût: Dâr al-Thaqâfah, 1960). In this book Kirmânî is judging or correcting what Râzî and Sijistânî had said regarding *Kitâb al-Maḥṣûl*, by Nasafî. See also below Chapter I, note 55. For details regarding these books, see: Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.38 (*al-Iṣlâḥ*); pp.42-43 (*al-Maḥṣûl*); p.86 (*al-Nuṣrah*).
23. The other three are: *Rasâ'il Ikhwân al-Ṣafâ'*, *Da'â'im al-Islâm* of al-Nu'mân and *al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah* of al-Mu'ayyad fî al-Dîn Shîrâzî. See A.A.A. Fyze, *Introduction to the Book of Faith* by al-Nu'mân (Bombay: Macmillan Co. of India Ltd., 1974). p.ix.
24. Giving fundamental importance to books seems to be a later development in Musta'lawî Ismailism due to the concealment of their Imâm. Otherwise, in the presence of the Imâm of the time, such a concept does not accord with the the Ismaili concept of imamate, for the ta'wîl of the Qur'ân, according to the needs and requirements of the time, gradually continues to be revealed (VII:53; X:39) through the Imâm of the time till the time of al-Qâ'im, and to this Kirmânî himself alludes in *Râḥat* (pp.191-92). *Râḥat* has been edited and published twice: First by M.K.Ḥusayn and M.M.Ḥilmî (Qâhirah: Dâr al-Fikr al-ʿArabî/Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1952) and then by M. Ghâlib (Bayrût, Dâr al-Andalus, 1967). The former edition has also an index in English prepared by W. Ivanow, therefore, the references in this dissertation will be given from it unless Ghâlib's edition is specified. See also below Chapter I, note 46.
25. Ḥusayn and Ḥilmî, *Introduction to Râḥat*, p.2.
26. Tâmir, *Introduction to al-Riyâḍ*, p.16.
27. See below Chapter I, notes 9, 30.
28. An important step in this direction has been taken by Aminmohammed Haji with his translation of Kirmânî's treatise, *al-Risâlah al-Wâ'iḏah* into French, with an Introduction. In the introduction, however, he deals mainly with the development of the concept of imamate till the time of Imâm al-Ḥâkim and the issue of the Druze. See his thesis: *al-Risâlat al-Wâ'iḏah (Epître de l'Exhortation) du Dâ'î Fâtîmîde Ḥamîd al-Dîn Aḥmad b. (Abd Allâh al-Kirmânî (ob. 411/1021), traduite et présentée par Aminmohammad Haji, Mémoire de*

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III, 1979.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. For a brief life sketch see also: Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, pp.40-45; idem, *Guide*, pp.43-46; P. Kraus, "Hebräische und syrische Zitate in ismā'īlitischen Schriften", *Der Islam*, XIX (1931), 243-44. Hereinafter "Hebräische"; Hasan, *Ta'rīkh al-Dawlat al-Fāṭimiyyah*, p.488; Ghālib, *ʿAlām al-Ismā'īliyyah* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Andalus, 1964), p.99; idem, Introduction to *Rāḥat*, pp.40-47; Ḥusayn and Ḥilmi, Introduction to *Rāḥat*, pp.1-4. (Alī, *Ta'rīkh*, pp.402-03; Tāmīr, Introduction to Kirmānī's *Kitāb al-Riyāq* (Bayrūt: Dār al-Thaqāfah, 1960), pp.15-21; A. Hamdānī, *The Fāṭimids*, pp.35-37; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, pp.94-102; Fuat Sezgin, *GAS* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), I, 580-82; E. Griffini, "Die jüngste ambrosianische Sammlung arabischer Handschriften", *ZDMG*, LXIX (1915), 87. Hereinafter "Die jüngste ambrosianische Sammlung"; Henry Corbin, *Histoire de la philosophie islamique* (Paris (?): Editions Gallimard, 1964), pp.130-31; S.Ḥ. Naṣr, Introduction to Kirmānī's *al-Aqwāl al-dhahabiyyah*, ed. Sāwī and Gh.R. Aavani, (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1977/1397); J.T.P. de Bruijn, "Ḥamīd al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Kirmānī", *EI*2, V, 166-67; Sāwī, Introduction (in Arabic) to *al-Aqwāl al-dhahabiyyah*; Aavani, Introduction (in Persian) to *al-Aqwāl al-dhahabiyyah*; F. Meier, *Oriens*, VII(1954), 190; A. Baumstark, "Zu den Schriftzitaten al-Kirmānīs", *Der Islam* XX (1932), 308-13; ʿImād al-Dīn Idrīs, *Uyūn al-akhbār*, ed. Ghālib (Bayrūt: Dār al-Andalus, 1978), pp.281-88, 306-10.

2. *Dāʿī* literally means "one who invites" and technically "one who invites to the religion of God." The usage of this term is based on the Qurʾānic verse XXXIII:46, in which the ideal *dāʿī* connotes the Prophet himself, and thus by extension, this term is applied to one involved in preaching his mission. In Ismailism, it has two main connotations. In general, it is applied to the entire hierarchy of the *daʿwah*, and in particular, it is a rank below the rank of *ḥujjah*. The hierarchy of *daʿwah* as it appears in *Rāḥat* (p.38) is as follows:
 (1) *nāṭiq*, (2) *asās*, (3) *imām*, (4) *bāb*, (5) *ḥujjah*, (6) *dāʿī balāgh*, (7) *dāʿī muṭlaq*, (8) *dāʿī maḥdūd*, (9) *maʿdhūn muṭlaq*, (10) *maʿdhūn maḥdūd* or *mukāsir*.
 For their functions and further details see: Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*, pp.90-96; Ivanow, "The Organization of the Fatimid Propaganda", *JRAS*, XV (1938), 1-35; A. Hamdānī, "Evolution of the

Organisational Structure of the Fâtimî Da'wah: The Yemeni and Persian Contribution". *AS*, III (1976), 85-114; Paul E. Walker, "Cosmic Hierarchies in Early Ismâ'îlî Thought: The View of Abû Ya'qûb al-Sijistânî. *MW*, LXVI (1976), 14-28; R. Strothmann, *Gnosis Texte Der Ismailiten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1943), p.57; 'Alî, *Ta'rîkh*, pp.500-01; idem, *Hamâre Ism'â'îlî Madhhab kî Haqîqat*, pp.299-306; A. Hamdânî, *The Fâtimîds*, p.35; David R.W. Bryer, "The Origin of the Druze Religion", *Der Islam*, LIII (1976), 18.

3. For a definition of the term "jazîrah" in the Ismaili da'wah, see: Ivanow, *The Rise of the Fâtimîds*, pp.21-22.
4. Kirmânî, *Râhat*, p.20.
5. Ghâlib, Introduction to *Râhat*, p.41; S.A. Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥâkim bi Amr Allâh (386/996-411/1021), A Political Study*, (Bayrût: The Arab Institute, 1974), p.90.
6. M. Canard, "Da'wa", *EI2*, II, 168-70;
7. M.G.S. Hodgson, "Ḥudjdja", *EI2*, III, 544-45; see also above note 2.
8. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.40; H. Hamdânî, "History of the Ismâ'îlî Da'wat and its Literature during the last Phase of the Fâtimîd Empire", *JRAS*, (1932), 127. Hereinafter "History".
9. Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.95.
10. Canard, "Fâtimîds", *EI2*, III, 855-56; A. Hamdânî, "The Fâtimîd-Abbasîd Conflict in India", *IC*, XLI (1967), 185-91.
11. Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥâkim*, p.108 ff; Canard, "Fâtimîds", *EI2*, III, 855-56.
12. Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥâkim*, p.109.
13. Kirmânî, *al-Riyâḍ*, p.108; see also below note 54.
14. Ḥusayn, Introduction to *al-Risâlah al-Wâ'izah*, p.4, see for the description of its publications, below note 69; Ḥasan, *Ta'rîkh*, p.490. The authorship of the *Rasâ'il Ikhwân al-Ṣafâ'* is a disputed subject, see article by

- Y. Marquet, "Ikhwân al-Safâ'", *EI2*, III, 1071-76; I.R. Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1982), pp.95-104. According to Kraus, the *Rasâ'il* already existed in Kirmânî's time and he is said to have cited it in his works. See "Hebräische", 244; however, according to my reading I have not come across any such references.
15. For the meaning and importance of *khuṭbah* in Islam, see: A.J. Wensinck, "Khuṭba", *SEI*, pp.258-59.
 16. Ibn Khallikân, *Wafayât al-A'yân wa-Anbâ' al-Zamân*, (Biographical Dictionary), tr. de Slane (Paris: Edouard Blot, 1868), III, 528.
 17. Ibn al-Sâbî', Fragment of his *Ta'rîkh* in *Dhayl Tajârîb al-Umam*, ed., H.F. Amedroz (Mişr: Shirkat al-Tammaddun al-Şinâ'iyyah, 1334/1916), III, 390.
 18. Ibn Athîr, *al-Kâmil fî al-Ta'rîkh* (Bayrût: Dâr Sadir, Dâr Bayrût, 1966), IX, 223; Ibn Taghrîbirdî, *al-Nujûm al-Zâhirah fî Mulûk Mişr wa-al-Qâhirah*, (Qâhirah: Maṭba'at Dâr al-Kutub al-Mişriyyah, 1352/1933), IV, 224.
 19. Asaad, *The Reign of al-Hâkim*, p.111.
 20. Ibn Jawzî, *al-Muntaẓam fî Ta'rîkh al-Mulûk wa-al-Umam* (Hyderabad, India: Maṭba'at Dâ'irat al-Ma'arif al-'Uthmâniyyah, 1940), VII, 238; see also Ibn Kathîr, *al-Bidâyah wa-al-Nihâyah* (Mişr: Maṭba'at al-Sa'âdah, 1932), XI, 339; Suyûtî, *Ta'rîkh al-Khulafâ'* (Mişr: Maṭba'at al-'Abbâsî al-Maymaniyyah, 1305/1881), 166; Yâfi'î, *Mir'ât al-Janân* (Bayrût: Mu'assasat al-'Alamî, 1937), II, 449.
 21. Strothmann, "Taḳîya" *SEI*, pp.561-62. M.G.S. Hodgson, *The Order of Assassins* (The Hague: Mouton and Co., 1955), 155 ff.
 22. Canard, "Al-Basâsîrî", *EI2*, I, 1073-75.
 23. Ibn Taghrîbirdî, *al-Nujûm*, V, 73; Suyûtî, *Ta'rîkh al-Khulafâ'*, p.167; Canard, "Fâtîmîds", *EI2*, III, 856.
 24. Ibn Taghrîbirdî, *al-Nujûm*, IV, 229; Ibn Jawzî, *al-Muntaẓam*, VII, 255.

25. Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥâkim*, p.86.
26. D. Sourdel, "Dâr al-Ḥikma", *EI2*, II, 126¹-27.
27. A. Hamdânî, *The Fâtîmids*, p.36; Kirmânî, *Majmû'at rasâ'il al-Kirmânî*, ed. Ghâlib (Bayrût: al-Mu'assasat al-Jâmî' iyyah, 1983), pp.113-14. Hereinafter "*Majmû'ah*."
28. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.113-14.
29. Kirmânî speaks about this dâ'î in laudatory terms. He says: "Among the people of da'wah he was the most truthful in speech, the most trustworthy in executing the duty, the most steadfast in faith, the most firm in obedience and the most longstanding in migration. He was appointed by Imâm al-Ḥâkim as the gate of his mercy (*bâban li-rahmatihi*) and the chief dâ'î (*dâ'î al-ḍu'ât*) and was called *al-ṣâdiq al-ma'mûn* (the truthful and trustworthy) so that he may re-unite them and preserve their order." (*al-Durriyyah*, in *Majmû'ah*, p.20). Prior to his appointment as *bâb al-abwâb*, he was in charge of da'wah in the Bûyîd court and was nicknamed *al-ʿAḍûdî* after the Bûyîd prince, ʿAḍûd al-Dawlah. (324/936-372/983) see Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥâkim*, p.110.
30. B. Lewis, "Bâb", *EI2*, I, 832. See also above, note 2.
31. Views on Kirmânî's arrival at Cairo differ; for details see: Kraus, "Hebräische", 243; Ḥusayn, Introduction to *al-Wâ'izah*, p.5; A. Hamdânî, *The Fâtîmids*, p.36.
32. Hodgson, "Drûz", *EI2*, II, 631-34, idem, "Al-Darazî and Ḥamza in the Origin of Druze Religion", *JAOS*, LXXXII (1962), 5-20; P.K. Hitti, *The Origin of the Druze People and Religion*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928); Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥâkim*, p.156 ff; S.N. Makarem, *The Druze Faith* (Delmar N.Y.: Caravan Books, 1974); David R.W. Bryer, "The Origin of the Druze Religion", *Der Islam*, LII (1975), 47 ff, 239 ff, LIII (1976), 5ff; ʿAlî, *Ta'rîkh*, pp.449-55; Ḥusayn, *Ṭâifat al-Durûz* (Qâhirah: Dâr al-Ma'ârif, 1962).
33. Idris, *ʿUyûn al-akhbâr*, p.281.
34. ʿAlî, *Ta'rîkh*, p.402.

35. Ibid, p.405.
36. H. Hamdânî, "The History", 129.
37. A. Hamdânî, *Fâtîmîds*, p.48.
38. W. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.40.
39. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.20; Ivanow reads the passage: *allafahu fî sanah iḥdâ' (asharah wa-arba'a mi'ah* (i.e. he compiled it in the year 411), in connection with the compilation of *Tanbîh* (See *Ism. Lit.*, p.40), while it (*Tanbîh*) is mentioned only in connection with the books and epistles written prior to *Râḥat*, as it is also mentioned on p.22. Also Ivanow thinks that the mention of *Tanbîh* "undoubtedly is an appendix by someone else". Here again it would seem that it has been mentioned by Kirmânî himself, since he, as mentioned above, mentions the same book in a similar context in *Râḥat* (p.22).
40. About the position of Kirmânî as *bâb al-abwâb*, see 'Alî Ta'rîkh, p.403; A. Hamdânî, *Fâtîmîds*, p.36; about his death at Cairo, see, p.37.
41. See above note 39.
42. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, p.20.
43. A. Hamdânî, *Fâtîmîds*, pp.36-37.
44. The following list is mainly culled from *Ismâ'îl al-Majdû's Fihrist al-Kutub wa-al-Rasâ'il*, ed. 'Alînaqî Munzawî (Tehran: Maktabat al-Asadî, 1966); Ivanow's *Ism. Lit.*; idem, *Guide*; M. Goriawala's *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Fyzee Collection of Ismaili Manuscripts* (Bombay: Bombay University Press, 1965); C. Brockelmann's *GAL*, Supplement (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1937), I; Fuat Sezgin's *GAS*, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1967), I; H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown Ismâ'îlî Authors and their Works", *JRAS*, (1933). Hereinafter "Some Unknown"; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*; J. Van Ess, "Biobibliographische Notizen zur islamischen Theologie", *Die Welt des Orients*, IV, heft 2, 1978. Hereinafter "Biobibliographische".
45. See for its publication details above, Introduction, n.24; Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (117), *Ism. Lit.*, p.41 (124); H. Hamdânî, "Some

Unknown", p.374; idem, *al-Ṣulayḥiyyūn wa-al-ḥarakat al-Fāṭimiyyah fī al-Yaman*, (Qāhirah: Maktabāt Miṣr, 1955), pp.260-61; al-Majdūʿ, *Fihrist*, p.280; Sezgin, *GAS* I, 580; Kraus, "Hebräische", extracts, 259-60; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, pp.39-41 (53,54); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.96; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 257, 261.

46. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.4.
47. Ibid., p.5.
48. Ibid.
49. *Inbi'ath* is usually translated as "emanation". However, Kirmânî's exposition of *inbi'ath* does not accord with this. For his understanding of this term and its derivation, see Chap. III, notes 135, 136.
50. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.6.
51. For the explanation of what is meant by "primary intention", see Chap. III, note 132.
52. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.7.
53. Kirmânî uses the term "the closest angel" (*al-malak al-muqarrab*) to denote both the Pedestal and the Throne. Similarly, he applies the term "Pen" (*qalam*) to the First Intellect, the Second Intellect and the rest of the intellects of the world of *ibdâ'* and the world of *inbi'ath*, due to their homogeneity. *Râḥat*, pp. 107-108.
54. See above, note 53.
55. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.8.
56. Ibid., p.9.
57. It is edited by Ghâlib and published by Manshûrât Ḥamd, Bayrût in 1969. Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (116); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.41 (125); H.Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; idem, *al-Ṣulayḥiyyūn*, p.259; Kraus, "Hebräische", 245-47; al-Majdūʿ, *Fihrist*, pp.121-23; Griffini, "Die jüngste ambrosianische Sammlung", 87; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, pp.38-39 (52); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 580; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.98; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 257, 261.

58. It is edited by Tâmir and published by Dâr al-Thaqâfah, Bayrût, in 1960; H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 367; idem, *al-Şulayhiyyûn*, p.259; See also his article on *al-Riyâq: Maqâlah Kitâb al-Riyâq li-al-Shaykh Ahmad al-Kirmânî* (Hyderabad, India: Maṭba'at Dâ'irat al-Ma'ârif al-ʿUthmâniyyah, 1358 A.H.); *al-Majdûʿ*, *Fihrist*, pp.254-56; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, pp.41-42 (55, 56); Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.42 (130); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581. The work has been studied by Ivanow in *Studies in Early Persian Ismailism* under the title of "An Early controversy in Ismailism". Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.97; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 261.
59. Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (119); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.41 (126); Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.88 (51); *al-Majdûʿ*, *Fihrist*, pp.95-96; Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 580; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.98.
60. Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325 (here the title is given as *Tanbîh al-ḥadd wal-mustaḥidd*); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 327; idem, *al-Şulayhiyyûn*, p.260; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (118); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, pp.41-42 (127); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 580; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.43 (57); *al-Majdûʿ*, *Fihrist*, pp.48-49; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.97.
61. It has been edited and published twice: by Sâwi and published by Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, Tehran, 1977, and by Ghâlib and published by Dâr Mahy, Bayrût, 1977. Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325; H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 374; S. Pines, *Beitrage zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, (Berlin: Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 1936), p.24; Arabic Transl. *Madhhab al-dharrah (ind al-Muslimîn*, by M.A. Abû Rîdah, (Qâhirah: Maktabat al-Nahḍat al-Miṣriyyah, 1946), p.25; Kraus, (ed.) *Rasâ'il Falsafiyyah*, (Miṣr: Kulliyyat al-Ādâb Jâmi'at Fu'âd al-Awwal, 1939), I, 292; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (121); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.42 (128); *al-Majdûʿ*, *Fihrist*, pp.176-9; Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 580; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.98. Excerpts are edited and published by Kraus in *Rasâ'il Falsafiyyah*, 7-13, 313-16. These excerpts have been summarized and translated into Persian by H. Wâ'iṣ-zâdah, and published in *Farhang-i Irân Zamîn*, II, 265-71.
62. Referred to in *Râḥat*, pp.22, 208, 265, 342, 353, 360; in *al-Riyâq*, p.138; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (124); idem,

Ism. Lit., p.42 (129); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581; H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, pp.127-29; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, pp.60-62.

63. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (125); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.42 (132); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.44 (59); al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, pp.144-49; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.97.
64. It has been edited and published twice: by Ḥusayn with *Risâlat al-Naẓm* in 1952, in the series of *Makhtûṭat al-Fâtimiyyîn* (7,8), and by Ghâlib in *Majmû'ah*, pp.19-26; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (125); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (133); Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.44 (i); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, pp.144-45; Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (10); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 261. For the elaboration of the meaning of *fard* see below: Chapter III, section B.
65. It has been edited and published twice: by Ḥusayn with *al-Durriyyah*, and by Ghâlib in *Majmû'ah*, pp.27-34; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (126); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (134); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.145; Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (11); Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.261.
66. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.35-42; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (127); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (135); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.145; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.46 (iii); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (13); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 261.
67. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.43-60; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (128); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (136); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.145; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.46 (iv); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (13); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 261.
68. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.61-80; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (129); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (137); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.145; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.46 (v); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (14); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 257, 261.

69. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.81-91; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (130); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (138); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.146; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.* pp.47 (vi); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (15); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 261.
70. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.92-101; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.44 (131); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (139); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.146; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.47-8 (vii); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (16); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100.
71. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.102-112; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.45 (132); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (140); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.147; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.48 (viii); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (17); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 256, 261.
72. It has been edited and published thrice: first by Husayn in *Tâ'ifat al-Durûz*, (Qâhirah: Dâr al-Ma'ârif, 1962) pp.55-74, and then twice by M. Ghâlib in *al-Ḥarakât al-Bâṭiniyyah* (Bayrût: Dâr al-Kâtib al-'Arabî, n.d.), pp.205-233, and in *Majmû'ah*, pp.113-133; excerpts are also edited and published by Kraus in "Hebräische", p.253; Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325; H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.45 (133); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (141); al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.147; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.49 (ix); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (6); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.100; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 256, 261.
73. It has been edited and published twice: by Husayn in the *Majjalat Kulliyyat al-Ādāb Jāmi'at Fu'ād al-Awwal*, XIV, Part I (May 1952), 1-29, and Ghâlib in *Majmû'ah*, pp.134-47; Brockelmann, *GAL*, Supp.I, 325 (here the title is given *al-Mawâ'iz al-Wâ'iṣah*); F. Meier, *Oriens*, 7/1954/190; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.45 (134); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.43 (142); H. Hamdânî, "Some Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.147; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.49 (x); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581 (7) (here also the title is given *al-Mawâ'iz al-Wâ'iṣah*); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 257, 261.
74. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.148-82; Ivanow, *Guide*, pp.45-46 (135); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (143); H. Hamdânî, "Some

Unknown", 373; al-Majdû', *Fihrist*, p.148; Goriawala, *Fyzee Coll.*, p.50 (xi); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 581-2 (18); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101; Van Ess, "Biobibliographische", 258, 261.

75. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.364, also pp.25, 361, 383 as *al-Wahîdah*, and pp.23, 124 of *Râhat* and p. 126 of *al-Riyâq* as *al-Wahîdah fî al-Ma'âd*. In al-Majdû's *Fihrist*, p.278, it is referred to as *Risâlat al-Ma'âd*. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (138); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (145); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
76. It is edited by Tâmir in *Arba'a rasâ'il Ismâ'îliyyah*, pp.59-66, from a single manuscript in the possession of Ismâ'il Muḥammad al-ʿAlî Al Sulaymân, in Qadmûs, Syria, and published by Dâr al-Kashshâf, Bayrût, in 1952. Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582 (19); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.102.
77. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.123; Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (149); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
78. Referred to in *Râhat*, pp.23, 25, 192; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (139); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (145); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
79. Referred to in *al-Riyâq*, p.108; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (147); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (153) (Ivanow gives the title *al-Baghdâdiyya wa'l-Baṣriyya*); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582 (same title as Ivanow gives); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.102.
80. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.364; Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (148); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.97. This may be the same "*Maydân (kadhâ) al-ʿaql*" referred to in *Râhat* (p.433): "*ʿalâ mâ dhakarnâhu fî Kitâb al-Riyâq wa-Maydân-al-ʿaql*". For there is no great orthographical difference between *Mîzân* and *Maydân*. However, in the former case (p.364) the editors have assumed that *al-Riyâq* and *Mîzân al-ʿaql* as two works (see also Ghâlib edition, p.511), and in the latter *al-Riyâq* and *Maydân al-ʿaql* (p.433 and Ghâlib edition, p.585) as one work.
81. Referred to in *Râhat*, pp.313, 319, 421, 436. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (142); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (147); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.97.

82. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (145); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (151); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.98.
83. Referred to in *Râhat*, p. 313; Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (148A); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.99. He thinks that probably it is an error for *Ma'âlim al-Dîn*.
84. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.364; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (146); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (152); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.99.
85. Referred to in *Mabâsim al-bishârât* (Husayn edition), p.71, (Ghâlib edition), p.229; *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (154); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
86. Referred to in *al-Riyâq*, p.108; Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (155); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
87. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.34; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
88. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (156); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
89. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (144); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (150); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
90. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.81, as *Kitâb al-Ma'ârij*. Ivanow, *Ism. Lit.*, p.45 (157); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.102. He accuses Ivanow of ascribing it to Kirmânî without indicating any source.
91. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.43 (122); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.42 (131); Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101.
92. Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (140); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (146). According to Ivanow, perhaps these are two separate works. Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.101. Poonawala thinks that title is the same *Kitâb al-Mafâwiz* (no.32).
93. Referred to in *Râhat*, p.433; Ivanow, *Guide*, p.46 (143); idem, *Ism. Lit.*, p.44 (148); Sezgin, *GAS*, I, 582; Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.97.

94. Referred to in *Mabâsim al-bishârât* (Ḥusayn edition), p.73 and (Ghâlib edition), p.232. This seems to be the epistle *al-Waḥîdah fî al-ma'âd*, no. 19. See above note 75.
95. Poonawala, *Biobibliography*, p.102. Poonawala, however, does not indicate any source.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. For etymological analysis see: al-Nu'mân, *Kitâb al-Tawhîd*, MS Institute of Ismaili Studies, fol. 32a, 32b; Abû Hâtîm Râzî, *Kitâb al-Zînah* ed., Husayn Hamdânî (Qâhirah: Dâr al-Kitâb al-'Arabî, 1958), II, 32-42; Edward William Lane, *An Arabic-English Lexicon* (London: Williams and Norgates, 1893), book I, vol.8, 2926-28, 26-8; Ibn Manẓûr, *Lisân al-'Arab* (Bayrût: Dâr Sâdir and Dâr Bayrût, 1955-56), III, 450-51; Muḥammad Murtaḍâ Zabîdî, *Tâj al-'Arûs* (Miṣr: al-Maṭba'at al-Khayriyyah, 1306-07/1889-90) II, 535-36; Majd al-Dîn Muḥammad b. Ya'qûb Fîrûzâbâdî, *al-Qâmûs al-Muḥîṭ* (Miṣr: al-Maṭba'at al-Husayniyyat al-Miṣriyyah, 1344[1925]), I, 343-44. B.D. Macdonald, "Tawhîd," *SEI*, pp.586-87.
2. For the beginning of kalâm in Islam, see: H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976), p.4 ff.; W.M. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973), p.180 ff.; S. Pines, "Philosophy" in *The Cambridge History of Islam* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp.787-94; Muḥsin Mahdî, "Alfârâbî and the Foundation of Islamic Philosophy" in *Essays on Fârâbî*, ed., I. Afshâr (Tehran: Central Library and Documentation Center, University of Tehran, 1976), p.38 ff.
3. Abû Ya'qûb Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, ed. M. Ghâlib (Bayrût: Dâr al-Andalus, 1980), p.28.
4. *Ibid.*, p.28.
5. *Ibid.*, p.29.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Nâṣir Khusraw, *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn* ed., H. Corbin and M. Mo'in (Tehran: Department d' Iranologie de Institut Franco-Iranien/ Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1953), p.31; Ta'tîl is used in different senses, such as negation of creaturely attributes or negation of the ipseity of God. For details see, 'Abd al-Karîm Shahrastânî, *Nihâyat al-Iqdâm fî 'ilm al-Kalâm*. ed. and translated into English by A. Guillaume (Baghdad: Maktabat al-Muthna, n.d.), pp.123-30, (English title: *The Summa Philosophiae of al-Shahrastânî*, London, 1934).

8. *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, p.31.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid., p.32
11. Ibid., p.32. Note that this group and the one following it have already been included in Nâsir's classification of those who hold that the Creator is more than one.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., pp.32-33.
16. Ibid., p.33.
17. Ibid., p.33; idem, *Khwân al-Ikhwân*, ed., Yahyâ al-Khashshâb (Qâhirah: Maṭba'at al-ma'had al-'ilmî al-Faransî li'l-âthâr al-sharqiyyah, 1359/1940), p.242. Nâsir also attributes an intermediary position to Imâm Ja'far al-Ṣâdiq with regard to the issue of predestination and free will, while it is usually related to the Mu'tazilite tenet concerning mortal sin. See *Gushâ'ish wa Rahâ'ish*, ed. S. Nafîsî, 2nd ed. (Bombay: The Ismâili Society 1961), pp.98-99.
18. W. Madelung, "Aspects of Ismâ'îlî Theology" in *Ismâ'îlî Contributions to Islamic Culture*, p.57.
19. *Sijistânî, al-Iftikhâr*, p.28-29.
20. Henry Corbin, *Cyclical Time and Ismaili Gnosis*. See particularly the section on "From the Gnosis of Antiquity to Ismaili Gnosis", p.151 ff.; "Cyclical Time in Mazdaism and Ismailism", p.1 ff.; H. Halm, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der Frühen Ismâ'îliya*.
21. See on the influence of Greek philosophy on the Mu'tazilites, Muḥammad 'Abd al-Karîm Shahrastânî, *al-Milal wa al-Niḥal*, ed., A.M. Wakîl (Qâhirah: Mu'assasat al-Ḥalabî wa-shurakâ'ih, 1968), I, 46 ff.; idem, *Muslim Sects and Divisions*, trans., A.K. Kazi and J.G. Flynn (London: Kegan Paul International, 1984), p.43 ff.; Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, pp.19-31.

22. Kirmânî, *Tanbîh*, fols. 137-38.
23. Ibid, fol. 129; Pines, "Philosophy", p.791.
24. R. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic* (Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1962), pp.22-23; Pines, "Philosophy", p.798 ff.
25. Ibid, p.801 ff.; Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, pp.15-16; Mahdî, "Alfârâbî and the Foundation of Islamic Philosophy", p.41.
26. Watt, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought*, p.291 ff.
27. Nâşir Khusraw, *Wajh-i Dîn*, ed. Gh. R. Aavani (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1977), pp.11-13.
28. Madelung, "Aspects of Ismâ'îlî Theology", p.53.
29. Ibid., p.54.
30. Al-Mu'ayyad fî al-Dîn Shîrâzî, *al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah*, ed. Ghâlib (Bayrût: Dâr al-Andalus, 1974), I, 5.
31. Pines, "Philosophy", p.791.
32. Nâşir Khusraw, *Wajh-i Dîn*, pp.11-12.
33. Kirmânî, *Tanbîh*, fol.143.
34. For the difference between the inspired (*mu'ayyad*) intellect and the ordinary intellect, see: Sijistânî, "al-Yanâbî" in *Trilogie Ismaelienne*, ed. and trans. into French by Corbin (Tehran: Department d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-Iranien/Paris: Librairie d'Amerique et d'Orient Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1961), pp.94-96; idem, *Kitâb Ithbât al-nubuwwât*, ed. Tâmir (Bayrût: al-Maţba'at al-Kâthûlîkiyyah, 1976), pp. 119-23; Kirmânî, *Râhat*, pp.400-38; Nâşir Khusraw, *Khwân al-Ikhwân*, pp.217-19; idem, *Zâd al-Musâfirîn*, ed., M.B. Raḥmân (Berlin: Kavianî G.m.b. 1341 A.H.), pp.162-65.
35. Al-Nu'mân, *Asâs al-ta'wîl*, ed., Tâmir (Bayrût: Dâr al-Thaqâfah, 1960), p.31.

36. al-Mu'ayyad, *al-Majâlis*, I, 5.
37. Walzer, "al-Fârâbî", *EI2*, III, 79.
38. Nâşir Khusraw, *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, p.225.
39. Abû Ḥâtim Râzî, *A'lâm al-nubuwwah*, ed. Ş. Sawy (Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1977), p.131.
40. Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.30.
41. Kirmânî, *al-Riyâḍ*, p.100.
42. Abû Ḥâtim Râzî, *A'lâm al-nubuwwah*, pp.277-78.
43. Kirmânî, *al-Riyâḍ*, p.99.
44. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, pp.47, 84.
45. Nâşir Khusraw, *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, p.18.
46. Corbin, *Histoire de la Philosophie Islamique* (Paris (?): Editions Gallimard, 1964), p.8.
47. Nâşir Khusraw, *Dîwân-i Ash'âr*, ed., Naşr Allâh Taḡawî (Tehran: Kitâb-furûshî Ibn Sînâ, 1335 A.H. Solar), p.300.
48. Corbin, *Histoire*, p.8.
49. Madelung, "Aspects of Ismâ'îlî Theology", p.56.
50. al-Mu'ayyad, *al-Majâlis*, I, 212-13; Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.29.
51. Nâşir Khusraw, *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, p.60.
52. Kirmânî, *Tanbîh*, fols. 169-70.
53. Shahrastânî, *al-Milal*, I, 46.
54. Ibid., 92,
55. Ibid., 92, 103ff.
56. Ibid., 94-95.
57. Ibid., 95; see also, Abû al-Ḥasan Ash'arî, *Kitâb al-Luma'*, ed. and trans. into English by R.J. McCarthy

- as *The Theology of al-Ash'arî* (Bayrût: al-Maṭba'at al-Kathûlîkiyyah, 1952), p.14.
58. Kirmânî, *Tanbîh*, fol.131.
 59. Nâṣir Khusraw, *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, pp.64-66.
 60. Kirmânî, *Tanbîh*, fols. 132-33.
 61. Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.29.
 62. Idem, *al-Maqâlîd*, fols, 25a-25b.
 63. Corbin, *Cyclical Time*, p.85; P. E. Walker, "An Ismâ'îlî Answer to the Problem of Worshipping the Unknowable Neo-Platonic God", *AJAS*, II (1974), 12-22.
 64. Imâm 'Alî, *Nahj al-Balâghah*, ed. Muḥammad 'Abduh (Misr: Maṭba'at 'Isâ al-Bâbî al-Ḥalabî wa-shurakâ'ih, n.d.), pp.14-16.
 65. A.H. Armstrong, ed., *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); p.236 ff.; idem, *Plotinian and Christian Studies* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1979) articles; XXIII, XXIV.
 66. Kirmânî, *al-Riyâḍ*, p.214. Nasafî's ambiguous statement which Kirmânî criticizes as not being logical seems to be an early expression of Ismaili double negation which was later developed by Sijistânî. For almost identical words attributed to Empedocles, see: Shahrastânî, *al-Milal*, II, 127.
 67. Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, pp.25-26.
 68. Idem, "Tuḥfat al-mustajîbîn", in *Khams Rasâ'il Ismâ'îliyyah*, ed. Tâmir (Bayrût: Dâr al-Anṣâf, 1956), p.139.
 69. Idem, *al-Maqâlîd*, fol. 34b.
 70. *Ibid.*, fol.26b.
 71. Idem, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.27, MS IIS NO. 12, fol.23. The manuscript reads:

وليس يجوز تنزيه اسنى واشرف مما نزهنا به مبدئنا
 بهذه الالفاظ التي يتقابل فيها النفيان نفى ونفى نفى

In my translation I have followed the manuscript.

72. Idem, "Sullam al-Najâh" in *Abû Ya'qûb al-Sijistânî and Kitâb Sullam al-Najât*. p.11.
73. Idem, *al-Maqâlîd*, fol.25a-25b.
74. Ibid., fol. 32b.
75. Idem, "Tuḥfat", p.146.
76. For further studies, see sources mentioned in Chapter I, note 2.
77. Nâṣir Khusraw, *Khwân al-Ikhwân*, p.170.
78. Ibid., p.174.
79. Ibid., pp.170-76; *Sijistânî*, "Tuḥfat", pp.146-55; Corbin, "Etude Préliminaire" to *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, pp.91-112.
80. Al-Mu'ayyad, *al-Majâlis*, I, 212.
81. Ibid., pp.212-13.
82. Ibid., p.147.
83. Ibid., p.372.
84. Imâm al-Mu'izz, *Ta'wîl al-Sharî'ah*, MS. fol.5; 'Ali, *Hamâre Ismâ'îlî Madhab kî Haqîqat*, p.401.
85. Al-Nu'mân, *Da'â'im al-Islam*, ed. A.A.A.Fyzee (Qâhirah: Dâr al-Ma'ârif, 1963/1383), I, 57.
86. Ja'far b. Manṣûr al-Yaman, *Kitâb al-Kashf*, ed., Strothmann (Qâhirah: Dâr al-Fikr al-'Arabî, 1952), p.109.
87. Muḥammad b. Ḥanî Andalusî, *Dîwân Ibn Ḥanî*, ed., Karam Bustânî (Bayrût: Maktabat Ṣâdir, 1952), p.76.
88. D.D. Runes, *Dictionary of Philosophy* (Totowa, N.J: Littlefield, Adams, 1962), p.89.
89. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, p.57. For a comprehensive study of this tenet, see: Mahdî Ashtiyânî, *Asâs al-tawḥîd dar qâ'idat al-wâḥid wa waḥdat al-wujûd* (Tehran:

- Châp-khânah-i Dânish-gâh, 1330 A.H. Solar), p.15ff.
90. Madelung, "Aspects of Ismâ'îlî Theology", p.56.
 91. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, pp.355-72; Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, pp.187-90; Ibn Rushd, *Tafsîr mâ ba'd al-ṭabî'at*, ed., M. Bouyges (Bayrût: Imprimerie, 1948), pp.1497-505.
 92. Ibn Manzûr, *Lisân al-'Arab*, VIII, 6.
 93. Ibid.
 94. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, pp.355-72; Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p.187 ff.
 95. Ibid., p.187; Ya'qûb b. Ishâq Kindî, *Rasâ'il al-Kindî al-falsafiyyah*, ed., M.A. Abû Rîdah (Qâhira: Dâr al-Fikr al-'Arabî, 1950), II, 165.
 96. Ibid., p.182; Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, p.187.
 97. Ibid., p.187.
 98. Fârâbî, *Alfârâbî's Philosophische Abhandlungen*, ed., F. Dieterici (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1890), p.58.
 99. Ibn Sînâ, *al-Ishârât wa-al-tanbîhât*, ed., S. Dunyâ (Cairo: Dâr al-Ma'ârif, 1958), III, 524.
 100. Fârâbî, *Alfârâbî's Philosophische Abhandlungen*, pp.58-9.
 101. S. H. Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines* (Boulder: Shambhala, 1978), pp.202-04.
 102. Pines, "Philosophy", p.780.
 103. According to Ismailism physical world is created by the Universal Soul and the Nature. See the chapter on Universal Nature (ṭabî'at-i kullî) in *Jâmi' al-Ḥikmatayn*, pp.122-34.
 104. Nâṣir Khusraw, *Diwân -i Ash'âr*, p.27.
 105. P. E. Walker, "The Ismaili Vocabulary of Creation", *SI*, 40 (1974), 81.

106. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.125.
107. Sijistânî, "al-Yanâbî'", p.62; Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.46-48; idem, *Râḥat*, p.101 ff.
108. Sijistânî, *Kashf al-Maḥjûb*, ed. Corbin (Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien/ Paris: Librairie Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1949), p.13.
109. Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.25.
110. Ibid., pp.12-13; Kamada, S. "The First Being: Intellect ('Aql/Khiradh) as the link between God's Command and Creation according to Abû Ya'qûb al-Sijistânî". Unpublished paper. The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, 1980.
111. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, pp.69-71; idem, *Tanbîh*, fols. 119-21, 126.
112. See, however, also: P. E. Walker, "The Ismaili Vocabulary of Creation", p.80.
113. Sijistânî, "Tuḥfat", p.146.
114. Idem, *al-Iftikhâr*, pp.31-32.
115. Idem, *al-Maḡâlîd*, fol. 41a. See also his *Risâlah fî al-radd 'alâ man waqfa 'inda al-falak al-muḥîṭ min al-falâsifah*, No. 25 in Poonawala's *Bibliography*, p.89.
116. Corbin, *Trilogie Ismaelienne*, p.20; see also: Paul E. Walker, "The Ismaili Vocabulary of Creation", pp.82-85.
117. Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.24.
118. For the etymology and technical usage of *ays* and *lays* see: Khwârizmî, *Mafâtiḥ al-'Ulûm*, ed., G. Van Vloten (Lugdun-i Batavorum: E.J. Brill, 1968), p.23; also note of Abû Rîḍah in *Rasâ'il al-Kindî al-falsafiyyah*, pp.182-83; W. Wright, *A Grammar of the Arabic Language*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), I, 96.
119. L. Gardet, "Ibdâ'", *EI2*, IV, 665; Pines, "Philosophy", p.786.
120. Imâm al-Mu'izz, *Ta'wîl al-Sharî'ah*, fol.193.

121. Ibid., fol. 192.
122. Sijistânî, *Kashf al-Mahjûb*, p.15.
123. Ibid., p.23.
124. Idem, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.26.
125. Abû Hâtim Râzî, *A'lam al-nubuwwah*, pp.143-44.
126. Shahrastânî, *al-Milal*, II, 124.
127. This view in the standard works is not attributed to the Presocratic Anaximenes; it may have come from Anaximenes of Lampsacus (ca. 380-320 B.C.); see Dimitri Gutas, *Greek Wisdom Literature in Arabic Translation* (New Haven, Connecticut: American Oriental Society, 1975), pp.171, 267-68, 399-400, 464.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III.

1. Kirmânî, *Riyâq*, p.49.
2. Ibid., pp.49-50.
3. Ibid., p.214.
4. Sijistânî, *Iftîkhâr*, p.19.
5. Shahrastânî, *al-Milal*, I, 93.
6. Al-Nu'mân, *Da'â'im*, pp.45-55.
7. Muḥammad b. Ya'qûb Kulaynî, *Uṣûl al-Kâfî*, ed. and trans. into Persian by Jawâd Muṣṭafawî (Tehran: Intishârat-i Masjîd-i Chahârdah Ma'şûm, 1902), I, 251.
8. Mullâ Şadrâ, *Sharḥ Uṣûl al-Kâfî*, (n.p., n.d.), pp.4-5. For a Şûfî interpretation of ḥûjjah of God see: Gerhard Bowering, *The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islam: The Qur'ânic Hermeneutics of the Şûfî Saḥl at-Tustarî* (d. 283/896) (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), pp.63-64.
9. Al-Nu'mân, *Da'â'im*, pp.48-49.
10. Ibid., pp.49-50.
11. Van Ess, *Chiliastische Erwartungen und die Versuchung der Göttlichkeit der Kalif al-Ḥakim (386-411 H.)* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1977), p.64; 'Alî, *Târ'ikh*, pp.218-21; Assaad, *The Reign of al-Ḥakim*, pp.158-60. See also H. Halm, "Der Treuhänder Gottes: Die Edikte des Kalifen al-Ḥakim," *Der Islam*, LXIII (1986), 11-72.
12. 'Alî, *Târ'ikh*, pp. 221-22.
13. Rashîd al-Dîn Faḍl Allâh Hamdânî, *Jâmi' al-Tawârikh* (Part of the Ismâ'îlî History), ed. M. T. Dânesht-pajûh and M. Modarresy (Tehran: Bingâh-i Tarjumah wa Nashr-i Kitâb, 1960), p.59; Van Ess, *Chiliastische Erwartung*, p.30.
14. Faḍl Allâh Hamdânî, *Jâmi' al-Tawârikh*, pp.55-58.

15. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, p.137.
16. Ibid., p.139; see for a slightly different translation, Van Ess, *Chilistatische Erwartung*, p.65.
17. Ibid., p.145.
18. Ibid., p.142.
19. Ibid., p.145.
20. (Alî, *Târ'îkh*, pp.220-21.
21. See "al-Risâlah al-Kâfiyyah," in *Majmû'ah*, pp.148-82.
22. See for example O. Leaman, *An Introduction to Medieval Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Chapter 5.
23. See above Chapter II, note 31.
24. See above Chapter II, note 30.
25. Madelung, "Aspects of Ismâ'îlî Theology," p.56.
26. Sijistânî, "Tuḥfat" pp.146-55.
27. Kirmânî, *al-Waḍiyyah fî ma'âlim al-dîn*, fol. 61; idem, *Râḥat*, p.297.
28. H. A. Davidson, "Alfarabi and Avicenna on the Active Intellect," *Viator*, III (1972), 109-78.
29. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.132.
30. Ibid., pp.24-25.
31. Ibid., pp.21-23.
32. Pines, "Philosophy," p.799.
33. Ibid., p.795.
34. Ibid., p.799.
35. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, pp.27-29.
36. Corbin, *Historie*, p.230.

37. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, pp.59-68.
38. Ibid., pp.132-39.
39. Ibid., p.127.
40. Ibid., p.3.
41. Ibid., p.20.
42. Ibid., p.3.
43. Ibid., p.22.
44. Sijistânî, *Kashf*, pp.4-25.
45. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.5.
46. See above Chapter I, note 58.
47. Al-Nu'mân, *Kitâb al-Iqtiṣâr*, ed. Muḥammad Waḥîd Mîrzâ (Dimashq: Ma'had al-Faransî lil-Dirâsât al-'Arabiyyah, 1957/1376).
48. See above Chapter I, note 55.
49. See above Chapter I, note 57.
50. See above Chapter I, note 70.
51. It has been edited by 'Abd al-Salâm Muḥammad Hârân and published by Maktabat al-Jâḥiẓ, Qâhirah, 1374/1955.
52. It has been edited by P. Kraus in *Rasâ'il Falsafiyyah*, I, and published by Kullîyat al-Âdâb, Jâmi'at al-Fu'âd Awwal, publication No.22, Qâhirah, 1939.
53. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.3.
54. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.145.
55. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p. 344.
56. Idem, *al-Waḍiyyah fî ma'âlim al-dîn*, MS. fols. 43, 69.
57. Ibid., 70. See also for a similar interpretation of *shirk*: Kulaynî, *al-Kâfî*, II, p. 320; see also on the importance of the *walâyah* of the Imâm: H. Landolt, "Walâyah, or Wilâyah," to be published in *ER*, ed.

Eliade (New York: Macmillan), pp. 12-16; S.N. Makarem, "The Philosophical Significance of the Imâm in Ismâ'îlism," *SI*, 27 (1967), 41-53.

58. For a complete translation of this *sûr* see Appendix no.1.
59. For a complete translation of *al-Durriyyah*, see Appendix no.2.
60. Sijistânî, *Kashf*, p.4.
61. Ibid., p.5.
62. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.46.
63. Ibid., p.39.
64. Sijistânî, *Kashf*, pp.10-12.
65. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.140; idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.55.
66. Idem, *Râḥat*, p.49.
67. Sijistânî, *al-Iftikhâr*, p.26.
68. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.50.
69. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.20.
70. Ibid., p.20.
71. Ibid., pp. 20-21.
72. Ibid., p.56; idem, *Râḥat*, p.41.
73. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.21. By composed letters Kirmânî probably means words.
74. Idem, *Râḥat*, p.50.
75. Ibid., pp.87-88.
76. Idem, *al-Waḍiyyah fî ma'alîm al-dîn*, fol. 21.
77. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.56.
78. Ibid., p.84.

79. Ibid., pp.84-85.
80. Ibid., p.85.
81. Ibid., p.21.
82. Ibid., p.23.
83. Idem, *Râḥat*, p.37.
84. Ibid., pp.37-38.
85. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.29.
86. Ibid., p.21.
87. Ibid., p.29.
88. Ibid., p.21.
89. Ibid., pp.21-22.
90. Ibid., p.22.
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Ibid., p.23.
97. Ibid.
98. Ibid.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid., pp.23-24.

103. Ibid., p.24.
104. Ibid.
105. Ibid., p.23.
106. Ibid., p.24.
107. Ibid.
108. Ibid.
109. Idem, *Râḥat*, p.75.
110. Ibid.
111. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.25.
112. P. Merlan, "Plotinus," *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards, (New York: The Macmillan Co. and Free Press, 1967), VI, 354.
113. Armstrong, *Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, p.240.
114. Kirmânî, *Râḥat*, p.69.
115. Ibid, p.70.
116. Ibid.
117. Ibid., pp.70-71.
118. Ibid., p.59; idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.55.
119. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.55.
120. Idem, *Râḥat*, pp.59-60.
121. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, p.57.
122. Ibid., pp.22-23.
123. Idem, *Râḥat*, pp.73-75.
124. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, pp.22-23.
125. Ibid., p.24.

126. Ibid., p.23.
127. Ibid., pp.24-25.
128. Idem, *Râḥat*, p.74.
129. Ibid., p.73.
130. Ibid., p.104.
131. Idem, *Majmû'ah*, pp.52-55; idem, *al-Maṣābiḥ fī ithbāt al-imāmah*, ed. Ghālib (Bayrūt: Manshûrat Ḥamd, 1969), p.33.
132. Idem, *Râḥat*, pp.108-09.
133. Ibid., pp.101, 108, 203 and passim; W. Madelung, "Ismā'īliyya", *EI* 2, IV, 204.
134. Kirmānī, *Râḥat*, pp.109, 111, 113.
135. Ibid., pp.105, 109.
136. Ibid., pp.101, 105, 109.
137. Ibid., p.101.
138. Ibid., p.98.
139. Kirmānī, *Majmû'ah*, p.55.
140. Kirmānī, *Râḥat*, pp.108-16.
141. Madelung, "Aspects of—Ismā'īlī Theology," p.58.
142. Kirmānī, *Râḥat*, p.93.
143. See above Chapter II, note 100.
144. See above in Chapter II, note 101.
145. Kirmānī, *Râḥat*, pp.101-102.
146. Ibid., pp.67, 112.
147. Sijistānī, *al-Maḡālīd*, fols. 98-100, Kirmānī, *Majmû'ah*, p.49.

148. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, pp.49-52.
149. Sijistânî, "al-Yanâbî'", p.62.
150. See above note 145.
151. Kirmânî, *Majmû'ah*, p.29.
152. Ibid., pp.24-25.
153. Corbin, *Histoire*, p.119.

APPENDIX I

Al-Sûr al-Thâni
(The Second Wall)

On tawhîd (Unification), tagdîs (Sanctification),
tahmîd (Praise), tamjîd (Extollation) which is the
Crown (read tâj) of the Intellects consisting of
seven mashâri' (sing. mashra', ways),

From

Râhat al-'aql

by

Ḥamîd al-Dîn Kirmânî

THE FIRST MASHRA'

*On Allah, besides Whom there is no
other God, and on the Falsity of His being Non-Existent .*

We say: It is among the (fundamental) laws that an effect does not exist, except through that which necessitates its existence, such as its cause, to which it relates and upon which it depends for its existence. If it were not for the cause, the effect would not exist. For example, heat does not exist, except through that which necessitates its existence, such as its cause, namely, movement. If it were not for the latter, it would not exist. And movement does not exist, except through that which necessitates its existence; such as its cause, to which it relates and upon which it depends for its existence, namely, the mover. If it were not for the mover, movement would not exist. Likewise, physical composites, such as generated things (i.e. the realms of nature), do not exist except through the existence of elements, to which their existence relates and upon which they depend for their existence. If it were not for the elements, generated things would not exist. In the same way, the elements would not exist and would not have come into existence, had it not been for the existence of that upon which they depend for their

existence, such as matter and form. Again, matter and form, would not exist, had the existence of that upon which they depend for their existence not existed, namely, the causes whose nature is to bring them into existence, such as the sublime heavenly bodies and the exalted external forms. Since some of the existents depend upon others for their existence, had those of them upon which the others depend and to which they relate for their existence, not been proven to exist, the existence of those others would have been impossible. When it is proved that these do not exist without those, it is understood, that the One to Whom the existents -- which exist through Him, depend upon Him and obtain existence from Him -- come to an end, is Allah, other than Whom there is no deity, then His non-existence is absurd and His non-ipseity is false. Had He been non-existent, the existents would have also been non-existent. But, since the existents are there, His non-existence is (established as being) false.

Again, it is in the nature of contraries that they do not exist without the loss of their contraries. But the existents are contrary to each other, and their quiddities differ from and avoid each other, yet they, in spite of their contrariety, exist without losing

anything due to the existence of their contrary, and all of them are guarded under the existence. It follows from this that the One, through Whom the nature of the contrary -- i.e. leaving the domain of existence because of the existence of its contrary -- became null, and the contrary remained secure from its contrary, is the One who is Allah, except Whom there is no other God, Whose non-existence is absurd. For had He been non-existent, the existence of the contraries would have also been non-existent. But, since the contraries do exist in their quiddities (*a'yân*, essence), (and) their existence depends on an order (*siyâsah*), His non-existence is absurd. Therefore, may He be purified, through Whom the existence of things, despite the contrariety of their quiddities and difference in their forms, is secure. And there is no God but Allah, such a God that when those souls who attempted to describe Him with an attribute of speech, (their) tongues became mute and they stood in helpless bewilderment assured of (their) inability. And there is no power and no strength save in Allah, the Sublime and the Tremendous.

THE SECOND MASHRA'

On the Falsity of His being Existent

(May He be Exalted)

Since the existent, as such, is, as already mentioned, in need of something upon which it depends for its existence, and He, as such -- may His grandeur be exalted -- is too lofty to be in need of (something) other than Himself to which His ipseity would relate, it follows from this that He, the Exalted, is precluded from being an existent because of the dependence of the existent on the one preceding it, which has made it an existent. Thus it is absurd that He, the Exalted, should be an existent, nor is He, as such, in need of something other than Himself, upon which He would depend for His ipseity (His being as He is). He is too Great for that and too Mighty and Exalted. Thus since He -- may He be exalted and extolled -- does not need anything other than Himself to which His ipseity may relate, His being an existent is absurd.

Furthermore, if God, the Exalted, were an existent, He would indeed not have been free from being either a substance or an accident. Had He been a substance, He would not have been free from being either a body or a

non-body. If He were a body, then the division of His essence into that through which it exists, necessitates the existence of something which precedes Him, for every multiple is preceded and anteceded by something else. But He, in His transcendence, is above being preceded by something else. And if He were a non-body, then He would not have been free from being either potential, like souls, or actual, like intellects. If He were potential, His need of that through which He comes into actuality, necessitates something which would precede Him; but He, the Exalted, is above such a thing. If He were actual, then He would not have been free from either being an agent in Himself without the need of something else by which His act would become complete, or an agent in something else by which His act would become complete. If He were an agent in something other than Himself through which His act would become complete, then indeed, this would be due to His deficiency in His act and His need of something through which His act becomes complete, (and this) necessitates something upon which He would depend. But He, the Exalted, is above that. If He were an agent in Himself, without the need of something other than Himself through which His act becomes complete, then the comprehension by His essence, of different relations with the multiplicity of divergent meanings, by virtue of

His being both subject and object by Himself, necessitates something from which is His existence (and) in which there is no multiplicity and scarcity because of these relations. But He, the Exalted, is above that. If He were a substance, He would not have been free from these divisions. But He is exempt from the aspects of need and multiplicity which are inseparable from substance. Hence it is false to hold that He is a substance. And if He were to be considered an accident, which depends for its existence on the substance which precedes it, (and) through which is its existence, while He is too Sublime and too Great, for His ipseity to relate to something which precedes Him, then it is false to hold that He is an accident. Since an existent is not free from being either a substance or an accident, and His being either a substance or an accident is false, then by virtue of the falsity of His being a substance or an accident, it is false to say that He is an existent.

Further it is not possible for something which is neither substance nor accident to be something from existence, so that existent may be God, the exalted. For that necessitates Him to be preceded by something whose existence is impossible. That is to say that if He were, from the existence, that which is neither substance nor accident, as

the substance is an existent but not an accident, and the accident is an existent but not a substance, while He, as such, is neither substance nor accident, then He would be one of the species of the genus of existence and would be under it. And each one of them, the substance, He (God), may He be exalted, (read *ta'âlâ*), and the accident would deserve from the existence that which the other deserves; and He would (only) be different from the substance and the accident by that which distinguishes Him as there is difference between the substance and the accident and the accident and the substance by their respective differentia; He would (also) be a partner with both of them in that in which they participate, as there is partnership of the substance with the accident and that of the accident with the substance, in that in which they participate. Thus His essence owing to that by which it would differ from others and that in which it would participate with them would consist of two parts which would constitute Its existence (read *wujûduhâ*). And that whose essence is divided in this manner into that from which is its existence, is a multiple and is preceded by something upon which it depends for its existence. Thus it, with respect to its multiplicity necessitates the precedence of that which is not multiple by virtue of the fact that that which is not multiple precedes

multiple, and with respect to its being one of the species of existence, which when removed in imagination nullifies the existence of the species, (it)² necessitates that by which it is it. But He, the exalted, is too great to have multiplicity which necessitates Him to be preceded by something else, and transcends specificity which necessitates that from which is His ipseity. And when He transcends specificity then His being an existent is false.

Furthermore, had He, the exalted, been an existent, He would not have been free from either, that He existentiated Himself, or someone else existentiated Him. It is false (to say) that He is His own existentiator. For this necessitates that He did not exist (before), and that is a sign of transformation and contingency that He did not exist (and) then came into existence. In addition to being impossible in such a case, (i.e. assuming) there is a thing which has no quiddity in the existence according to its two kinds (substance and accident), it is impossible (for it) to become existent unless there is an agent behind it upon which its existence depends. And it is false to say that He is existentiated by something other than Himself that precedes Him. Since it is false from both aspects, thus His being an existent is false. Thus

His ipseity must be assumed to be beyond the existents whose existence depends on His act of origination. He is above those who in bewilderment undertake to comprehend Him with an attribute which befits His originated things. There is no God but He. And there is no power and no strength save in Allah. Indeed, Allah is Seer of His seryants.

THE THIRD MASHRA'

*On (Allah) the Exalted, Whom no
Attribute can describe: He is neither a Body nor in a
Body; neither can an Intelligent Being conceive His
Essence nor can a Percipient Being perceive It*

We say: He (Allah) the Exalted, is concealed by His transcendence from the things which are the means for the comprehension of the existents. He is beyond what the organs which belong to man can achieve in the enumeration of the kinds of intelligible and sensible existents, because of His not being from their genus. And His exaltedness from being like them is as the concealment of the sun from the grasp of eyesight; for He as such, is in such a position that their essences are unable to try to describe Him with an attribute, and His ipseity being an ipseity in itself and by itself differs from all things in every respect. Thus due to His dazzling power which renders any other than Him powerless to comprehend Him, the intellect and the sense cannot comprehend Him, (lit. the grasp of the intellect and the sense cannot affect Him). Thus He, as such, makes it impossible to comprehend Him, for mouths to move, for tongues to speak, for intellects to grasp and for souls to imagine. Therefore,

nothing, even though it may be absolutely perfect and extremely glorious, can be prescribed to be said about Him, but that befits that which is below Him, which is not free from being either a substance or an accident. For the existent which consists of the attributes of diversity and division, verbally or quantitatively, is such that the existence of its essence is due to that in which it is divided, and the existence of that necessitates something which precedes it and that from which is its existence. But He -- may He be purified -- is far from division and is free from the modes of perfection and imperfection. Thus, He is Sublime, beyond these signs (âyat) which necessitate something which causes (or affects) His ipseity and if He is described with an attribute, or a thing from the attributes is applied to Him, then those attributes are the ones which are taken or borrowed from the existents which fall under the originated existence, and with them are distinguished the essences which are inseparable from the sign of the instaurated being.

And it is evident that if we ascribe an attribute to some thing, which is an attribute belonging to something else, then, indeed, we lie in describing that thing, because it (attribute) does not belong to it, rather to something

else. And if we say something about it which is not in it, and necessitate for it that which does not belong to it, and ascribe to it that which belongs to something else, then that by itself is a falsity. If that is the case, then what is ascribed to Allah belongs to something else, transferred (*manqûlah*) from that to Him (i.e. is only metaphorically applicable to Him). Thus it is clear that whoever describes Him lies about Him, because of the fact that, that with which he has described Him, is an attribute which belongs to something else. Thus, it is obvious that the (human being) is unable to attain an attribute which befits Him, may He be exalted.

Moreover, the impossibility for and incapacity of the intellect to originate an attribute which does not exist in creatures, and the imperfection and weakness of the soul in imagining that which has no origin in nature, are (well) conceived and known without any doubt. How, then, can the intellect by itself rise in search of that which, when it (intellect) rises towards it and turns its face to observe it, dazzles it, as the sun dazzles our eye-sight? Hence it (intellect) can only prostrate in purifying (Him), repenting for its act (of trying to comprehend Him) knowing that what it has desired is impossible. Or how can it move towards that in which lies the destruction and

perdition of its essence, as there is the total loss of the eye-sight when it encounters the sun itself?

Again He, the Exalted, is not a body to be talked about in the way we talk about bodies, nor is He in a body to be talked about according to what is necessary to be talked about as we talk about that which is in the bodies, because of the fact that if He were a body or in a body, it necessitates something which precedes Him, the proof of which we have established in our Epistle "*al-Wâ'izah*".

Again nor is He, the Exalted, divisible, that it might be possible to talk about His divisions. Had He been divisible, then His division would have required something preceding Him, which would have constituted His ipseity. Nor is He a *definiendum* (*dhû ḥadd*), that His nature might be known from His definition, as length, breadth and depth are the definition of the body and its nature. Nor is He like that which is defined by matter and form so that He might thereby be known. Nor is He a composite, that He might be analyzed into that out of which He is composed, and be known thereby. Nor is He that from which (something) is composed so that through His composition might be known that towards which its perfection in composition comes to an end. Nor is He from that which

might be known through demonstration, so that premises may be established about Him and knowledge of Him attained thereby. For that which is known by premises is like the premises. That is to say the ultimate purpose of the object sought to be comprehended through the premises is to conceive it in its nature as the nature of the premises is conceived. And the premises can neither be arranged nor be comprehensible except through known data, either through the intellect or through the sense, knowing that the tendencies of doubts do not obfuscate it, and for what is sensible or intelligible, the ways of its comprehension are known. But due to the door of His comprehension being closed He can neither be sensible nor intelligible. For had He been sensible, He would have been comprehended through the (five) senses. Or had He been intelligible, He would have been comprehended through the five ways (of comprehension of intelligibles) which are definition, division, analysis, synthesis and demonstration. But since He is neither sensible nor intelligible, it is absurd to say about Him what is said about them. Thus He, as such, by virtue of His sublimity over the things which He has originated, the unattainable sublimity of the All-encompassing, and because of His loftiness over them -- the loftiness of the Exalted -- Whose knowledge is

unobtainable by any thing, is utterly incomprehensible. Therefore, it is said that He, the Exalted, is far beyond perfection and far away above majesty, and the world of intellects is overwhelmed under the weight of His might. Thus glorified is He Who has this might, and there is no God save Him, the Lord of the Lofty Throne.

THE FOURTH MASHRA'

*On (Allah) that He, the Exalted, is neither
Form nor Matter, nor subsists with Him, as such, Something
Analogous to Matter upon which He would act. May He
therefore be Purified and Exalted from that.*

We say: He, the Exalted, transcends being a form by virtue of the fact that the form for its existence is in need of that of which it is the form, and that which is in need of another's existence for its own existence has the characteristic of a creature, which latter necessitates its termination to something which is neither form nor anything else which needs something (for its existence). He also transcends being matter or something analogous to it; for matter, in its existence, is inseparable from that of which it is the matter, and whose acts it accepts. And He, the exalted, is also sanctified from being both form and matter together so that His essence may be divided into form and matter, which are in need of each other for their existence -- whose essence necessitates something which precedes them both -- and is more self-subsistent than both of them. Also, it is not possible that there may be a matter with Him through which comes into existence whatever comes into existence from Him. Had

it been so, He would have been imperfect in His act, due to the impossibility of the existence of His act without matter by which His act becomes complete; and the existence of that which is imperfect in its act, exists because of something else which precedes it. But He, by virtue of His exaltedness, transcends priority or precedence over Him by something else. Thus the existence of matter with Him, as such, is false.

Further, form is divisible into what is intellectual, what is natural and what is artificial. As for that which is intellectual, it is intellecting for itself, intelligible by itself and intelligence in itself, varying by relations and correlations. Its essence consists of that which is its substance and that which is (its) perfection, which follows the substance, out of which comes forth the existence of that which comes into existence from it. The intellectual form thus, due to the existence of these signs within it, requires something which precedes it and out of which is its existence. But He, may He be purified is He Who is free from these signs. And that which is natural (form) is the mover of that which is in it, and is movable by accident and its essence consists of that which is intellecting and that which is not intellecting but is intelligible. And these signs which

exist (in it) necessitate something which precedes them in the existence out of which comes their existence. But He, by virtue of His sublimity, is above movement, division and from that which, due to its existence, necessitates something which precedes Him. And that which is artificial (form) is the perfection of that in which it is, and has no existence without it. And if He -- may He be purified -- by virtue of His sublimity, transcends resembling the intellectual form, despite its (having) brilliance, augustness, power, knowledge, comprehension, kingdom and might, then it is more befitting for Him to transcend that which is inferior to it, in majesty and augustness. He transcends to be like it. Thus He -- may He be purified -- is neither form nor matter, nor both of them, nor is there a matter with Him upon which (read fîhâ) He would act. Hence, He, as such, is different from the whole creation due to the attributes which it has. He is in a veil which the intellects, in order to observe that unity and to inform about it, want to lift. (They would like to do so, but they are unable to do so) except through the negation of the attributes of the existents -- subject and predicate, interior and exterior -- whenever He is mentioned. May He, therefore, be Purified, Whom neither the attributes can affect nor expressions reveal. There is no God but He,

the Highly Exalted. I seek forgiveness from Allah for myself and for the community of believers, and I say: There is no power and no strength save in Allah, the Sublime and the Tremendous.

THE FIFTH MASHRA'

On Allah that He has neither a Contrary nor an Equal

We say: It is in the nature of a contrary to cancel out its contrary and one does not exist without the loss of the other. Whatever belongs to the contrary, the contrary and its counter take turns over that thing, for (their) existence; one being weak in relation to the other. Since any weakness occurring in the existence of one of them leads to its nullification from existence itself, it is not possible for (God), the Exalted, to have a contrary. If He had a contrary, it would not be free from being either self-subsistent or non-self-subsistent. If the contrary is non-self-subsistent, then the loss of His contrary would be the cause of His existence; and that which is His cause would be more deserving of priority and more befitting for divinity. If the contrary exists as a self-subsistent, and both of them are equal in existence, then the existence of both without the loss of either of them, necessitates that both have something which is analogous to the protector of their existence; for two contraries cannot exist without the protection of a protector and the binding of a binder, who protects their existence from outside of them, and their protector is

worthier of divinity than both of them. Since the existence of the contrary would necessitate Him to be preceded by something, whose existence is impossible, consequently, it is absurd and false to say that He has a contrary.

Moreover, if He had a contrary -- may He be exalted from that -- then this would have required something which they follow one after the other for existence, sometimes this one and sometimes that one until each of the two would have its ample share from their states in existence, as the contraries do for their existence. And if there were something which they follow one after the other and upon which they depend for their existence, then that thing upon which they depend and which they follow one after the other, precedes them and their existence in turn depends upon it. But He, as such, is above being preceded by someone and is too great to be accompanied by someone else, or that His ipseity may depend on something which may be His cause in what He is. Since the existence of a contrary causes the necessity of existence of something which He follows after the other for the existence, by which He is preceded, and the continuation of the matter according to this proposition leads *ad infinitum*, it is therefore, false (to say) that He has a contrary. Since

it is false (to say) that He has a contrary, it is false (to say) that there is something which He would follow after the other, and something which would cause (His) exalted ipseity -- may It be sanctified. Again the impossibility of the existence of a cause of God, out of which may be the existence of His ipseity -- may He be exalted from that -- negates that He has a contrary. That is to say, that which has a contrary, has a cause which precedes it (and) upon which depends its existence, as is conceived in the contraries existing in the sensibles that their causes of existence precede them. Since that which has a contrary has a cause which precedes it and while He, the exalted, transcends having a cause, hence it is false (to say) that He has a contrary.

Furthermore, God has no equal. Had there been any, there would have been two gods; and by virtue of their being two, each would have something, due to which one would differ from the other, and by which duality would have taken place. Consequently, each one of them would have two parts -- one of them common and the other specific -- by which would exist their essences. This necessitates something which precedes both of them, and that which has given to each of them that, due to which each became distinguished and differentiated from the other, is

worthier of divinity. But He -- may He be exalted -- is One Who with respect to loftiness is on such a peak where it is not possible for anyone else to precede and antecede Him, such that He may be below him. Thus He, -- may He be exalted -- is extremely above the extreme end of the ranks of augustness, grandeur, power and beauty in such a way, that there is no way for the intellect to comprehend Him. Thus, He Who is in such a position has neither a contrary nor an equal. May Allah be therefore, purified, there is no God but He, Who, as such, is too great to have a contrary or an equal. I seek forgiveness from Allah, the Tremendous, and I ask Him for help in all my affairs. Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds. There is no power and no strength save in Allah, the Sublime and the Tremendous.

THE SIXTH MASHRA'

On Allah, that there is Nothing in the Languages with which it is possible to describe Him as He deserves.

We say: Since the existence of things despite their difference and contrariety is due to the dependence of some of them upon others through resemblance and compatibility which (exist) between them, and upon which it depends, just as in the existents in the physical world there is the resemblance through which some of them are protected from the others and through which a whole is related to another whole and through which it came into existence (read *wujida*). Had it (resemblance) not been there, it (existence) would not have come into existence. Like fire which, because of its heat and dryness, is contrary to water, because of its coldness and moisture, came into existence through air which is between them, which is warm and wet. The fire became compatible with the warm side and attached itself to it. In this way water, which is contrary to fire attached itself to and united with it. In the same manner, air and earth due to their resemblance to water which brings them together through their (two) sides. And that which has no compatibility and resemblance between itself and the other

avoids it and does not circle it and affirm it.

Since names and words are things which signify the things which affirm them, this necessitates that there is compatibility between the signifying names and words, and that which has been signified by them (read *al-madlûl bihâ 'alayhi*, i.e. things). Had it not been there, they would not have affirmed it, nor would there have been any way for the soul to know the things in their realities. For if it were possible for that which signifies the figure of a triangle to signify the figure of a square, and for that which signifies the figure of a cube, to signify the figure of a circle, and vice versa, then, in reality the way to comprehend sciences would have been destroyed and the soul would not have had access to them due to the possibility that what it conceives becomes something else. Since, it is impossible to conceive the figure of a triangle by that which signifies the figure of a cube, and the figure of a square by that which signifies the figure of a triangle, nor to know from that which signifies a number more or less than the number (signified), nor is it possible to affirm something except that which that compatibility necessitates, with which it circles, then from this it is evident that the compatibility and the resemblance which are between them have something which does

not signify other than it, nor does it affirm that which exceeds it. And since names, attributes and words "have resemblance with that which they signify; and names and words are composed of simple letters out of which are made all languages, while the letters are contingent, then that which they signify and necessitate is contingent like them.

Since, in all languages, that which the composed letters signify is contingent as we explained, and He -- may His grandeur be exalted -- is not contingent, thus it is clear that by virtue of His being different from and incompatible with the contingent things and not being from their substance, it is not possible for them (composed letters) -- out of which are originated all languages -- to point out to Him in any way which would be worthy of His grandeur. When Allah -- may His glory be exalted -- is different from the contingent things, then there is no hope at all that words and expressions may indicate something that would be worthy of Him. Thus the truthfulness of the believers in one God is clear that He cannot be described by a verbal expression or by a mental concept. And how could the letters indicate an ipseity, out of which came all those things which came into existence through *ibdâ'*, *inbi'âth* and creation including themselves? He, the exalted, is beyond them at the apex of glory, the

intellects do not find the way to describe Him with an attribute. Or how is it possible for the intellects to find the way to conceive of Him, while they can only conceive that which (read mâ) is comprised of the characteristic of being a substance or an accident.

Verily, He is in the heaven of exaltedness, and in the paragon beauty of perfection. Thus purified is He Who is God, Whom no words and no expressions can describe with a thing but that thing is under His origination. There is no God but He. I seek forgiveness from Allah and ask Him for help, and I confide my cause to Him in my religion and my world. There is no power and no strength save in Allah, the Sublime, the Tremendous.

THE SEVENTH NASHRA'

*On that the Truest Doctrine in the
Unification, Purification, Extollation and Affirmation
(of God) is that which is through the Negation
of the Attributes existing in the Existents from Him*

We say that since the intellects yearn for the *tawhîd* of God and to sanctify, praise and extoll Him with that which He deserves and in order to do so there are two ways: One is through ascribing and establishing the most noble attributes for Him and the other is through negating and divesting them from Him. And since the way of unifying and extolling Him, through establishing attributes by relating to Him that which He does not deserve and treating Him like the originated things which are under Him, leads to uttering and fabricating a lie about Him, then the truest (read *aşdaq*) of that which is reliable in unifying and extolling God, is the opposite to the affirmation of the attributes, i.e. their negation from Him. Thus, we the group of *dâ'is*, the believers in One God, the followers of the true imams, in unifying and purifying (God), have followed the way of negating attributes (from Him) by virtue of its being real and true. That is to say that, since truth means to establish something for that to

which it belongs and to negate something from that to which it does not belong, we realized that if we establish something for Him which does not belong to Him, rather to something else, by its being the characteristic of those who came into existence from Him, which are other than Him, we would be false in doing so. For a lie or falsity means to establish something for that to which it does not belong, or to negate something from that which belongs to it. And if we negate from Him an attribute which does not belong to Him, but to someone else, we are, indeed, truthful in doing so.

Thus we adhered to this path the way it has been drawn by the guides appointed (by God) to guide to the true path in *tawhîd* (*al-adillah al-manşûbûn lil-hidâyah ilâ tarîq al-ḥaqq fi al-tawhîd*, i.e. imâms), may the peace of God be upon them, and when we did it, by doing so, we affirm, purify, sanctify, extoll and praise Him with our true doctrine and affirm Him without aiming at an attribute and without describing Him by a simile, or an analogy or a definition. That is to say that in the purport of the speech, it is established and known to the people of intelligence and to the one who is our true brother, that while affirming God through the negation of the attributes, when we say that He is not this, and not this,

and not this, and not this - all this which we negate belongs to that which exist in the creation. Thus by doing so is established that to which the attribute does not apply, and through what we have negated (it is established) that all existents are different from being God. And this does not mean what these so-called intellectuals -- who claim to be intellectuals while they are enemies of themselves -- imagine to be ta'ṭīl (denial of God). For the fire of ta'ṭīl breaks out and its minaret of heresy rises high only when one relies in the doctrine on the particle "lâ (i.e. there is not or no)" aiming by its action, which is negation, at the exalted ipseity, to deny and negate it by saying only "lâ huwa or lâ ilâha (i.e. He is not there, or there is no God)", which leads to open ta'ṭīl, which lets the soul gain perdition and sets it on fire in the midst of hell. But the action of the particle "lâ" wends its way to attributes to negate them, excluding the exalted ipseity. Thus it is the attributes which are denied and negated, not the exalted ipseity. This is just like our doctrine about God (saying) first that "He is not subject to attributes (lâ mawṣûf)", in which the action of the particle lâ is directed toward the physical attributes and things subject to attributes to negate them from Him - may He be purified - Who is referred to by our saying "He". Thus the referent is established (i.e.

non-negated) and it is only the attributes which are denied and negated. And like our doctrine (about God), (saying) secondly, that "He is neither not-subject-to-attributes (wa-lâ huwa lâ-mawşûf)" which is like our first doctrine to negate from the exalted ipseity that which was not negated in our first doctrine by saying "He is not subject to attributes (lâ mawşûf)". That is to say that the action of the particle lâ in our doctrine "He is neither not-subject-to-attributes (wa-lâ huwa lâ-mawşûf)" is directed towards the things of which the "negation of the attributes from them" has become a characteristic, such as, the souls and the intellects, which transcend being described by bodies and their attributes, to negate from the exalted ipseity referring to it by our saying "He", that which these things deserve as their essences are based upon it. The referent is established and the ipseity subsists and (only) what is said about those things, is negated from it. Thus there is nothing in this doctrine which necessitates the defect of falsification (read *tabţîl*) or that it deserves the stigma of *ta'ţîl*.

When a just and reflective person examines this through his thinking, he will come to know that each one of (our) opponents who has decorated his religion (or school of

thought) in the unification of his Lord has approached what we have approached, and has intended to do what we have intended in the usage of the particle "lâ" in negating from Allah, the Exalted, that which the others deserve. Particularly, the Mu'tazilites who have published their books and decorated them with their doctrine in the Principles of their school of thought that "God, the Exalted, cannot be described with the attributes of the creatures". This is just like our doctrine that "He, the Exalted, is not subject to attributes". Then they say that "nothing can be said about Him what is said about the finites." This is like our doctrine that "He, the Exalted, is neither not-subject-to-attributes," like the one the negation of whose limit became an attribute of it. This (part of) their doctrine is the very foundation of our religion and upon which is the basis of our da'wah that we do not say about God what is said about the creatures. And this is the doctrine on which we rely in the tawhîd of our Lord and this is the object in the modes of our speech and in the citation of the proofs. But the Mu'tazilites, due to their contradiction: saying that God cannot be described by the attributes of creatures, (then) by applying to Him the attributes which are worthy of them, by saying, God forbid! that He is Living, Knowing, Powerful and the rest of the attributes

-- uttered with their tongues the doctrine of the believers in One God, but believed with their hearts in the doctrine of the heretics. Thus our doctrine "He is not this (lâ hâdhâ)" like our doctrine "He is not subject to attributes (lâ mawşûf)" is the affirmation of that which is not-subject-to-attributes. And when it is said: "And He is not this (wa-lâ hâdhâ)" is like our doctrine "And He is neither not-subject-to-attributes (wa-lâ lâ-mawşûf)". And this one which is not-subject-to-attributes (lâ-mawşûf) is other than the one which is negated by the particle "lâ" previously by this saying. It is the affirmation of that which is other than "this" which is affirmed previously by the first negation, which is "He is neither not-subject-to-attributes" (read wa-lâ lâ-mawşûf only). Thus until the particle "lâ" comprehends all existents and negates by each saying that which has been established in the preceding saying and affirms another which is not-subject-to-attributes until nothing remains from among the existents. Thus by the negation, every thing there, is affirmation of someone else who is free from (existents subject to attributes and not-subject-to-attributes). And He, the Exalted, the Supreme, may He be purified from the attribute of attributed things, is the One, Who by virtue of His grandeur transcends that the particle "lâ" may have access to negate from Him that which befits Him,

because of the constraint of the way of knowledge of this field. Thus, by virtue of His grandeur, it is appropriate that there is nothing of His, which the particle "lâ" may negate (lit. oppose with negation). He, the Exalted, with respect to the beauty of lordship and holiness, is in such a position where the power of comprehension of the intellects runs out and the lamp of understanding goes out. This trodden path in the unification of God, through the comprehension of the existents, which is the purpose in negating them and their attributes by the particle "lâ" to establish the desired object free from their properties is not strange. Indeed, the Arabs have followed it in many places, and they have made it the goal of eloquence in the field of rhetoric. For instance, one of them, describing a person who is generous and hospitable, says: "There are very few camels in the pasture and many knelt down in the courtyard. When they hear the sound of the lute, they are sure that they are going to be slaughtered." Thus he brought forth these words to describe the camels that kneel down in his courtyard and do not go to the pastures so that their slaughter for the guests may be available to him. When the lute (i.e. the lute for hospitality) is played, on hearing the sound of its chords, the camels are convinced that they are going to be slaughtered. This expression

shows that the man is generous in feeding the people, without the attribute being directed to him with specific words for the intended meaning. Thus because of the incapability and weakness of the incapable and weak (person) in following the path of eloquence and rhetoric in reaching the end in understanding and expression, the light of eloquence does not turn into darkness and its beauty into ugliness. Verily, the matter is clear in what we have followed the way of the unification (of God) and there is nothing which defiles it with dust.

In short, the falsity of the doctrine of the unification (of God) through establishing and affirming attributes to Him in the sense that they really belong to Him, not in a figurative sense and that which man needs during speech for the sake of affirmation and understanding, is obvious in the field of true argumentation (*al-baḥṭh wa-al-taḥqîq*). That is to say, the affirmation of the attributes for God leads either *ad absurdum* which is not permissible to say about Him, or to its prolongation *ad infinitum*, which necessitates the non-existence of the existents, which both cover the face of the unification of God with dust. That is to say, if He upon Whom the existents depend for their existence, cannot be proven to be independent of others in what He, as such, is, and would

be in need of someone else for the proof of His ipseity, whose condition concerning his ipseity is just like His (i.e. he also depends on someone else) and that someone else depends on another, *ad infinitum*, then due to the involvement of someone else in the proof of His ipseity, no action of His would be proven and in His being occupied with that no existence of an existent from Him would be established, till He would be proven; and (then) because of His being proven the others would have existence. As the numbers, whose existence depends on the one, if it were not self-subsistent, the rest of them would not have remained in the existence. But there are limits of the existents which exist in their realm about the falsity of the matter which implies the falsity of *infinitum*, and in the falsity of that which implies *infinitum* is the falsity of the doctrine which necessitates an attribute to Him - may He transcend and be exalted from attributes. And we will explain what absurdity stems from a single attribute out of all attributes from which, like it, the necessitation (of absurdity) of the rest can be inferred.

We say: Existence is an attribute; and the one who says that, in reality, He, the Exalted, can be described with existence, affirms that He, may He be purified, has the existence of the exalted essence, which is described first

by existence and secondly (is described) this attribute which is the existence, by virtue of His, the Exalted, being other than (this) attribute and the attribute being other than Him. Now this attribute of Him -- may He be glorified and exalted -- for its existence is not free from being necessitated and required either by His essence, may it transcend that, or by something else. If it is His essence which necessitates and requires this attribute for itself, then first the necessitation and requirement depend on the proof (positive status) of the essence, necessitating the proof of the essence free from this attribute, or that the act which is necessitation and requirement does not occur from the essence. And the proof of the essence necessitates the cessation of every thing which hinders its proof and its independence for the proof from that which distracts it from it. When the essence is proven free from this attribute, independent for its proof from that which diverts it from it (the proof) and the existence (read *al-wujûd*) is an attribute upon which the proof of the essence does not depend, then it is evident that the ipseity of the essence in its being a self-subsisting ipseity, is not in need of this attribute, nor is the essence in need of its necessitation for itself, so that thereby it (essence) will have that which it did not. For it is without any need, and when it

(essence) is not in need and want of it (attribute) to have there by that which it did have (before), then its necessitation to God is clearly absurd, which does not befit His glory, and the absurd is not permissible to say about God. This is the case when the necessitation of the attribute is ascribed to His essence which precedes affirmation (of the attribute) in proof. But if this attribute would be ascribed to God Himself (in such a way) that in proof (His) essence does not precede the attribute (in proof) but rather is equal to it, then this necessitates someone else who has characterized the essence to be non-attribute and attribute to be non-essence, by virtue of the essence not being free from the attribute specifying the essence not to be the attribute, and the attribute not to be the essence. Thus the attribute would belong to the essence because of its affirmation. And since the attribute is equal to the essence, not because of the affirmation nor because of requirement, then its proof depends on the affirmation of something else. When the necessity of something else is established, then the same (aforementioned) will be said about it, i.e. *ad infinitum*, which is purely absurd.

And if the one who necessitates this attribute is something other than God's (essence), then the

argumentation will continue *ad infinitum*, which no reason confirms with the proof of the existents. Since the affirmation of this attribute leads to that which we mentioned, and that to which it leads is false, hence all the attributes take the same course in leading to acquisition and affirmation of the absurd. Thus He, the Exalted, is free from and transcends the attributes which are under His origination. He -- may He be extolled and exalted -- is the agent of the attributes and all (other) things.

Furthermore, if we speak about the existence of Allah, the Exalted, it is because of the compulsion for expression and the inability of the soul to express anything except through contingent things whose knowledge is acquired through the senses. Otherwise existence is among the attributes of the Act which came forth from God, the Exalted, to the existence known as the First Existence or the First Intellect. His act does not return to His essence and acts upon it, as is the case in our acts when they come into existence they affect our souls and they thus acquire that which they did not have, as we, God willing, will explain (this) in its proper place. Rather His act is directed towards subsistence and actuality, and due to this there occurs the difference between the two

acts. It is not possible for an opponent, attaining access to fraud and following the path of devils in distorting and misleading based on absurdity, to reverse it and treat the essence in the necessitation of its proof like the attributes which we discussed. Thus the argument stands against the opponent since he has the necessary duty to prove the exalted Essence of Allah, may He be purified and exalted. And there is need in the existence of the existents of that by which they are proven, (namely Allâh), upon Whom the existents depend for their existence and with it the doors of heresy are closed.

Blessed be He and may He be exalted, the Lord of the worlds. There is nothing among the existents which can share with Him qua Him, nor is there a deity but He, the Exalted. I seek forgiveness of Allah and ask Him for help and I confide my cause unto Allah. Indeed, Allah is seer of (His) servants.

APPENDIX II

Al-Risâlah al-Durriyyah
(Brilliant Epistle)

on the meaning of

tawhid (unification), muwahhid (unifier) and
muwahhad (unified)

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, Who is too mighty to have an equal and too sublime to be described by speech in any way. The intellects are perplexed about Him, therefore, they barely begin to search for a path to attain something to name Him therewith, but the incapability of reaching Him surrounds them. And the insights (*albâb*) are baffled (about Him), therefore, they barely think of something, intending to make it an attribute of Him, but the ignorance of how to judge Him with it seizes them.

I praise Him with the praise of the one who affirms only that which is comprehended of itself by His essence. And there is none among His instaurated things which is a deity, and there is none among His originated creatures, but a suppliant to Him through glorification. And I truly bear witness according to my creation and thereby I hope to attain salvation and success when there will be no longer time to escape, that divinity is not among the things which can be comprehended by an intellect or a soul, nor is it among those which can be judged by an imagination or a sense, except that while affirming Him

they are compelled to say that He is Allah, Other than Whom there is no deity. Nor is there anyone worthy of worship (*ma'bûd*), other than Him.

And I bear witness that Muḥammad, the one crowned with the lights of *ta'yîd* (divine help) and holiness and honoured with the leadership of (all of) mankind, the former and the latter, His servant and messenger, invited to the principles of faith (*aḥkâm al-îmân*) and to the attainment of mercy in the neighbourhood of God, through a law (*sharî'ah*) which he spread and introduced and practices (*sunan*) which he established and laid down, and obedience which he urged as beneficial and disobedience which he abstained from and prohibited, and pillars of truth which he raised high and motives of falsehood which he eradicated as something repelled, and a trust which he conveyed, yet prevented its assumption. May God bless him with ever-increasing and pure (*zâkiyah*) blessing so long as a night becomes dark and a morning shines. And may the peace (of God) continue eternally and multiply sempiternally upon the one who is (divinely) helped (*mu'ayyad*) with the comprehensive lights and is rich with the blessed and reverent imâms from his progeny, his legatee, inheritor of his knowledge, his successor and protector of his authority, 'Alî ibn Abî Ṭâlib, the

guardian of the religion and its crown and the custodian of the straight path and its course. And may the best of blessings and salutations of God be upon the pure imâms, the forefathers of Imâm al-Ḥâkim bi-Amr Allâh, the Commander of the faithful, and upon him and those who are waiting to come till the Day of Resurrection.

Now then, when the trial pervaded the people of the guiding mission (*al-da'wah al-hâdiyah*), may God spread its lights, due to the withholding by the sky of the rain, and the perplexity seized them due to the stopping by the earth of the nurturing of the seeds, and the distress surrounded them due to the domination of the famine and the causes of insanity alternated among them and the teeth of test bit them and the vicissitudes of time snubbed them, the wisest of them was flabbergasted and the most clement of them was dismayed. Their hope and expectation diminished. They gave up all hopes and thought that they were doomed to perdition. Then by the favour of the friend (*bi-naẓar walî*) of God and the son of His Prophet ... His succour came to them as a mercy. He illuminated for them what was dark and elucidated what was obscure. And that was his chosen, ... the one who was the most truthful in speaking, the most trustworthy in executing the duty, the most steadfast in the religion, the most

firm in obedience and the most long-standing in migrating among them, namely, Khatgîn al-Ḍayf, may God guard him in the best obedience. He appointed him as the gate (*bâb*) of his mercy and the chief *dâ'î* (*dâ'î al-ḍu'ât*), with the title of *al-ṣâdiq al-ma'mûn* (the truthful and trustworthy), so that he may reunite them and preserve their order.

On this renewal of the gift for them, they rejoiced. For, (his) favour for them became greater by his gift (read *minḥah*). And (for this) they thanked God, may He be exalted, and His friend in the earth, may peace be upon him. They used to attend his circle (*majlis*), and converse with one another. Some of the people of *da'wah*, may God protect its lights, put some questions to make them a means of testing and a way of spreading discord. I thought it appropriate to answer each of the questions according to what has been extended from the blessings of the friends of God in the earth ... and devote a separate epistle to what I am going to write. So that thereby the pillars of intimacy, by confidential conversation between me and my brethren, may become strong and the soul may be prepared with training to encounter the antagonists and the hypocrites. Thus I decided and wrote this epistle answering the first of the questions and named it

"*al-Risâlah al-Durriyyah* (The Brilliant Epistle)". For it is a light in its meanings and a pearl in its contents. The rest of them will follow it. I ask God for help to complete them, by His strength and power.

The actual question: A questioner asked and said: What is *tawhîd*? It is known in our saying that it means "making a *muwahhâd* (unified, one) (*fi'l al-muwahhâd*)" and the *muwahhâd* is the object of the *muwahhids* (sing. *muwahhid*, unifier). But it is not permissible for us to say that God is the object of the *muwahhids*. Further, he said that *tawhîd* is not possible without the imagination of a multiplicity; it is applicable only to what is made *wâhid* (*muwahhâd*) of the entire multiplicity. But in the divinity there is no multiplicity to make *wâhid* out of it. Explain this for us.

First, we say that the *mubdi'*'s ... having no similitude, does not depend on the unification of the unifiers (*tawhîd al-muwahhidîn*), nor on the purification of the purifiers (*tajrîd al-mujarridîn*), so that He would leave His having no similitude if the unifiers do not unify Him, or that He would leave His transcendence (*min 'uluwwihi*) from the characteristics of His originated things, if the purifiers do not purify Him. But He... has no similitude

whether the unifiers unify Him or not, whether the purifiers purify Him or not.

And it is the element (*unşur*) and nature of speech that, when someone intends to inform about the traces and essences which transcend the comprehension of the sense, its meanings become too narrow and too subtle (to convey them), let alone that which (even) the propositions of the intelligence and the soul cannot comprehend. Thus the speech is unable to denote that which is not like it. Thus there is nothing in that which is composed of letters, such as a word or speech, which can denote the reality sought in the *tawhîd*. For what is intended to comprehend about the *mubdi'* ... through a description, it is beyond the most noble meanings which the composed letters can convey.

Since this is the case and it is inevitable to speak and affirm what the rudiments of the intellect necessitate, namely, an agent from whom the existing actions came forth, nor is it possible to dispense with the expression of the subtleties of the imaginary thoughts which flash in the mind, and (since) the simple letters, to which recourse is taken in expression and whence the speech and demonstration come forth, due to their limitation

in bearing the subtle meanings, are unable to convey what is not from their element and incapable of informing about what is not from their substance, the speaker is compelled to speak with the most noble, most sublime and most subtle meanings which the letters can convey from their cognation (*sunkh*) and origin. When there is compulsion (to speak) then there is no more noble and more subtle meaning in the speech than the *wâḥidiyyah* (being *wâḥid*) and no more exalted than the meaning of our saying *fard* (single), owing to the fact that, to that which has no similitude, *fard* may be applied more appropriately, from among that which is composed of letters, even if it does not befit Him (or it), than *mubdi'*. Since the name referring to His being *mubdi'* is due to Him (only) by virtue of His *ibdâ'* and He was there while there was no *ibdâ'*, and He is not He without being *fard*. But He is *fard* forever. And He, as such, is *fard* due to the impossibility of the existence of His similitude.

Again, (*fard* may be applied more appropriately) because when the field of thinking is extended in attaining the most appropriate of the meanings which the composite letters convey to be said about the *mubdi'* in bewilderment and compulsion, even though the meaning (of *fard*) is applicable to some of His originated things (*mukhtara'ât*)

the field of thinking remaining) confined to what the intellect comprehends through its light and to that which its propositions may comprehend of what is beyond it (i.e. the field of the intellect), namely, the meaning conveyed by our saying "*fard*". For the meaning of *fardiyyah* (being *fard*) in *wâḥidiyyah* exceed the meaning of *wâḥid*, *aḥad* and *waḥīd*, in *wâḥidiyyah* by virtue of its being *ṣamad* (One to whom people resort to in their needs, that which has no cavity i.e. self-sufficient). And the meaning of the *fard* in *wâḥidiyyah* is not, upon careful examination, to be distinguished from the meaning of *wâḥid* by virtue of its having an additional meaning in *wâḥidiyyah*, except by virtue of its being the cause of *wâḥid*. And that which is the cause always precedes the effect, about which we have spoken in our book, known as *Râḥat al-ʿaql*, with which the darkness of ignorance disappears and through which the light of justice speaks. We have written it as a preface and have extended the field of definition so that it may be helpful for what we want to speak about.

Tawḥīd does not mean, as we have said in the meaning of *fard*, the careful examination of the meaning in communicating about God, that He is *fard*, so that the one who carefully examines (the meaning) may be a *muwaḥḥid*.

Nor is it the case that God is restricted to one particular meaning so that by virtue of that meaning, it may be established that He is *fard*. For the glory of His grandeur is in a veil making it impossible for the letters to render it by any means. And how can it be possible for the letters to render it while they barely erect a lighthouse in their composition to guide, but the water of His power overflows, and they barely announce an information to speak with a meaning, small or great, but the incapability (of that) establishes itself and spreads. God, the Existentiator, the Worthy of worship, thus, transcends the rational propositions and the physical qualifications.

Tawhîd, indeed, is an infinitive on the measure of *taf'îl*. The philologists do not use this kind of quadriliteral verb-forms except for the one whose action is abundant. For instance, if someone massacres, it is said: *qattala fulânun yuqattilû taqtîlan fa-huwâ muqattil*. The one who kills only once, is called *qâtîl*, but the one who massacres, *qattâl*. *Tawhîd*, with respect to its meaning, has two aspects: One is related to the *ibdâ'* of the *mubdi'* ... and the other to the act of the *mu'min* (believer) who is a *muwahhîd*. With respect to the aspect related to the *ibdâ'* of the *mubdi'*, *tawhîd* necessitates a *muwahhîd*

(unifier) who is the agent of *wâḥid* (*al-fâ'il lil-wâḥid*) and a *muwaḥḥad* (unified) which is the object (of the *muwaḥḥid*) in the sense of *wâḥid*. And the *wâḥid* is used in many ways, such as:

i) A *wâḥid* is *wâḥid* by virtue of the finiteness of its unit (*dhât*) towards the sides by which it separates itself from others, such as the bodies of sensible things. In this respect, it deserves to be called *wâḥid*. And its limitation towards the sides and the comprehension of its limits, all this shows that this *wâḥid* is contingent.

ii) A *wâḥid* is *wâḥid* in the sense that it is given a specific meaning which is not found in others, such as the property of the magnet in attracting iron. In this respect, it deserves to be called *wâḥid*. And its specification with this meaning, with the exclusion of the others, necessitates it to be contingent.

iii) A *wâḥid* is *wâḥid* in the sense of essence (*'ayn*), such as the essence of whiteness, the essence of blackness, the essence of a substance and the essence of a thing. In this

respect, all of them deserve to be called *wâḥid*. And the fact that this *wâḥid*, in its existence, depends on the existence of someone other than who precedes it, and that its existence does not detach itself from its existence, being always with it, as long as it has an essence within existence, necessitates its being contingent.

iv) And the *wâḥid* is *wâḥid* in an absolute sense. The absolute *wâḥid* betrays its essential "pairedness (*izdiwâj*)", which consists of the *waḥdah* (oneness, unity) and its receptacle.

All these aspects (of *wâḥid*) necessitate that the *wâḥid* is absolutely contingent. When it is established that the *wâḥid* is absolutely necessarily contingent, then it necessitates that the *tawḥîd*, which means "making *wâḥid* (*fi'l al-wâḥid*)" which latter pronounces the contingency of its (own) essence, does not befit the glory of the *mubdi'* ... Thus the *mubdi'*, may He be sanctified, is *muwaḥḥid* in the sense that He is the *mubdi'* of *wâḥid* and *aḥad*.

As to (the aspect of) *tawḥîd* related to the *mu'min* who is a *muwaḥḥid*, does not mean that he "makes *wâḥid* (*yaf'alu al-wâḥid*)", rather, it changes from its previous meaning,

which is "making *wâhid* (*fi'al-wâhid*)" to another one. As when the particle "*'an*" is used with the verb "*raghiba*" its meaning changes (from the previous one). For instance, when it is said: "*raghiba fulâhun 'an al-shay'*" means "so-and-so disliked the thing", but the "*raghiba*" alone means contrary to it (i.e. to like). Thus the meaning of *tawhîd* of the *muwahhid* (in the case of the *mu'min*) is to divest the *muwahhad* from a certain meaning. As in the sense of isolating (*tajrîd*) or separating (*ifrâd*) a thing from another thing, it is said: "*wahadtu al-shay'a 'an al-shay'* (I isolated a thing from another thing)".

When *tawhîd* (in this case) means divesting the *muwahhad* from a certain meaning, as we mentioned, and divinity is a necessity whose existence cannot be repudiated and the fact of the agency (*fâ'iliyyah*) is a power which cannot be negated, and from among the things falling under existentiation, from the Instaurated Intellect (*al-'âql al-ibdâ'î*) to the Emanated Intellect (*al-'âql al-inbi'âthî*) -- there is that which possesses the highest degree of knowledge, beauty, power, light, might, grandeur, nobility and sublimity, such as the Intellect, the precursor (*sâbiq*) in the existence; and there is that which is below it in rank, such as the successor (*tâlî*) in the existence, and so on till what is

below them from the world of nature, and what it contains till the human intellect at the end -- it is not impossible for an ignorant to think that the divinity lies in some of them. Each of these things (under existentionation) because of the subsistence of the traces (of creaturehood) in it, bears witness against itself that it is not God, then from that proposition it follows that the *tawhîd* which means to divest the *muwahhîd*, which because of the subsistence of the traces in it bears witness against itself that it is not God, from divinity and to negate it from it and to isolate it from it and sustainership (*rubûbiyyah*) and what is related to it, is the act of the *mu'min* who is a *muwahhîd*, so that by that *tawhîd* it may be established that the divinity belongs to someone else. As it is known from the things which fall under the existence, there are things which have no intermediaries opposite to those which have intermediaries, such as blackness and whiteness which have intermediaries, such as redness, yellowness, etc. The things which have no intermediaries, they as such, have two sides, two states and two aspects. That is to say, when one of the two sides is negated by that negation, the other side is established, such as eternal and contingent. They do not have intermediaries between them, when eternity is negated from a thing, contingency becomes inseparable

from it. And like substance and accident which have no intermediaries between them, when the characteristic of substance (*jawhariyyah*) is negated from a thing, the characteristic of accident (*simat al-ʿaraḍ*) becomes inseparable from it. Then it is not imaginable that there is an intermediary between the Lord (*rabb*) and the vessel (*marbūb*), or between the *mubdiʿ* and the *mubdaʿ*, as we have explained the meaning of our saying: The *ibdāʿ* is the essence of the *ibdāʿ*, in the book *Râḥat al-ʿaql*. Then the *muʾmin* is a *muwaḥḥid* in the sense that he divests the *muwaḥḥad*, who is the *mubdaʿ*, from the divinity, as he finds the trace of *ibdāʿ* and the subjects and predicates in itself. Thus the Prophet ... said: "Al-*muʾmin muwaḥḥid wa-Allâh muwaḥḥid* (The believer is a *muwaḥḥid* and God is *muwaḥḥid*)".

Again the meaning of the multiplicity which is necessitated by our saying that "tawḥīd stands in two aspects" is: either with respect to the *fard* (Single), may He be exalted, ... which is the *ibdāʿ* of multiplicity, which is multiple singles (*afrād*) and units (*âḥād*), or with respect to the *muʾmin*, which is divesting all these numbers and singles from the divinity, one by one.

And then, first we will tersely show the truth contained

in our saying, that the *fard* is the cause of *wāḥid*, according to the capacity of the epistle, even though we have explained it in our books. We say that the existence of all those things which are the essence of the first effect (*al-ma' lûl al-awwal*) is from the essence of the cause, which is the effect and the effect is the cause (*hiya huwa wa-huwa hiya*). by virtue of the effect in its existence being from the element of the cause. And it is the nature of the effect that nothing is granted to and nothing exists in it, except what its cause itself has poured forth over it, for what exists in the effect exists in the cause out of which the effect came into existence. For if the existence of what exists in the effect were not in the cause, it would have been impossible to grant the effect that which did not exist in its cause. For instance, fire which is the cause of heating in what adjoins it, had the heat not been existing and subsisting in the essence of the fire, it would not have been found in what adjoins it. And how can a thing grant a thing from itself while the field of its element is empty of it? Or, how can it bestow a thing while the bones of its existence are worn out?

When this is the case, we thought to investigate whether the *fard*, which is the cause of the numbers, can from its

essence, indicate the ranks of countable things, or not. We found it, by virtue of what is hidden in it, such as, the letters, their conjunction, their disjunction, their signs, their kinds, their multiplication, their calculation, that it comprises and indicates the entire ranks which God has originated and instaurated. And the ranks in arithmetic are twelve, even though in form they are nine, vis-a-vis the existents. This is the form of twelve ranks hidden in the *fard*

And corresponding to those kinds are the letters of "lâ ilâha illâ Allâh" which show the *ḥuqûd*, over whom the light of oneness pours forth, and upon whom are based the heavens and the earth and what they contain. As we have drawn in this picture so that they may be viewed with the sense. ...

The brilliant proof of what we have said in this regard is the existence of the seven letters, vis-à-vis the lords of the cycles, through whom and through what is poured forth over the souls from them, the purpose of the spiritual form which is created in their cycles, becomes complete. If you calculate their numerical values according to the calculation of the *jummâl*, they stand vis-à-vis the days of the sun in one revolution, which are three hundred sixty

five days; the result of the multiplication of the rank four into rank seven stands vis-á-vis the mansions of the moon in one revolution, which are twenty-eight mansions; the result of the values of the letters of the fourth rank according to the calculation of the *jummāl* stands vis-á-vis the numbers of the lords of *ta'yīd* from the *ḥudūd* of every cycle, which are fifty one and the result of the multiplication of the letters of the seventh rank into itself, together with the number of the *ḥudūd* of every cycle, except the supreme of them which is one, stands vis-á-vis the names of God ... which he who counted them entered paradise, and which are ninety nine names.

Had we not chosen brevity and decided that proximity does not befit the epistles, we would have similarly expounded these ranks and numbers with which the abundance of the oceans of the friends of God, may peace be upon them, in sciences and the subtlety of the deduction of their followers from them, specifically and generally, would have been conceived. But this we have left so that the one who thinks on it may have happiness in every moment and the one who reflects on it may renew for him a good deed in every instant from what shines to him from the wonders of wisdom.

Thus it is evident that in the *fard*, by virtue of its being the cause of the *wâḥid*, are contained the ranks of all the countable (lit. that which fall under the number) existents and that the *tawḥîd* with respect to God is the *ibdâ'* of the *wâḥid* and units (*âḥâd*) and with respect to the *mu'min* is to divest the divinity from the units.

We say that the community, due to its deviation from the lords of guidance and due to relinquishing the injunctions of obedience, it does not reach (even) the remotest end of the ways of *tawḥîd*, except a few who follow the friends of God, the Exalted, in His earth, may peace be upon them. Therefore, the one whom they worship with their descriptions of and belief in Him, is not searched for except (in) the one who exists and falls under origination (*ikhtirâ'*) and His essence is comprehended by the power of *ibdâ'*. When the One Whom they worshipped is originated and over-powered, then their *tawḥîd* is short of that by which they would deserve the garden of paradise and its felicity and falls short of that by which they can enter the garden of eternity and dwell in it.

And how can they reach the eternal blessings while the prerequisite of attaining them is to reach their source. It is unimaginable that a traveller may reach peace,

pleasures, bounty and blessings in a desired abode while he is miles away from it. Nay, "Verily, the wicked will be in the hell" (LXXXII:14). And indeed the negligent are in excruciating punishment. "Say: Shall We inform you who will be the greatest losers by their works. Those whose effort goes astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they do good work. Those are they who disbelieve in the signs of their Lord and in the meeting with Him. Therefore their works are vain, and on the Day of Resurrection We assign no weight to them" (XVIII:103-05). God has refused to pour forth His light except over one who surrenders to His friends and enters the house of His worship through its gate; one who made his *tawhid* to divest His instaurated things from (divinity) and his worship is surrendering to His friends; Whose obedience is his purpose and Whose disobedience his object of fear. And he knows that this world is the abode of tribulation whose star never falls and it is a dwelling of humiliation whose screw never turns. Its delights have to come to an end and what is loved from it is going to perish; its children are bound to extinction and mankind among them to resurrection (lit. gathering and dispersing). We ask God ... for help to attain peace from its ruses and to take a share from its benefits. May God make us and the community of the believers among the righteous and

sincere servants and unite us with our pure lords in the paradise (*ḥaẓīrat al-quds*) and in the vicinity of the Lord of the worlds.

I completed this epistle with the praise of God; the High, and with the blessing and peace upon the pure Prophet Muḥammad, the revered and righteous, and with the peace upon the one who is true to his word, 'Alī, the legatee, and the imāms from their progeny, the intercessors of their followers and the genera of their species. May the peace of God be upon all of them and the best of peace and greetings upon the *qā'im* among us, al-Manṣūr Abū 'Alī Imām al-Ḥākim bi-Amr Allāh, the Commander of the faithful. (With the praise of God and His help the Brilliant Epistle is completed).

APPENDIX III

Al-Risālah al-Durriyyah (M.K.Husayn Edition)

In our translation of the *Risālah* we have followed the readings of the manuscript (Tübingen DC 1258). Most of the variants are also confirmed by the manuscripts (Ismailia Association, Karachi, H. Corbin Collection). The following list should be sufficient for the purposes of the present thesis.

صفحة	سطر	
١٣	٢	عنه
	٣	ينفض
١٤	١٠	فدفع
١٥	٥	البذرة
	٨	اب ولله
	٩	ما كان
١٦	٣	شكروا الله
١٧	٩	مفعول الموحدين
٢	٢	الضمير
	٨	سفع
٢١	٤	الفرديّة
٢٢	٧	التفضيل
	٩	مدان تفضيله يقتل
	١٠	مقتول

التوحيد يقتضى	١ يقتضى	٢٣
واحد	٢ للواحد	
حز الحدي	٩ حزر الحدي	
يكون الواحد واحد	٥ يكون واحد	٢٤
التوحيد الذي هو	٩ التوحيد هو	
فيه انه ليس باله	٢ انه ليس	٢٤
الرش	٣ الموحث	٢٧
يوجبها	١١ توجبها	
المعدل	٢ المعدلات	٢٩
لا يوجد	٣ يوجد	
فوجدناه	٧ وجدنا	٣٠
الموجودة. وهذه صورة المراتبة	١١ الموجودات	
الاشياء المستكنة في الفرد		
نور الوحدة ما صورنا وهذه الصورة	١٣ نور الوحدة	
ليعاني بالحس		
(اراء اصحاب)	١ ما د	٣٣
إلا آحاد	٢ الآحاد	
الحظ	٦ النظر	٣٤
جميعنا	٧ جميعا	
اتباعهم وانما ناس انواعهم	١١ اتباعهم	

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