'IBN TUFAYL'S "HAYY IBN YAQZAN"

AN ANALYTIC STUDY.

by

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A thesis
presented to McGill University
in fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Arts
in
Islamic Studies

The Institute of Islamic Studies
McGill University

Montreal, Quebec, 1987

ABSTRACT

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Title of Thesis: Ibn Tufayl's 'Hayy ibn Yaqzan' An analytic study

Department: The Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University.

Degree: M.A.

This thesis aims to understand Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* as a unit and to explore the literary and philosophical aspects of the book. Earlier studies have generally tended to support one particular aspect at the expense of the other. The study also proposes to ascertain the extent to which *both* the literary and philosophical modes need to be seen as essential to the understanding of the risalah. To this end, we examine the statements of major critics as well as the main issues and themes of the risālah. We also try to show how Ibn Tufayl tackles the warring elements in the Muslim *weltanschauung* and presents through his risālah, a mild confrontation between religion and society.

Another question that the risālah raises is the extent to which it might be considered mystical and philosophical. We have compared the risālah to some of the

works of Ibn Sinā, al-Suhrawardī and *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* attributed to Ibn Hawshab Mansur al-Yaman in order to trace the mystical/symbolic elements as well as to confront the issue whether the risālah should be considered a *récit d'initiation*, in which the components of the allegory, the myth, the philosophical romance and the treatise have been combined.

RESUME

Auteur:	Parveen Hasanali
Titre de la thèse:	'Hayy ibn Yaqzān' d'Ibn Tufayl: une étude analytique
Département:	L'Institut des Etudes Islamiques de l'Universite McGill.
Niveau:	M.A

Cette thèse a pour but de comprendre *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* d'Ibn Tufayl comme une unité et d'explorer les aspects littéraires et philosophiques de ce livre. Les études antérieures ont généralement eu tendance à soutenir un aspect particulier au dépens de l'autre. Notre étude se propose aussi d'établir jusqu'à quel point les deux modes, litteraire et philosophique, sont essentiels pour comprendre la risālah. A cette fin, nous examinons les proposition des principaux critiques ainsi que les points importants et les thèmes de la risālah. Nous essayons aussi de montrer comment Ibn Tufayl adresse les élements antagonistes dans le *weltanschauung* musulman et comment il présente à travers sa risālah, une confrontation légère entre la religion et la société.

Une autre question que la risālah soulève est jusqu'à quel point on peut la considérer comme une oeuvre mystique et philosophique. Nous avons comparé la

risalah avec quelques oeuvres d'Ibn Sīnā, al-Suhrawardī et *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām*, attribué à Ibn Hawshab Mansūr al-Yaman, afin de trouver les eléments mystiques et symboliques ainsi que pour savoir dans quel mesure la risālah doit être considérée comme un récit d'initiation dans lequel les composants de l'allégorie, du mythe, du roman philosophique et du traité sont combinés.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to especially thank my supervisor Dr. Hermann Landolt, for his constructive criticism and his valuable suggestions. Dr. Landolt spent many hours meticulously reading through the thesis and discussing the issues. I am also grateful to him for his keen interest in my work and his constant encouragement.

I would also like to thank the Institute of Islamic Studies and its library staff, especially Salwa Ferahian. I am grateful to the Institute of Ismaili Studies for providing the greater part of the finances required to complete the M.A., and the Institute of Islamic Studies and the Student's Office of McGill University who also provided me some finances for my research.

Among those people who have helped me in different ways, my teachers, family and friends, I would like to thank Dr. J. Morris for introducing me to Islamic thought; Inara Hasanali and Abdul Aziz Shamsuddin for their support and understanding, Steve Mellier and Gulzar Lakhani.

TECHNICALITIES

The system of transliteration that has been utilized in this thesis generally adheres to the one that is employed by the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. We have used the Spanish/Anglicized term 'Almohad' instead of the Arabic *al-Muwaḥḥidūn* (the Unitarians). We have also preferred to use Absāl in the text of the thesis rather than Asal, which is found in some variant manuscripts, except in the case of a direct quote, whose author utilises Asal. The word 'risālah' has been treated as a part of the English context in which it is used and has not been italicized although it has been transliterated.

We have used the following abbreviations in the thesis to indicate the particular edition of the risālah to which we have referred.

GM -- Goodman's English translation, first published in New York, 1972.

LGAR -- L. Gauthier's second revised Arabic edition published in Beirut, 1936.

Arabic and other foreign words as well as those words on which extra stress has been placed have been italicized. Words, such as 'orthodox' which holds an ambiguous meaning and 'encounter' which has a specialized or technical meaning, are enclosed within quotation marks when such an emphasis is required. Frequently used foreign loan-words such as 'the Almohads' or anglicized Arabic nouns such as 'Mālikite' are not italicized. Titles of books have also been italicized. After the first reference to a work in a footnote, we have generally used a shorter title. We have also abbreviated frequently cited periodicals etc. as given below:

AS	Arabian Studies.
ASQ	Arab Studies Quarterly.
EB	Encyclopedia Brittanica.
EI	Encyclopedia of Islam, 1st edition.
EI^2	Encyclopedia of Islam, 2nd edition
EP	Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
ER	Encyclopedia of Religion.
ERE	Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
Eranos	Eranos Jarhbuch.
GAL	Geschichte der Arabischen Literatur.
Isl.	Der Islam.
IBLA	Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes.
IC	Islamic Culture.
IQ	Islamic Quarterly.
JAL	Journal of Arabic-Literature.
JAOS	Journal of the American Oriental Society.
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies.
JRAS	Journal of Royal Asiatic Society
RIEEI	Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islamicos.
RSO	Rivista degli Studi Orientali.

PHILOSOPHUS AUTODIDACTUS

SIVE

EPISTOLA

ABI JAAFAR,

EBN TOPHAIL

DE

HAI EBN YOKDHAN.

In quâ

Oſtenditur quomodo ex Inferiorum contemplatione ad Superiorum notitiam Ratio humana aſcendere poſſit.

Ex Arabicâ in Linguam Latinam verſa.

Ab EDVARDO POCOCKIO A. M.

Ædis Chriſti Alumno.

OXONII,

Excudebat *H. Hall* Academiæ Typographus. 1671.

Figure 1: Titlepage and frontispiece of E. Pococke's edition (1671). "The self-taught philosopher..., in which it is shown how the human reason can ascend from contemplation of the Lower world to knowledge of the Higher world."

An Account of the

ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY,

Shewing

The *Wisdom* of some *Renowned* Men of the East;

And particularly,

The profound Wisdom of *Hai Ebn Yokdan*, both in Natural and Divine things;

Which he attained without all Converse with Men, (while he lived in an Island a solitary life, remote from all Men from his Infancy, till he arrived at such perfection.)

Writ Originally in *Arabick*, by *Abi Jaapher Ebn Tophail*;

And out of the *Arabick* Translated into *Latine*, by *Edward Pocok*, a Student in *Oxford*;

And now faithfully out of his *Latine*, Translated into *English*:

For a General Service.

Printed in the Year, 1674.

Figure 2: Titlepage of the first English translation (1674) by G. Keith.

Figure 3: Frontispiece to the Dutch translation (1701) entitled *Het Leven van Hai Ebn Yokdhan.*

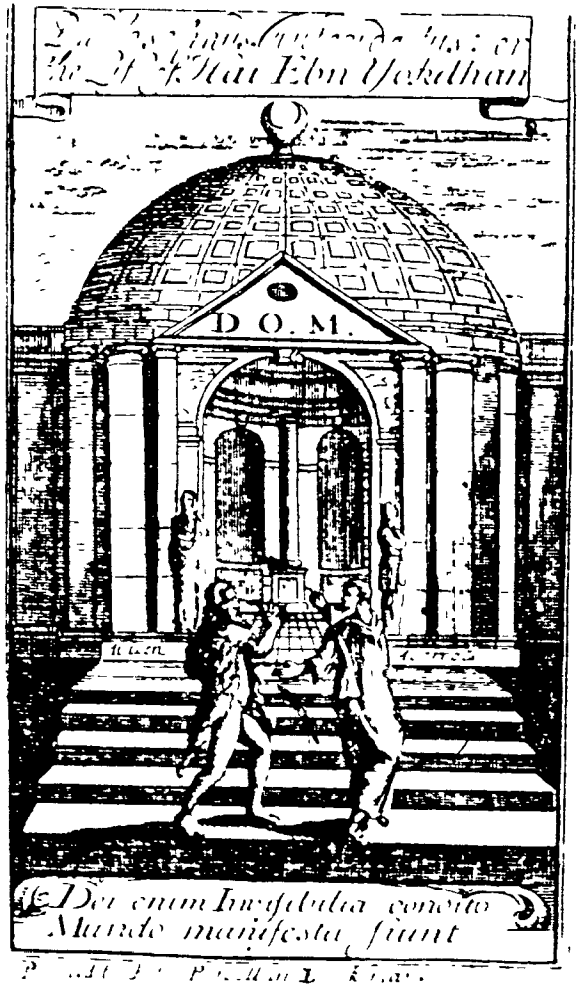


Figure 4: Frontispiece of S. Ockley's English translation (1701).

The Improvement of

HUMAN REASON,

Exhibited in the LIFE of

Hai Ebn Yokdhan:

Written in *Arabick* above 500 Years ago, by *Abu Jaafar Ebn Tophail.*

In which is demonstrated,

By what Methods one may, by the meer **Light of Nature**, attain the Knowledg of things **Natural** and **Supernatural**; more particularly the Knowledg of GOD, and the Affairs of another Life.

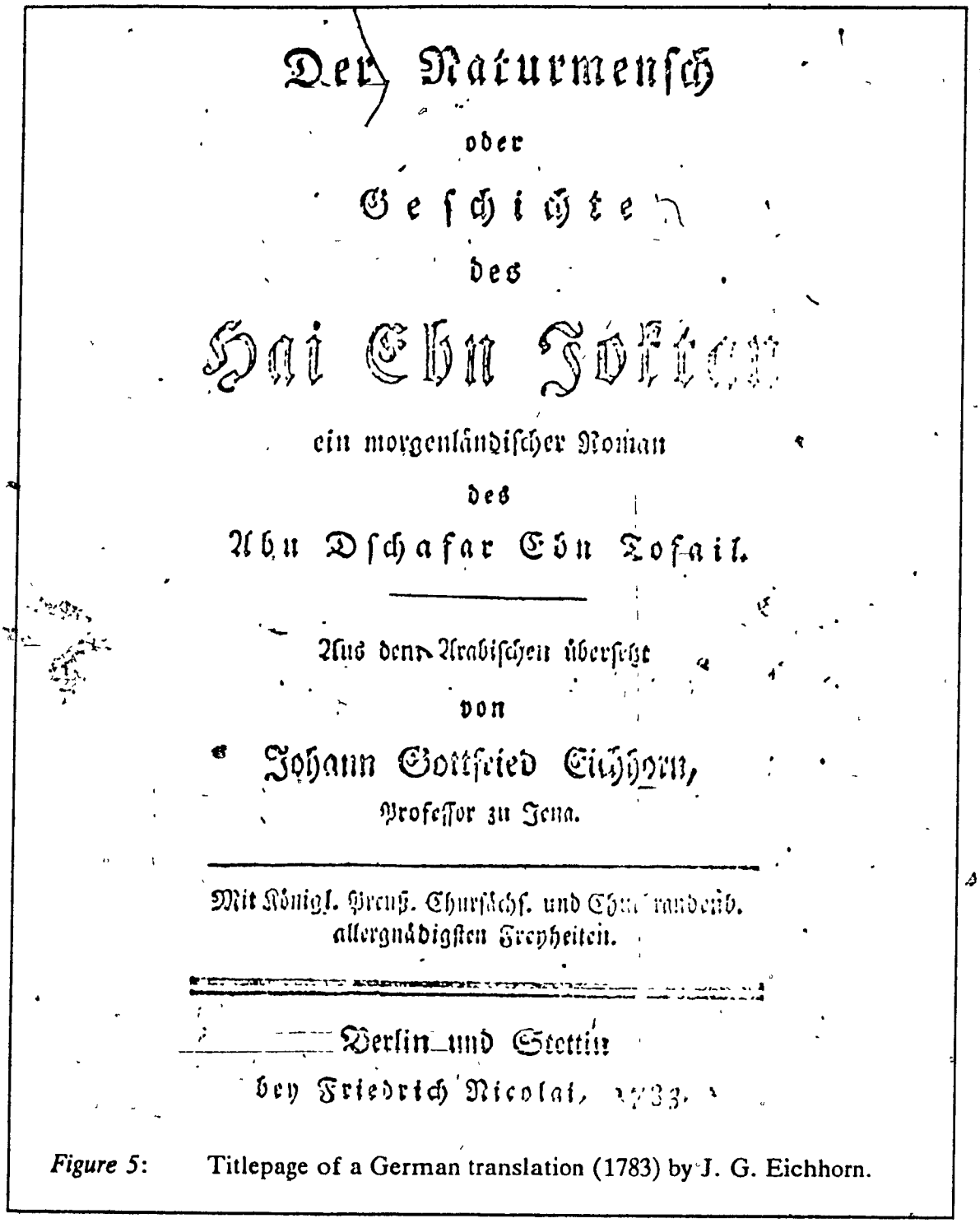
Illustrated with proper FIGURES.

Newly Translated from the Original *Arabick*, by *SIMON OCKLEY*, A M. Vicar of *Swavesey* in *Cambridgshire.*

With an APPENDIX,

In which the Possibility of Man's attaining the True Knowledg of GOD, and Things necessary to Salvation, without **Instruction**, is briefly consider'd.

LONDON Printed and Sold by *Edm. Powell* in *Black-friars*, and *J. Morphew* near *Stationers-hall* 1708.



Der Naturmensch

oder

Geschichten

des

Hai Ebn Jokdan

ein morgenländischer Roman

des

Abu Dschafar Ebn Tofail.

Aus dem Arabischen übersetzt

von

Johann Gottfried Eichhorn,

Professor zu Jena.

Mit Königl. Preuß. Churfächs. und Churbrandenb. allergnädigsten Freyheiten.

Berlin und Stettin

bey Friedrich Nicolai, 1783.

Figure 5: Titlepage of a German translation (1783) by J. G. Eichhorn.

Figure 6: Frontispiece to A.S. Fulton's (1929) revised English translation.

Figure 7: Title page of the Arabic edition by F. Sa'd (1978).

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Chapter I

IBN TUFAYL AND HIS WORKS

1.1 The Problem posed in the thesis

Ibn Ṭufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān*[1] is one of those works which form an arch between Eastern and Western Medieval Islam It was written in a period when Islamic philosophy was in full bloom, under the Almohads (524-667, 1130-1269). Yet, the questions that it raises and the issues that it evokes are to a great extent, left unaddressed till today The reasons for such obscurities are many and we shall briefly deal with them here.

Firstly, the information regarding Ibn Tufayl, as with many other medieval philosophers and mystics, is minimal. We have some indications of the influential role that he played in the political milieu of his time It is important for us to discern this role, since the brief sojourn of the Almohads has been a host to several contradictory notions.

The Almohad Movement began under Ibn Tūmart (d ca 524/1130) who claimed to be the *Mahdī* and utilized the role of the Messiah to engender the faith of the Berber population With the rulers, 'Abd al-Mu'mīn (525-559, 1130-1163) and Abu Ya'qub Yūsuf (558-580, 1163-1184), the emphasis shifted to the literal acceptance of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah Speculation was certainly not the manner in which the masses spent their time and was reserved for an elite Thus, there was a small circle around the ruler who ignored the official doctrine of the Almohads and enjoyed a *relative* freedom to speculate. These circumstances must have influenced the writing of the risālah, which on the one hand emulates the mystical experience, outside the day to day routine, while on the other hand, it appears to advocate a passive acceptance of the *sharī'ah* The restrictions in expression and the necessity of diplomacy is also seen

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[1] The full title of the work is *Risalah Hayy ibn Yaqzan fi asrar al-hikmat al mashriqiyah* henceforth referred to in short as *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* or the risalah in the text of the thesis

through various incidents, such as the burning of the *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* under the Almoravids and the exile of Ibn Rushd (d. 545/1198) by Abū Yūsuf al-Mansūr (580-595, 1184-1199).[2]

The second problem is related to the form and content of the risālah under study. Here is a risālah, one might say, which uses the form of a story and facetiously deals with various subjects such as science, religion, society, asceticism and philosophy. How seriously can one study it as philosophy or as literature? Is it viable or even permissible to perceive its relevance to Western thought of the 17th-19th century without endangering its original impulse? To what extent can one see it from a particular viewpoint? How does one know what the crux of the author's argument is and how does such a consideration effect the appreciation and understanding of the risālah?

Thirdly, How far does the risālah mirror the image and the events of Ibn Tufayl's times and to what extent was he influenced by his predecessors?

These are some of the issues that we hope to clarify in the course of our study We have noticed a tendency in many of the earlier works to lay emphasis on a particular aspect of the risālah, at the expense of others. In a work like *Hayy ibn Yaqzān,* which is structured on the different phases in the protagonist's life, there is enough material to deal with just one aspect The advantage of such an approach may lie in its specificity; yet the value of such specificity is lost, when it contradicts with the rest of the text, and

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2 al-Marrākushī, *Al-Mu'jib fī talkhīs akhbār al-Maghrib,* ed. Muhammad Sa'īd and Muhammad al-'Arabī al-'Alamī (Cairo Matba'at al-Istiqāmah, 1949), pp. 306-307. *Cf.* M. Arkoun, "Ibn Tufayl ou le philosophe dans la cité almohade," *Les Africains,* VI (1977), 266-68; reprinted as "Présentation d'Ibn Tufayl," in *Pour une critique de la raison islamique* (Paris: Edition Maisonneuve et Larose, 1984), pp 327-348. *Cf.* L. Gauthier, *Ibn Roshd* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948), p. 18

the preference of such an aspect can lead to a misinterpretation of Ibn Tufayl's philosophy. Hence, we have geared ourselves to a study of the text as a *unit* comprising of a number of smaller units or motifs and their relation to the main matrix.

The thesis is divided into 5 chapters: In this Introductory chapter, we briefly explicate the problem posed in the thesis and indicate the sources and the methodology undertaken Further, we have put together all the biographical details available regarding Ibn Tufayl, his life and works.

Chapter II, is a study of the critical corpus available on the risalah and the methods which have been undertaken by the major critics of the risalah

Chapter III is a descriptive analysis of the risālah It is intended as a premise for the analyses of the major themes of the risālah in Chapter IV

In Chapter IV, we examine in some detail the *genre* to which the risalah belongs We compare the use of the genre by Ibn Tufayl with some of the tales by Ibn Sina (d.428/1037), al-Suhrawardī (d 587/1191) and *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulam* attributed to Ibn Hawshab Mansūr al-Yaman, in order to see the extent to which the risalah might be considered an *initiatory narrative* Further, we briefly examine the justification of the definitions of the risālah as 'allegory', 'myth', 'philosophical romance' and 'philosophical treatise' The major issues that are raised in the risalah are also seen from the literary and philosophical modes in order to ascertain the extent to which Ibn Tufayl contributes to each of these modes.

In the Concluding Chapter, we summarize the problems raised and inferences drawn from our study We also give a brief survey of the afterlife of the risalah, and its role as a mirror which reflects a critique of his philosophical predecessors

1.2 The sources utilized

We have based our study on the text of the risālah, primarily on the English translation by Lenn Evan Goodman.[3] The Arabic text that we have used is the revised 1936 edition by Léon Gauthier, which was prepared on the basis of various early manuscripts of the risālah.[4] We have also used G. N Atiyeh's partial translation of the risālah whenever necessary.[5]

We have compared the risālah to Ibn Sīnā's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* and *Salāmān and Absāl*, the mystical treatises of al-Suhrawardī and *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* attributed to Mansūr al Yaman[6] in order to examine the points of conjunction and the differences and also the manner in which each of these authors utilized the genre.

Our other major historical source of information on Ibn Tufayl and his risālah have been historical works, bibliographies and catalogues such as the ones by al-Marrākushī, Ibn Abi Zar', Ibn al-Khatīb, al-Maqqarī, Ibn Khallikān, Ibn Khaldūn, Hājji Khalīfah, Casiri, Derenbourg and Dozy.[7]

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3 L. E. Goodman, trans., *Ibn Tufayl's 'Hayy Ibn Yaqzān'* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972).

4 L. Gauthier, ed and trans., *Hayy Ben Yaqdhân, roman philosophique d'Ibn Thofail* (2nd ed.; Beirut Imprimerie Catholique, 1936), pp. XXII-XXIX, *idem. Ibn Thofail, sa vie, ses oeuvres* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1909), pp. 43-45

5 George N. Atiyeh, trans., "Hayy, the Son of Yaqzan," in *Medieval Political Philosophy*, ed Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (Toronto: The Free Press of Glenco, 1963), pp. 134-162.

6 See H. Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne ou l'Esoterisme et Le Verbe," *Eranos*, XXXIX (1970), 41-142 Henceforth referred to as "L'Initiation Ismaélienne". W. Ivanow, "The Book of the Teacher and the Pupil," in his *Studies in Early Persian Ismailism*, The Ismaili Society, Series A, no 3 (Leiden: E J Brill, 1948), pp. 85-113.

7 See below under Ibn Tufayl's biography for the details of these works

We have also given a critical history of the risālah and have organized it according to the approaches that appear to have been utilized by the critics of the risālah. In our examination of the risālah, we have also illustrated through footnotes and in the text of the thesis, any points made by critics which are in concurrence or in opposition to our analysis.

The risālah has an extremely interesting and widespread history of translations.[8] It was translated in the 14th century into Hebrew and commented upon by Moses ben Josué Narboni.[9] The Hebrew version was translated into Latin in the 15th century by Pico della Mirandola.[10] The Arabic text was also edited and translated into Latin in 1671 by Edward Pococke[11] who made it famous in the West and subsequently, the

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8 See Appendix B for a list of translations Badawi remarks in *Histoire de la Philosophie en Islam* (Paris J Vrin, 1972), II, 721. "A l'exception, peut-être, de *Mille et une Nuits,* aucun ouvrage arabe ne fut traduit en autant de langues et autant de fois que *Hayy ibn Yaqzān.*"

9 Solomon Munk, *Mélanges de philosophie juive et arabe* (1859, rpt. Paris Librairie philosophique J Vrin, 1955), p. 417 *Cf* G Vajda, "Comment le philosophe juif, Moïse de Narbonne, comprenait-il les paroles extatiques *(šatahat)* des soufis?" in *Actas del Primer Congreso de estudios Arabe e Islamicos,* Cordoba, 1962 (Madrid Commite Permanente de Estudios Arabe e Islamicos, 1964), 129-135. Whether Moses was, in fact, the translator of the early Hebrew version of the risalah is conjectural but we do know him to be the author of the commentary in Hebrew, written in 1349 The Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris has two complete manuscripts (no 913 and 916) of Narboni's commentary with the Hebrew title, *Yehi'el bin Ouriel. Cf* Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* p 48, no 3

10 Giovanni Pico, Count of Mirandola (1463-1494) was a wellknown advocate of Renaissance humanism He is best known for his *Oration on the dignity of man* which was published posthumously. Pico was deeply interested in Hebrew and Arabic philosophy. One can see that Ibn Tufayl's risalah would have attracted his interest, since it dealt with the issue of human dignity which is independent of external power, which was a part of Pico's philosophy Pico's version of the risalah remains unedited *Cf* C. A Nallino, "Filosofia "orientale" od "illuminativa" d'Avicenna?" *RSO,* X (1923-25), p 434

11 *Philosophus autodidactus sive Epistola Abi Jaafar ebn Tophail de Hai ebn Yokdhan, in qua ostenditur, quomodo ex inferiorum contemplatione ad superiorum notitiam ratio humana ascendere possit* (Oxford Excudebat H Hall Acadimae typographus, 1671) The editor and translator, E Pococke Jr (1648-1727) was the son of the well-known British Orientalist of the same name (1604-1691) Since we will not be making any reference to the father, we have simply referred to this translator of the

Latin translation was the source of many of the translations into other western languages In the 18th century, there were two German translations and a translation into Dutch [12] More recently, in the 20th century there also have been new translations into English, French, Spanish, Russian, Dutch, Persian and Urdu The Spanish translation by Pons Boigues is a study of the risālah as a *psychological novel*[13] and includes a detailed introduction by the Spanish literary historian of the 19th century, Menendez y Pelayo We have obtained and examined as many of the early translations as we possibly could, although we have not used these as a basis of our study.

1.3 A biographical sketch

A presentation of the meagre biographical details on Ibn Tufayl that have come down to us would help in the summarization of his life and works Abū Bakr Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Malik ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammed ibn Tufayl al-Qaysī was born in the first decade of the 6th century hijrah *(ca.*504/1110) in a small town called Wādī Ash

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risālah as E. Pococke and have not appended Jr. to his name See also M. Nahas, "A Translation of *Hayy b Yaqzān* by the elder Edward Pococke (1604-1691)," *JAL*, XVI (1985), 88-90 Nahas indicates in this article that the elder Pococke had begun an English translation of the risālah some years before the Latin translation and Arabic edition was published by his son.

12 *Het leeven van Hai ebn Yokdhan, in het arabisch beschreeven door Abu Jaaphar ebn Tophail, en uit de latynsche overzettinge van Eduard Pocock In het nederduitsch vertaald*, tr into Dutch from Pococke's Latin translation (Amsterdam: J Rieuwertsz, 1672) The second edition was published in 1701 See also *Der von sich selbst gelehrte Weltweise*, tr. into German from Pococke's Latin edition by George Pritius (Frankfurt, 1726) *Der naturmensch, oder, Geschichte des Hai ebn Joktan; ein morganlandischer Roman des Aby Dschafar ebn Tofail*, tr. from the Arabic by Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (Berlin: F. Nicolai, 1783)

13 Pons Boigues, trans , *El Filosofo Autodidacto* (Zaragoza. Tip de Comas Hermanos, 1900); see also the other Spanish translation with the same title, from Pococke's Latin version by A G. Palencia (2nd ed.; Madrid: Imprenta de Ediciones Jura San Lorenzo, 1948)

14 See Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-Qirtās (Annales regum Mauritaniae)*, ed and trans into Latin by C J Tornberg (Upsala: Litteris academicis, 1843-1846), Vol I (Arabic text),

(Guadix) in the province of Granada [14] He was also called Abu Ja'far,[15] al-Andalusī, al-Qurtubī,[16] al-Ishbīlī,[17] and was known in Latin Scholastics as Abubacer [18]

p. 130. This work was translated into French by A Beaumier, *Roudh el-Kartas Histoire des souverains du Maghreb et annales de la ville de Fès* (Paris Imprimerie Impériale, 1860), p 292 R. P A Dozy, ed, *Scriptorum Arabum loci de Abbadides* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1852), II, p. 171. This extract on Ibn Tufayl from Ibn al-Khatīb's *Ihātah fī akhbār (var. tarīkh) Gharnātah* informs us that he was from Guadix but does not give his year of birth Similarly the records by Ibn Abī Zar' and al-Marrākushī do not mention the year in which Ibn Tufayl was born It is assumed that he must have been born within the first decade of the 12th century since we know him to be junior to Ibn Bājjah and at least about twenty years older than Ibn Rushd (b. 1126), since he excuses himself as being too old to attempt the commentaries on Aristotle, which he passes over to Ibn Rushd and also since he needed to retire from his post of personal physician in 1182 due to his old age and which he hence commissions to his younger contemporary, Ibn Rushd

15 According to the Oxford manuscript used by Pococke The name appears on the title page of Pococke's bilingual edition cited above

16 Casiri, *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana Escurialensis* (Madrid Osnabruck Biblio, 1760-1767; rpt 1969), I, p. 203 *Cf* H Derenbourg, *Les manuscrits arabes de l'Escurial* (rprt, Hildesheim, New York George Olms Verlag, 1976), Vol I, pp 492-493

17 Ibn al-Khatīb, *Ihātah fī akhbar al-Gharnatah*, ed Muhammad 'Abdullah 'Unan (Cairo Dār al-Ma'arif bī Misr, n d), I, p 193 Hajji Khalifah, *Kashf al Zunun 'an Asāmī al-Kutub wa-al-Funun (Lexicon bibliographicum et encyclopaedicum)*, ed and trans into Latin by G Flugel, 6 vols (Leipzig Oriental Translation Fund, 1835-1872), III, p 393, no 6115

18 It appears that the risalah was not known at firsthand to Christian Scholastics Ibn Tufayl was known to Latin Scholastics through the comments made by Ibn Rushd in his commentaries on Aristotle Ibn Rushd refers to him in his Middle commentary on Aristotle's *Meteorologica* (Bk II) Ibn Rushd, while speaking of the habitable and inhabitable zones of the earth, notes that his friend Ibn Tufayl had written on this subject One wonders whether Ibn Tufayl actually wrote a book on the subject or whether this is a reference to the first part of the risalah -- as Gauthier and Munk also suggest -- where Ibn Tufayl briefly speaks of the habitable and inhabitable zones on the earth before he embarks on an account of Hayy's spontaneous generation Ibn Rushd also alludes to Ibn Tufayl in his commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima III* and the *Metaphysics*, which we will discuss further In any case there are no extant commentaries by Ibn Tufayl on these subjects See also Munk, *Mélanges*, p 412 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail*, p 2, 26, 57 E Renan, *Averroès et l'Averroisme* (3rd ed , Paris Calmann-Levy, 1886), p 227 H Z Ulken, *La Pensee de L'Islam*, tr G Dubois, M Bilen and the author (Istanbul, Fakulteler, 1953), p 530. He is referred to as *Abubakerus* by Casiri, *Bibliotheca*, II, p 76 Mahmoud Kassem says that Thomas Aquinas attributed Ibn Tufayl's mystical theories to Ibn Rushd, suggesting that the Christians were aware of Ibn Tufayl's works but attributed them to Ibn Rushd See M Kassem, *Théorie de la connaissance d'après Averroes et son interpretation chez Thomas D'Acquin* (Alger Etudes de documents, 1978), pp 206-207

He studied Medicine and Philosophy among other subjects and his early education probably occurred at Seville and Cordova. Regarding his administrative career, we know that he first served as Secretary to the Governor of Granada [19] In 549 (1154) he was appointed as Secretary by the founder of the Almohad Dynasty, 'Abd al-Mu'mīn and served under one of his sons, Abū Sa'īd, who then was the governor of Ceuta and Tangiers [20] In 558 (1163), 'Abd al-Mu'mın was succeeded by Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf who appointed Ibn Tufayl his personal physician. He probably also was the Prime Minister to the Almohad monarch, Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf[21] but scholars differ on this point and we are unable to ascertain it due to the paucity of historical details We do however know that Ibn Tufayl played an important role in the Almohad court, especially under Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf's rule. The Sultan would sometimes spend days and nights with Ibn Tufayl probably discussing religious and political issues [22] Abū Ishāq al-Bitrūjī (Alpetragius), who was a disciple of Ibn Tufayl, refers to him as *Qādī.*[23] We do not know whether this is rendered merely out of respect or whether Ibn Tufayl was a trained, if not practicising Jurist

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19 See al-Maqqarī, *The History of Mohammedan Dynasties in Spain,* trans. Pascual de Gayangos, 2 vols. (London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1840-1843), I, p. 335, no.35; Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* p. 5; Munk, *Melanges,* p 410, no 3.

20 Ibn Abī Zar', *Rawd al-Qirtās,* vol I, pp 126-127

21 The early historical text that makes a mention of Ibn Tufayl as the *Wazīr* is Ibn Abī Zar"s, *Roudh el-Kartas,* p. 292 See also al-Maqqarī, *The History of Mohammedan Dynasties,* Vol 1, p 335.

22 al-Marrākushī, *al-Mu'jib,* p. 240 It was translated into French under the title *Histoire des Almohades d'Abd el-Wāh'id Merrākechi* (Alger Adolphe Jourdan, 1893), p. 208.

23 Alpetragii Arabi, *Planetarum Theoria* fol 4, recto This treatise by al-Bitrūjī was translated from Arabic into Hebrew in 1259 The Hebrew version was translated into Latin in 1528 and was published in Venice in 1531. *Cf.* Casiri, I, 396 Cited by Pierre Duhem, *Le Système du Monde* (Paris. A Hermann et fils, 1914), II, pp 146-147

In 578 (1182), due to his old age, Ibn Ṭufayl retired from the post of Personal Physician and was succeeded by his protégé, Ibn Rushd. However, he retained his post as *Waẓīr*.[24] Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf died in 580 (1184). Ibn Ṭufayl continued as a court dignitary under his successor, Abū Yūsuf al-Mansūr.[25]

Ibn Ṭufayl died at Marrākush in 581 (1185) and was buried with due honour. His burial was presided by the reigning Almohad monarch, Abu Yusuf al-Mansur.[26]

The closest historical records on the biography of Ibn Ṭufayl are available in the account of a contemporary Almohad historian, 'Abd al-Wahid ibn 'Ali al-Marrakūshi (b 581/1185) who knew Ibn Ṭufayl's son, Yahya and had personally seen many of his works in manuscript form. These are the earliest concrete records available. Al-Marrākushī includes Ibn Ṭufayl within the intellectual circle that surrounded the ruler, Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf and classifies him as "a Muslim philosopher, expert in all branches of philosophy, who had studied the works of many of the truest philosophers." Further, al-Marrākushī mentions having "seen works of Ibn Ṭufayl's both on natural and metaphysical philosophy to name only two areas of his philosophical competence."[27]

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24 Ibn Abī Zar', *Roudh el Kartas*, p. 292. G. Quadri, *La Philosophie Arabe dans l'Europe Medievale*, trans. from Italian by R. Huret (Paris: Payot, 1947), p. 165. I. Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail*, p. 19, no. 1.

25 With Abū Yūsuf al-Mansur, there is return to the 'orthodoxy' in accordance with the Mālikite *madhab*. The Mālikite dominance is perceived in different spheres, as in Abū Yūsuf al-Mansūr's decision to exile Ibn Rushd. *Cf.* Arkoun, "Ibn Ṭufayl," p. 268.

26 Ibn al-Khatib, *Ihâtah*. This passage is cited by R. P. A. Dozy in *Scriptorum Arabum*, II, p. 171. See also Ibn Abī Zar', *Roudh el Kartas*, p. 292. Casiri, *Bibliotheca*, vol. II, p. 76.

27 al-Marrākushī, *Histoire*, p. 207.

Abū Ishāq al-Bitrūjī, an astronomer of 13th century and a student of Ibn Ṭufayl dedicates a work to his master and credits him with having promulgated original astronomical theories which refute Ptolemy's theories on cycles and epicycles.[28] Ibn Rushd, in his Middle Commentary of the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle (Book XII) also says that Ibn Ṭufayl proposed excellent theories on the hypothesis drawn by Ptolemy on the structure of the celestial spheres and the movement of stars from which one could profit greatly.[29] However, we have no evidence of the existence of any works by Ibn Ṭufayl in the field of astronomy except for the passing detours that he occassionally takes in the course of the risālah.

Ibn Ṭufayl was well versed in the sciences of his times. He was reportedly, a poet, a physician, an astronomer, a jurist, and a politician. Ibn al-Khaṭīb reports in the *Iḥāṭah*, that Ibn Ṭufayl was a prominent scholar who was deeply interested in oriental philosopy *(al-ḥikmat al-mashriqīyah).*[30] He was also an expert physician, whose poem on medicine (*Urjūzah al-ṭibbīyah*) along with the earlier works of Ibn Sīnā presented the perfected study on medical cures.[31] It is also reported by Ibn al-Khaṭīb that Ibn Ṭufayl had written two volumes on medicine.[32] Ibn Rushd also mentions a dialogue between himself and Ibn Ṭufayl on the former writer's *Kullīyāt* which is recorded by Ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a in his section on Ibn Rushd.[33]

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28 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail*, p 21, no. 5, pp 28-29. no. 3 Duhem, *Le Système du Monde*, II, p. 146. Munk, *Mélanges*, p. 412.

29 *Cf.* C. Genequand, *Ibn Rushd's 'Metaphysics'* (Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1984), pp 54, 176-179 L. Gauthier, *Ibn Roshd (Averroès)*, pp. 123-124. Badawi, *Histoire*, p 719

30 See Dozy, ed. *Scriptorum Arabum*, p. 171

31 *Ibid*, p 167 Also cited by Cāsiri, *Bibliotheca*, II, 76.

32 *Cf.* Casiri, *Bibliotheca*, II, 76

33 Ibn Abī Usaybi'a, *'Uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā'*, ed. A. Muller (Cairo: Matba'ah al-Wahabiyah, 1882), II, p 78 *Cf* E. Renan, *Averroès et l'Averroïsme*, p 455

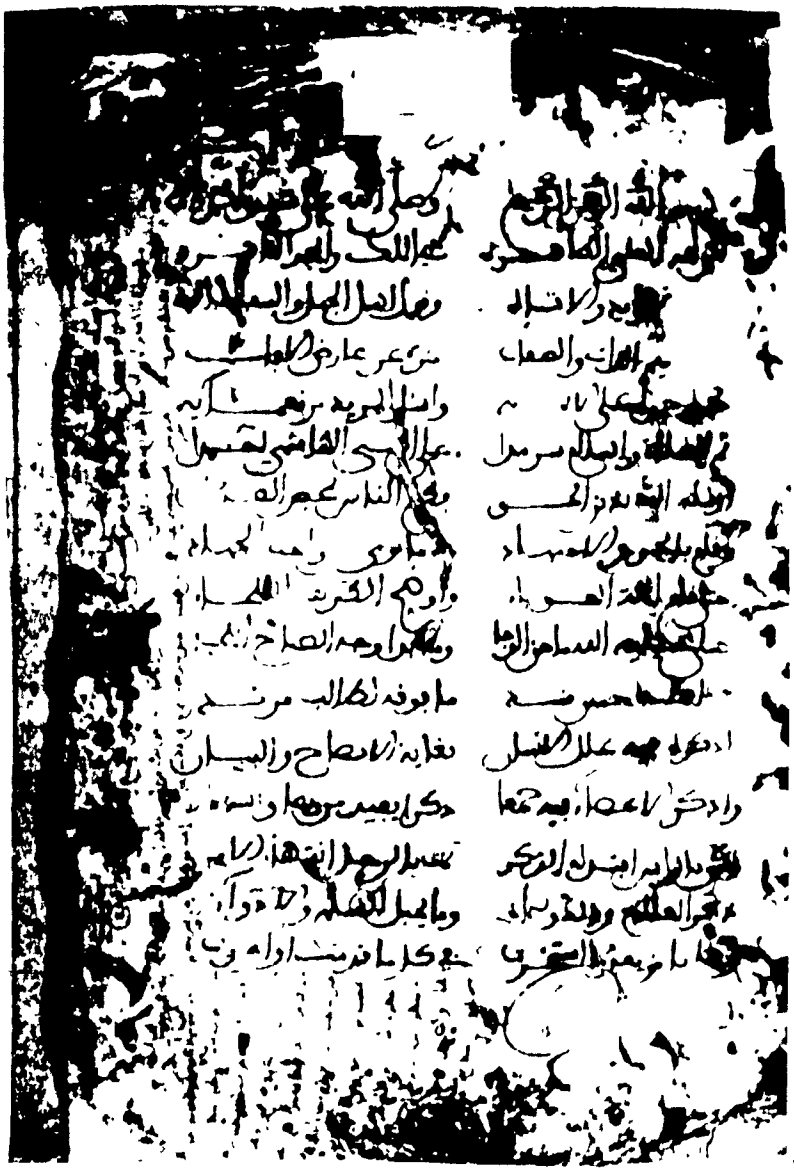

Figure 8: The first page of the manuscript of a Medical poem by Ibn Tufayl. The poem has been studied by Dr Mahmūd al-Hāj Qāsim Muhammad, "Qirā'h fī Urjūzah Ibn Tufayl fī al-tibb," *Ma'had al-Makhtūtat al-'Arabīyah* (Kuwait, 1986)

Some of Ibn Tufayl's poetry have survived the rigours of time. These include the medical poem and some other historical, mystical and political pieces. The manuscript of the medical poem was discovered in the Rabāt Library The poem, according to

Sarnelli, bears the title *Ragaz ta'wīl fī 'ilm al-tibb,* and is said to contain "more than seven thousand verses"[34] Casiri[35] also mentions two poems in the Escurial collection, one of which he refers to as *De Simplicibus Medicamentis* and the other being a political piece entitled *De expugnatâ urbe (Cabezon).* The latter poem has been cited by Ibn al-Khatīb as *Qafsah*[36] Al-Marrākushī also quotes excerpts from three poems by Ibn Tufayl in *al-Mu'jib.*[37]

Ibn Rushd in his commentaries on Aristotle's *De Anima* is critical of the opinion of Abū Bakr with regard to the criticism on Alexander's theory of Imagination If the Abū Bakr in question is Ibn Tufayl, this might suggest the existence of another work which quite probably is lost and of which we have no other reference. Ibn Rushd's allusion could also be to the section in the Prologue where Ibn Bājjah is criticized for being unable to understand the mystic's method and for deriding the experiences of the mystic as a product of their imagination[38] However, Ibn Tufayl makes no direct reference in the risālah itself to the imagination being able to replace the passive

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34 T. Sarnelli, "Primaute de Cordue dans la médicine arabe d'Occident," in *Actas del Primer Congreso de Estudios Arabes y Islamicos;* Cordoba, 1962 (Madrid Commité Permanente de Congreso de Estudios Arabe e Islamicos, 1964), p 451. It has recently been examined by Dr Mahmūd al-Hāj Qāsim Muhummad, "Qirā'ah fī Urjūzah Ibn Tufayl fī al-tibb," *Ma'had al-Makhtūtāt al-'Arabīyah,* XXX (Jan-June, 1986), 47-81

35 *Bibliotheca,* II, p. 76

36 See Dozy, *Scriptorum Arabum,* p. 171. This poem has been studied by García Gomez See also Garcia Gomez, "Una qasīda politica inedita de Ibn Tufayl," *RIEEI,* I°(1953), 21-28

37 al-Marrākushi, *Histoire,* pp. 208-209 These have been translated into English by Pastor, *The Idea of Robinson Crusoe* (Watford. The Gangora Press, 1932), pp. 81, 85-86

38 Ibn Rushd, *Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis De Anima Libros,* ed. F Stuart Crawford (Cambridge, Mass.: The Medieval Academy of America, 1953), p. 398. This reference is to Ibn Rushd's commentary to Book III of Aristotle's *De Anima,* summa I, cap I, comm 5. *Cf* P. Duhem, *Le Système du Monde,* II, pp. 531-532 GM 98, LGAR 9-10

intellect in its role of receiving intelligibles. Further, it is also questionable whether the reference is to Ibn Bājjah or Ibn Tufayl, both of whose *Kunyah* was Abu Bakr.[39]

Al-Marrākushī also mentions having seen the autographed copy of a treatise *Kitab al-Nafs (The Book on the Soul)*[40] amongst other metaphysical works by Ibn Tufayl. Gauthier considers the Escurial Manuscript of our *risalah,* recorded by Casiri under the title *Kitāb Asrār al-hikmat al-mashriqīyah,* as possibly being identical with the *Traité de l'Ame (i.e. Kitāb al-Nafs)* mentioned by al-Marrakushī [41] However, this contradicts the statement by al-Marrākushī that he had seen the autographed copy of *another* work by Ibn Tufayl, which he calls *Kitāb al-Nafs,*[42] besides the risalah *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* Hence, there is no doubt that al-Marrākushī, who was a contemporary historian and had access to the autographed versions of Ibn Tufayl's works which belonged to his son, Yahyā, was speaking of two different books

We would like to examine here Gauthier's own basis of argument with regard to this issue Casiri comments -- after the entry prior to the risalah which is a work by Ibn Miskawayh -- that here is "another book following the same argument" and proceeds to give the Arabic title as *Asrār al-Hikmat al-Mashriqiyah* It is true that Casiri implied that the *Asrār* is of a mystical nature and is concerned with the soul, but he does not refer to it as a *"Treatise on the Soul'*, nor does he indicate it through a Latin translation of the title. The issue of Ibn Tufayl's *Kitāb al-Nafs* does not arise in Casiri's catalogue He merely confirms the existence of a manuscript by Ibn Tufayl whose Arabic title reads

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39 Gauthier, *Hayy Ben Yaqdhān,* Appendix iii, pp 121-128 Gauthier thinks that the "Abū Bakr" referred to by Ibn Rushd is Ibn Bajjah and not Ibn Tufayl.

40 al-Marrākushī, *Histoire,* p 207

41 Casiri, *Bibliotheca,* I, p 203.

42 al-Marrākushī, *Histoire,* p 207

ARABICO-HISPANA. 203

1.° Tractatus Philosophicus de Anima, inscriptus *Demonstrationes Metaphysicæ* (1), ubi de Animæ felicitate, spiritualitate, immortalitate disputatur. Auctore luculentissimo nempe Philosopho SCHAMSEDDINO MOHAMAD ALSCHAHRZURI (2) *Persa*, ex urbe *Schabzer*. (3)

2.° Opus Philosophicum de Anima, cui titulus *Lumina* (4), capitibus xx. comprehensum, ubi de Animæ spiritualitate, immortalitate, felicitate, ac facultatibus secundùm Philosophorum principia disseritur. auctore ABU ALI AHMAD BEN MOHAMAD MASCOUIAH (5), de quo Abulpharagius in *Historia Dynast.* pag. 216. hæc verba ,, Fuit & ex illis *Mescouiah Abu Ali* ,, *Alchazen* e Persarum præstantium & ,, nobilium præcipuis, qui feliciter litterarum humaniorum, & scientiarum ,, antiquarum studia conjunxit. Regi ,, *Adadoddulæ Bouidæ* ærarii Præfectus, ,, cui fidem adhibuit, quemque carum ,, habuit. Multi sunt illi in variis scientiarum generibus Libri, necnon Disputationes & Discursus. . Diu vixit, ,, adeo ut fere ad annum quadringentesimum vicesimum Egiræ pertingeret.

[3.° Alter de eodem argumento Liber, sed mutilus, titulo *Sapientiæ Orientalis Arcana* (6), cujus auctor ABU BAKER BEN THOPHAIL *Hispanus Cordubensis*. (7)]

DCXCIV.

Codex literis Cuphicis, ac non una manu exaratus, in quo nimirum habentur.

1.° Commentarius in Opera *Metaphysica* Doctoris FAKHREDDINI RAZAI, inscriptus *Expositio Media* (8). Ubi de Deo, ejusque Attributis, de Anima, &c. Scholasticorum more disputatur Auctor Commentarii ABDALLA MOHAMAD BEN JOSEPH ALSENUSI ALHASENI (9) *Granatensis*, nobilissimus per ea tempora Philosophus qui, ut ipse fatetur, operi manum ultimam imposuit *Marochi* anno scilicet Egiræ 875. Christi 1470. (10)

2.° Ejusdem Commentarius in *Dialecticam* insignis apud Africanos Philosophi (11) EBN ARPHA. (12)

3.° Ejusdem *Compendium Logicæ*, idque luculentum (13)

Is vero liber exaratus est feria 6. die 25. mensis Scheuali anno Egiræ 948. Christi 1541.

4.° Ejusdem *Epitome Theologiæ Scholasticæ*. (14)

Tom. I. Cc 2 Ejus-

(1) *Titulus*: كتاب الرموز والامثال اللاهوتية في الانوار المجردة الملكوتية

(2) *Auctor*. للشيخ شمس الدين محمد الشهرزوري

(3) *Initium*. قال العبد ...

Finis ... دم دم له الامر ...

(4) *Titulus*. كتاب الانوار ...

(5) *Auctor* لابي علي احمد بن محمد مسكويه

(6) *Titulus*. اسرار الحكمة المشرقية

(7) *Auctor*. لابي بكر بن طفيل الاندلسي

(8) *Titulus* شرح السنوسي الوسطى في علم التوحيد

(9) *Auctor*: شرح عبد الله محمد بن يوسف السنوسي الحسني

(10) *Initium*: ولما من الله ...

Finis. ... الدوام

(11) *Auctor* ابن عرفه

(12) *Initium*. ...

Finis. ...

(13) *Initium*. ولما كان علم ...

Finis. ...

(14) *Initium*. هذه كلمات ...

Finis: ...

Figure 9: An extract from Casiri's "Bibliotheca," Vol I, p. 203.

Asrār. Gauthier suggests it to be a specific idea put forth by Casiri:

> Casiri dans son catalogue des manuscrits de l'Escurial, publié sous le titre de *Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana,* mentionne (t.I, p. 203, no.DCXCIII) le manuscrit mutilé d'un *Traité de l'Ame* et qui a pour titre *Asrār al-hikmat al-Mashriqīyah (Secret de la Sagesse Orientale)*[43]

43 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofaïl*, p. 32.

By italicizing *Traité de l'Ame*, Gauthier suggests that it is a title and not merely the description of a work. Further, Gauthier always refers to the work written by Ibn Tufayl (i.e *Kitāb al-Nafs)* as the *Traité de l'Ame.* He criticizes both al-Marrākushī and Casiri for being hasty in their statements. It is ironical that Gauthier on the one hand builds up his argument that *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* and the *Kitāb al-Nafs* are the same basing his argument on the fact that the work *Asrār al-hikmah al-mashriqīyah* and *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* are the same[44] while, at the same time he considers that Casiri was hasty in cataloguing this version along with other works on the soul.[45] Gauthier uses the discovery by Codera as an affirmation that the work referred to by Casiri (i.e the *Asrar*) is identical to the risālah and this, he feels is "la preuve directe qui nous manquait";[46] he says further "Cette identification, désormais certaine, ôte aux historiens de la philosophie musulmane le dernier espoir de trouver dans une bibliothèque publique un manuscrit du *Traité de l'Ame* d'ibn Thofaïl."[47] Codera's investigation merely proves that the risālah and the *Asrār* (i e the Escurial Mansucript) are the same, since Casiri himself does not refer to the *Asrār* as the *Kitab al-Nafs* there is no justification for Gauthier to consider that Casiri was referring to it as a *Traite de l'Ame* "In his second edition of the risālah, Gauthier reaffirms his statements.[48]

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44 An observation made by M. Francisco Codera when he compared the risalah and the Escurial Manuscript of the *Asrār* and found them to be identical. M F Codera, "El filósofo autodidacto," *Boletin de la Real Academia de la Historia,* XXVIII (1901) 4-8, cited by Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* p. 35 "Ibn Tufail," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy* ed M M Sharif, 2 vols (Wiesbaden Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), I, 527

45 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* p 34.

46 We are unable to understand how this discovery is linked with Gauthier's "proof" that the *Kitāb al-Nafs* is the same work as *Hayy ibn Yaqzan or al-Asrar.*

47 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* pp 34-35.

48 Gauthier, *Hayy Ben Yaqdhân,* pp. iv-v.

In the same manner, Gauthier accepts and bases many of his arguments on al-Marrākushī's testimony since he (and we) really do not have much choice, in order to create a pensketch of our philosopher but disregards his testimony whenever there exists another possibility which may or may not be any more reliable than the Almohad historian. al-Marrākushī's account, still remains the closest historical record and is also based on the authority of Ibn Tufayl's son.

Al-Marrākushī's authority is also undermined by Gauthier on the grounds that he refers to the risālah *"Hayy ben Yaqdhân* parmi les traités physiques" which exposes "l'origine de l'espèce humaine.." and the historian is ridiculed as not having read "beyond the first few pages of the treatise which deal with the notion of spontaneous generation."[49] It is possible that Gauthier misunderstood what al-Marrākushī meant since Ibn Ṭufayl's usage of the notion of spontaneous generation is not merely to establish 'scientific' principles, but also has a spiritual and metaphysical aspect[50]

The point that we wish to clarify here is that one cannot very easily assert that the risālah and the *Kitāb al-Nafs are* the very same. If the possibility exists, it would be based on surmise rather than evidence. There is no other indication that the two works are identical except for the fact that *Kitāb al-Nafs* is not extant It is quite possible that the work is lost and may not be available, it is even possible that it is the same work as the risālah under study but until we find an early manuscript of the risālah with the title or subtitle, *Kitāb al-Nafs,* one cannot complacently state that the two works are

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49 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* pp. 39-40, 63-64.

50 Ibn Sīnā, in his *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān,* also points out that the science of physionomy is the focal point from where the mystical experience begins ā hence it is also possible that our present day perceptions of these sciences differ from the earlier understanding in which time they were imbued with a sense of the sacred. See H. Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital,* trans W. R. Trask, Bollingen Series LXVI (New York Pantheon Books, 1960), p. 138

identical, as is generally the case in the present state of scholarship inspite of the fact that over seventy five years have passed since Gauthier conducted his research

We do have further details regarding Ibn Ṭufayl's philosophy as reflected in his risālah, through the account of the 14th century historian, Lisān al-dīn ibn al-Khaṭīb who also belonged to the same region, in the *Rawdat*. This work will be discussed further in chapter two of the thesis.[51]

We have briefly summed up the historical details about Ibn Tufayl's life and works which basically cover the period from whence he began his professional career but we do not know anything at all regarding his childhood or his early education. The only person who is referred to as his teacher is Ibn Bājjah[52] However, whether Ibn Bajjah actually taught Ibn Tufayl or whether he was Ibn Tufayl's teacher in the sense that Ibn Ṭufayl was greatly influenced by Ibn Bājjah's notion of the "solitary" remains conjectural.[53]

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51 Ibn al-Khaṭīb, *Rawḍat al-Ta'rīf bi'l-Hubb al-Sharīf*, 2 vols , edited by Muhammad al-Kattānī (Beirut: Dār al-thaqāfah, 1970) Dr. Landolt drew our attention to this work, whose relevance with reference to Ibn Tufayl's risālah has hitherto not been studied. We would also like to thank Dr Landolt for kindly going through the Arabic text of the *Rawdat* with us, especially the excerpts relevant to our study.

52 al-Marrākushī, *Histoire*, p 207.

53 See below, no. 122, ii

Chapter II

A CRITICAL HISTORY OF THE RISALAH

The diverse layers of the risālah have had an effect on the manner in which it has been perceived in recent scholarship. It has become the norm to address the book from a particular aspect and the fact that the work touches so many fields of knowledge lends itself to such approaches. This also allows the critic to expound and apparently prove his *particular* thesis. This may be done by laying emphasis on any one phase of Hayy's life, as being the most important to the understanding of the risalah. Even though such an approach allows an indepth study of a particular aspect of the risalah, the ability of seeing the work as a whole is often lost

Since Ibn Tufayl moves from one mode of experience to the other, the relation between the movements is tenuous If the critic is unable to perceive the risalah as a single unit belonging to different modes, the result is an appreciation of a particular aspect, quite often at the expense of another As we have noted earlier, the wide spectrum of Ibn Tufayl's awareness of diverse fields ranging from medicine, philosophy, to geography has resulted in varied responses to the risalah by its critics Unfortunately, we will not be able to analyse all of the critical corpus that is available on the risālah It is our aim to examine those works which may be considered as milestones in the study of risālah, either because these studies have had something new to say or when the author presents a particularly strong and scholarly refutation of an earlier view

In examining the various approaches, we hope to facilitate the process by classifying these approaches by sub-headings and then by the particular author, wherever such a study has been undertaken This classification does not entail one to consider that the critic in question sees the risalah, one might say, as a purely *sociological* or a *sūfi* tract etc The idea of such a classification is to indicate merely

that the main thesis of a particular critic's approach orbits around one of these classifications. This method, we hope, will be made more explicit in the course of the analysis. The relevance of the first *approach* that we will study, i.e. of Ibn al-Khatīb's, is in many ways in contrast to the more recent studies in the critical history of the risālah.

2.1 Ibn al-Khatīb and the approach from within Andalusian Islam

Ibn al-Khatīb may be considered as the first literary critic of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān*. His account of the story in the *Rawdat* has not been given any attention by the critics who have studied the risālah.[54]

Ibn al-Khatīb does not refer to the risālah by name but he gives a summary of it and intimates that the discussion being undertaken is a study of the theories discussed by Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Rushd Further, the concrete points referred to make it quite evident that Ibn al-Khatīb utilized Ibn Tufayl's risālah as the base of this discussion When referring to specific theories, Ibn al-Khatīb speaks in the third person plural and he attributes these theories to Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Rushd[55]

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54 Lisan al-Din Ibn al-Khatīb (d.776/1374) is a brilliant example of versatility. The *Rawdat* reveals the mystical and sūfi facet of this writer who was also a historian, man of letters, stateman and jurist His monumental historical work, the *Ihātah,* which is also one of the important historical sources on Ibn Tufayl, is a long monograph which is divided into two parts, containing the description of Granada and biographies of famous persons There is no complete edition of this work Much of the information on Ibn al-Khatīb is available through the works of al-Maqqarī, in his *Nafh al-Tīb min ghusn al-Andalūs al-ratīb* The first part of this book is an account on the history, politics and literature of the Spanish Arabs which has been edited by R Dozy *et al, Analectes sur l'Histoire et la Littérature des Arabes d'Espagnes par al-Makkari,* ed. R Dozy et al, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Oriental Press, 1967). It has also been partially translated into English by Pascual de Gayangos, *The History of Mohammedan Dynasties, op cit* See also Dozy, ed., *Scriptorum,* pp. 170-172.

55 Ibn al-Khatīb, *Rawdat,* I, p 281. This is of special significance with reference to Ibn Rushd since it reveals that his philosophy was considered in the same light as that of Ibn Tufayl's, as a kind of mystical philosophy. With regard to Ibn Rushd's rational mysticism, see also P Merlan, *Monopsychism mysticism and metaconsciousness* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), pp 17-25. *Cf.* Mahmoud

We summarize herein some of the points which render the *Rawdat* valuable to the study of Ibn Tufayl's risālah. Ibn al-Khatīb makes references in his text to

1. The island in a harmonious clime
2. The notion of spontaneous generation is described in almost the same words as in the risālah although Ibn al-Khatīb refutes this notion himself by declaring that it is quite implausible
3. The manner in which the divine spirit was attached to man and matter was enclosed in the human form
4. The gazelle as foster mother
5. His imitation of animals
6. The vivisection of the gazelle with analogous details
7. The heart as the seat of the spirit
8. The Search for the owner of the spirit i e its Agent *(al-Mu'aththir)*
9. The confrontation of reason and revelation.
10. The soul as the mirror of all forms
11. The tale as an esoteric explication of the story of Adam [56]

The study suffers due to the lack of historical details on Ibn Tufayl's life, but it provides an interesting clue to the manner in which Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Rushd were perceived in the Spanish tradition of Islam and subsequent Islamic thought, as belonging to the same class which we may refer to as "mystical philosophy" which is very different from the way in which Ibn Rushd -- and Ibn Tufayl in recent scholarship -- have been perceived in the West [57]

Kassem, *Théorie de la Connaissance d'après Averroes*, pp. 206-209

56 Ibn al-Khatīb, *Rawdat*, I, pp 281-283.

The study clearly perceived the problem that Ibn Tufayl himself addresses, which is evidenced from the title of the chapter: "Concerning the soundness of the *fitrah* and the possibility of independent learning of the arts and the sciences and to know God with that."[58] Hence it explores the issue as to how reason, aided by natural disposition, can gain knowledge of God outside human inference and how a person, in whom the elements are balanced can be guided to the knowledge of God, due to this primordial disposition *(fitrah)* which exists in his soul, in which knowledge of all things are hidden. It discusses that the possibility of the soul being open by guidance to the knowledge of the Truth is due to its innate nature.[59] The study also directly examines the notion suggested in the risālah, whether prophecy is a necessity in order to know the Truth [60] Hence it confronts the age old issue of the dual modes of knowledge through reason and revelation

Ibn al-Khatib's interpretation of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* as "the esoteric meaning of the story of Adam" lends greater clarity to the esoteric message of the risālah It is an interpretation which has been underplayed by critics and still retains a fresh approach In this sense, the risālah may be seen as a myth which deals with "origins". The story of Hayy is like the cyclical occurrence of the Adamic myth Hence, Hayy represents both the prototype and archetype of Man.

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57 See Arkoun, "Ibn Tufayl," p. 274 Arkoun briefly examines the various cases of critics See further in this chapter under 'Socio-political Approach.'

58 *Rawdat*, I, p 280

59 *Ibid.* p 281.

60 *Ibid.*, p 280.

Through Ibn al-Khatīb's account, we may assume that he had no doubt regarding the authorship of the risālah since he does not mention Ibn Sīnā at all in this context.[61] This work presents the first clear and concise study of the risalah. Moreover, the study, along with the presence of the manuscript and earlier historical accounts by al-Marrākushī could have avoided the mixup regarding the authorship of the risālah.[62]

2.2 The Classical Orientalist approach

Although the immediate reaction to the risālah within the political milieu in which it was written remains an enigmatic and neverending source of speculation, we do know that it was translated about two centuries later into Hebrew and a commentary was written on it by Moses Narboni.[63] The risalah holds a trackrecord in the history of its translation It was edited and translated into Latin by E Pococke, whose Arabic edition and Latin translation became the source of many of the subsequent translations The Latin title, *Philosophus Autodidactus* (The Self Taught Philosopher) became the key phrase by which the risālah was more popularly known in the Europe of the 17th-18th century. It evoked the exciting idea that a man, divorced from tradition and society, could reach the pinnacle of knowledge of all that exists and of God This idea of man as the ultimate victor against all odds was in agreement with the prevailing atmosphere

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61 It is the more surprising that Ibn Khaldun who was inspired by Ibn al-Khatib, was to confuse the two risālah's which bore the same title Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqadimmah: An Introduction to History*, tr F Rosenthal (London Routledge, Kegan & Paul, 1958), II, pp. 371-372 Ibn Khaldun notes that Ibn Sina's theory of spontaneous generation had been alluded to in his *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* Perhaps Ibn Khaldūn picked up this erroneous statement from the account by Ibn Khallikan who thought that the risālah was the Arabic translation of Ibn Sina's Persian version

62 The other possibility is that the risalah did not appear to have made much of an impact on contemporary society because it may have been exposed only to a small group. The Prologue to the risālah is addressed to a friend who is interested in knowing more about the mystical experience (GM 98, I GAR 10-11)

63 See also G. Vajda, "Comment le philosophe juif," pp 129-135 This is an interesting study which shows how Moses sees the risalah as a *sufi* tract in the light of Old Testament thought

of 18th century England and France. The focus on "self-taught" gained admirers amongst the nascent Quaker movement and G. Keith's English translation[64] from the Latin version provoked yet another English translation from the Arabic in which the translator, S. Ockley, included an appendix to clarify and refute "several things co-incident with the Errors of some Enthusiasts of these present Times."[65]

Thus, we find, throughout the critical history of the risālah, a fascination over the *curious* notions that the book addresses, as well as a eulogy on its clarity and poetic beauty.[66] The universal and enduring appeal of the risālah can be surmised through the various translations that have been made of it in diverse languages; through the numerous Arabic editions and through the recent influx of translations and studies in English.

Among the classicists, we would include Solomon Munk and Leon Gauthier as pioneers of a critical approach to the study of the risālah. Prior to these studies, the earlier translations were usually appended an introduction, such as is the case with P. Bronnle's partial translation of the risālah, which is followed by a literary appreciation. We have also noted that Ockley added an appendix to his translation However, this appendix may be considered to be a refutation of the current 'Quaker' view on Christianity, rather than a genuine critical expression Further, such a study does add

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64 *An Account of the Oriental Philosophy shewing the Wisdom of Some Renowned Men of the East and particularly, the Profound Wisdom of Hai Ebn Yokdhan* Except for the italicization of relevant words which emphasized the mystical aspect of the risālah, this book appears to adhere closely to its Latin source

65 S Ockley, trans , *The Improvement of Human Reason Exhibited in the Life of Hai Ebn Yokdhan,* trans into English from the Arabic by S Ockley (London, 1708; rprt 1731, rprt. Zurich George Olms Verlag, 1983), p. 167

66 "The great charm of the book lies in its simplicity and ingenuousness; in its entire freedom from affectation of style; in the transparent lucidity of its exposition, . " P Bronnle, *The Awakening of the Soul* (3rd ed. London J Murray, 1909), p 12

to our understanding of the role that the risālah might have played in the 17th century and later. Undoubtedly, it was familiar, not only to the Quakers but it may have had a key role in the creation of the "Robinson Crusoe" type presented by Daniel Defoe.[67]

2.2.1 Solomon Munk

To Munk belongs the credit of presenting the first detailed study on Ibn Tufayl and his works.[68] Munk summarizes the themes of the risālah, like the problem of unity and multiplicity, the conjunction of the human intellect with the Active Intellect, the issue regarding the eternity or the createdness-in-time of the universe and so on

The chief value of the work is that it marks the beginning of serious scholarship on Ibn Tufayl and makes a definite attempt to garner historical facts Most Encyclopedic articles undoubtedly used Munk and Gauthier as their source of information and quote them almost verbatim. Munk's studies on Ibn Tufayl may not be considered prolific, since he includes him in his larger study of various Islamic and Jewish philosophers Yet, this is the first study which goes to the original sources and performs the arduous task of locating and collecting together the few and widespread historical details from the various sources.

Interestingly, Munk sees Ibn Tufayl as belonging to the class of thinkers called the *Ishrāqīyun.* We will study further the coincidental occurrence of this class of thought, both in Eastern and Western Islam as reflected in the works of Ibn Tufayl and al-Suhrawardī. Munk also discerns quite accurately, the movement towards 'Speculative Mysticism' with Ibn Tufayl as something which definitely verves away from

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67 The socalled repercussions of the risalah in Western literature are discussed further in Chapter 4 under Literary themes The risālah is also briefly alluded by Leibnitz The copious translations into Western languages are another indication of its popularity and possible influence.

68 S. Munk, *Mélanges,* pp 410-418

the direction which had been taken earlier in the *exaltation mystique* by al-Ghazālī.[69]

2.2.2 Léon Gauthier

Beginning with the base laid by S. Munk, L. Gauthier enters into the first detailed study on Ibn Tufayl, in his book, *Ibn Thofaïl, sa vie ses oeuvres,* which was originally presented as a doctoral thesis to the Faculté des Lettres, University of Paris This book was published in 1909. The work is a well researched and erudite study which examines the life, works and sources of Ibn Tufayl. From the historical point of view, it is an excellent source book. However, Gauthier does not support his own statements and judgements at times. This has been earlier examined with reference to the issue regarding the *Kitāb al-Nafs.*

Another issue which has given rise to some debate by scholars such as G.F. Hourani and S S. Hawi[70] is the question regarding *le but* of the risālah. Gauthier was the first critic who drew our attention to the final episode of the encounter between Hayy and Absāl and society, which he considered to be the most important section of the risālah. However, he does not adequately justify why this is so He simply states that quite often in a literary piece, it is the final section that contains the main thrust of the argument In both the cases mentioned above, Gauthier might well be in the right but his argument is certainly weak and the work loses much due to this.

The other issue that has been subject to debate is the "originality" of Ibn Tufayl. In the above mentioned work, Gauthier declares that the originality of Ibn Tufayl lies in his use of the tale, whereas his strength in the field of philosophy lies in the assimilation of the thought of his predecessors. When this issue was later examined by García Gómez

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69 *Ibid.*, p 413

70 G. F Hourani,"The Principal Subject of Ibn Tufayl's "Hayy ibn Yaqzān", *JNES,* XV (1956), 40-46. Hawi's views are discussed below under the 'Philosophic Approach'

who presents a tale which could have been the source of Ibn Tufayl's story.[71] Gauthier is forced to some extent to justify his earlier statements. This results in rather variegated statements regarding Ibn Tufayl's "originality", which has been subject to criticism by modern scholars such as S.S. Hawi [72]

Gauthier literally scales the field and threshes out all historical information regarding Ibn Tufayl, beside locating and examining a number of manuscripts of the risālah. The book is the fundamental historical account which has been utilized by most of the other writers on the risālah. Gauthier added a brief review to his second edition of the risālah in which he responds to some of the criticism levelled against him.

2.3 The Sociopolitical Approach

The sociopolitical issue is dominant in the risālah whether it is perceived as a philosophical ideal i.e. a Utopia, or in conformity with Farabian notions or a commentary on and a reaction against the current political state of the Almohads The three authors whose approaches we analyse here have, to a great extent, taken up these three angles in their analyses:

2.3.1 W. Montgomery Watt

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71 For the discussion of this myth and its relation to the risalah, see below in Chapter 4.

72 This is basically a battle of words. Hawi conveys the same thing as Gauthier but indirectly See *Islamic Naturalism and Mysticism* (Leiden E. J Brill, 1974), pp 12-13

73 W. M Watt, "Philosophy and Theology under the Almohads," in *Actas del Primer Congreso de Estudios Arabe e Islamicos;* Cordoba 1962 (Madrid Comité Permanente de Congreso de Estudios Arabe e Islamicos, 1964), 101-128

We begin with an analysis of the article by W. M. Watt, entitled *Philosophy and theology under the Almohads,*[73] in which the author poses the question:

> How far do the philosophical doctrines of Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Rushd reflect aspects of the social structure under the Almohads regime?[74]

Watt finds it necessary to examine the teachings of the founder of the Almohad Movement, Ibn Tūmart in order to ascertain the political and intellectual atmosphere.

Watt notes the existence of various divergent religious, philosophical and theological groups within the pattern of the Almohad society, such as the Ash'arite and the Mu'tazilite theologians and the Neoplatonic philosophers. The influence of these three groups, Watt feels, are reflected in the teachings of Ibn Tūmart who was in agreement with the Ash'arites in his opposition to *tajsīm* (anthropomorphism), in sympathy with the Mu'tazilites and the Neoplatonic philosophers on the question of God's attributes. In other words, Ibn Tūmart launched an attack against jurists and theologians for their "crude theological interpretations of these terms; "for their reliance on *zann* (opinion) that was based on *taqlīd* (unquestioning adoption) and which implied a subjectivity to Ibn Tūmart.

Further, Watt speculates that the attack against the dominant Mālikism was possibly "the revulsion of feeling from and [sic] old ruler towards a new one?" or "an assertion of Berber independence in their struggle against the Arabs?"[75] Watt explains the strength of the Mālikites by the fact that the Almohads lacked the intellectual vitality to produce a new corpus of law.[76] Hence, Watt notes the existence of two rival groups of intellectuals under the Almohads. the intellectual supporters of the Almohad

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74 *Philosophy and theology*, p. 101.

75 *Ibid.*, p 102.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 103.

movement, some of whom were sympathetic to philosophy, and the Mālikite jurists.

Passing from the historico political introduction to philosophy, Watt examines Ibn Tufayl's and Ibn Rushd's role in section two and three of the article. Watt feels that the political role of Ibn Tufayl must be kept in mind in order to understand his philosophical romance, where the characters of the romance stand for the different classes: *Hayy* represents pure philosophy or "a philosophical system which was in the main Neoplatonic and which culminated in mystical ecstasy". Hence, Hayy represents that small group of philosophers in Spain, in which one would include Ibn Bajjah *Absal (Asāl)* represents rational theology [77] He is an adherent of the *batin* and a believer in *ta'wīl.* "This could be taken as a rough description of the official theology of the Almohad movement as it is expounded in the creed *('aqida)* of Ibn-Tumart" The only (I) point on which Absāl differs from the Almohads is that he seeks solitude, in which case, Watt adds, Ibn Tufayl is not describing an actual tendency but is assimilating the attitude of rational theology to that of philosophy, since philosophy had moved away from active participation since Ibn Bājjah's time [78] Otherwise, the pure philosophy of Hayy is identical to the rational theology of Absal *Salaman* represents the jurists and traditional religionists who contribute to the well-being of the state

The issue that Watt wishes to examine is the relation between popular and philosophical religion The study is a general examination of the relation between philosophy and theology However, there is no strong basis for the comparison between Ibn Tūmart and Ibn Tufayl Further, there is the attempt to fit in the characters

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77 Certain manuscripts of the risalah bear the name Asal, rather than Absal Consequently, some editors such as Gauthier have preferred to retain the name 'Asāl', as being a departure on Ibn Tufayl's part from the original 'Absal' referred to Ibn Sīnā. We have however, preferred to use 'Absal', except in the case of a direct quotation

78 *Ibid.*, p. 104.

into the preconceived types that presumably existed in the contemporary society of the time. We will discuss further how there is a great deal of 'typification' in the risālah but it is not quite as facile as Watt makes it appear. For example, he limits Absāl to a representative of the Official doctrine of the Almohads, which is quite unacceptable, if we wish to remain faithful to the text. The point which distinguished Absāl from the rest of the literalist society in which he lived, was this need for solitude, for contemplation and for the discovery of the inner meaning of the law and this cannot be waived aside as "the *only* distinguishing factor".

The value of the study is that it suggests the importance of seeing the risālah in a sociopolitical context This approach had been earlier suggested by Gauthier and is brought into focus by Watt. We will see how it is dealt with further by M. E. Marmura and M Arkoun

2.3.2 Michael E. Marmura

In the essay, "The Philosopher and Society: Some Medieval Arabic Discussions,"[79] Marmura presents the two contrasting views of the relation of the philosopher versus society that have been accepted in Islamic philosophy.

1. The pseudo Socrates image of the philosopher as alien to the social fabric and
2. The Platonic view of the Philosopher-king transmitted by al-Fārābī

Marmura notes that neither of these views can be treated exclusive of the other even though they are in marked contrast with each other [80] One of the root causes for these two contrasting views rests on the confusion that exists in the assimilation of Socrates/pseudo-Socrates, i.e. Diogenes image of the philosopher Moreover, the

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79 Michael E. Marmura in *ASQ*, Vol I, no.4 (1979), 309-323; *idem.*,"The Islamic Philosophers' Conception of Islam," in *Islam's Understanding of Itself*, ed. R. G. Hovannisian and S. Vryonis Jr. (California: Undena Publications, 1983), 87-102

80 *"The Philosopher and Society,"* p. 309.

second view, which is understood to be generally Farabian, sometimes gives way to the first view, even in the thought of al-Fārābī himself.

Using these two views as a premise, Marmura explores the theme of the philosopher as a stranger to society, discussed by al-Fārābī, elaborated by Ibn Bajjah and evoked by Ibn Tufayl. With reference to Ibn Tufayl, Marmura notes

> Ibn Tufayl seems at first sight to go beyond both Alfarabi and Ibn Bajja to proclaim, in effect, that the philosopher even in a virtuous, religious, but conservative traditional society has neither a place nor a function The philosopher must retire to his "island" in perfect seclusion More than this, Ibn Tufayl seems to go beyond the popular Islamic image of Socrates who, though an outsider to society, remains its outspoken critic. *But whether in fact this is what Tufayl is saying, depends on how we read him.*[81]

The whole discussion on Ibn Tufayl and his relation to Farabian concepts in Marmura's study is related to how we read Ibn Tufayl and in fact, on how we read al-Farabi also By this we mean that Marmura questions some of the principles understood to be an essential part of al-Fārābī's political philosophy on the basis of an intertexual reading of the works of al-Fārābī For example, he elucidates how the notion of legal rulership *(al-ri'āsah al-sunniyah)* is not completely alien to al-Farabi's thought and he cites a passage from *al-Millah al-Fādilah (The Virtuous Religion)* in this context Thus, Marmura notes that according to al-Farābī

> A necessary requirement for establishing a virtuous State is that its first ruler be a philosopher-king who is also a prophet who reveals the divine law. *Subsequent rulers need not always be prophets or even philosopher-kings--atleast, according to one of Alfarabi's treatises*[82]

In this context, we could say that Ibn Tufayl's interpretation appears to have a precedent in the not so well-known aspects of al-Farabi's thought Thus, one might equate Salāmān's rule with the legalrulership alluded to by al-Farabi Marmura raises a further point

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81 *Ibid.*, p. 309 The italicising is mine

82 *Ibid.*, p 313 and no 10

> But what if after the habits of this society become ingrained a philosopher should appear on the scene? Alfarabi does not discuss this contingency, but this, as we shall see, is a question which is suggested by Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy Ibn Yaqzan.*[83]

It is this issue which Marmura addresses that makes the study extremely illuminating with special reference to Ibn Tufayl. He not only examines the extent to which the question had been taken earlier by al-Fārābī and Ibn Bājjah but also clarifies and *suggests* why Ibn Tufayl might have taken the particular approach that he did - of making his philosopher's (i.e. Hayy's) attempts to communicate with Salāmān and his friends abortive and hence having to return to isolation.[84] Marmura also examines the issues on which Ibn Tufayl is concurrent and in opposition to al-Fārābī's philosophy and whether "in the final analysis the story is really a repudiation of Alfarabi's theory of the State"[85] and secondly, whether Absāl's original community can be explained in Farabian terms.

One might say that Ibn Tufayl refutes al-Fārābī with regard to the question of Hayy's isolated existence which "is a negation of the principle that man is a social animal, the principle that underlies the entire structure of Alfarabi's political philosophy"[86] Ibn Tufayl's philosopher does not fit into the moulds created by his

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83 *Ibid*, p. 315.

84 An interesting but speculative issue is whether Ibn Tufayl would have returned Hayy back to the island, had his mission to make the people understand the Ultimate Reality been a success. It is quite easy to declare Ibn Tufayl a cynic and establish this assumption on his 'proisolation' and 'antisociety' leanings which are presumably evidenced by Hayy's abortive attempt. But, we think that in either case, Hayy and probably Absāl would have returned to the island had their mission been accomplished. Ibn Tufayl's purpose is not merely to extoll the virtues of solitude. He would not have added the final episodes had this been the case. Gauthier presents the case for the final episodes being important to the overall tale but is unable to justify their presence. There are many points which show that Hayy's induction into society in no way aids in the betterment of his mystical vision - even the interruption by Absāl who is quite an 'elevated' member of society has a detrimental affect. See also Marmura, "The Philosopher and Society," p. 320.

85 *Ibid.*, p. 320.

predecessors. But Marmura feels that since Hayy's mission is "to a virtuous community, [whose] government [is] by religious law," one would hesitate to refer to him, in Farabian terms, as a "stranger in the world, [who] lives poorly in it, and death for him is better than life."[87]

Further, Marmura feels that although there are many indications in the text such as the excellence of Hayy and his island supporting the argument that Ibn Tufayl was illustrating an exceptional case, this argument is also ultimately unconvincing.[88] Marmura argues that the cause for isolation is presented for a purpose which is not discordant with Farabian principles since it establishes the harmony between religion and philosophy.[89] Another purpose is that such an isolation is not an end in itself but is a means of conveying what is involved in pursuing the mystical path.[90] Further, Marmura feels that isolation as a criterium does not detract from viewing Ibn Tufayl's philosopher in Farabian terms "for philosophers, whether or not engaged in political activity, require isolation. Moreover, not all philosophers for Alfarabi are endowed with political ability. There will be those who will confine themselves to the contemplative life."[91] Neither can the multitude of Salāmān's city "be represented as as Farabian "weeds," a nonvirtuous minority in an otherwise virtuous Farabian city" since we are

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86 *Ibid*

87 al-Fārābī, *Fusūl Muntaza'a*, ed. F. M. Najjar (Beirut, 1971), p. 95. The translation is Marmura's and is cited by him, see p. 315 and n. 20.

88 *Ibid*., p. 321.

89 *The Islamic Philosophers' Conception*, p. 321, p. 313.

90 *Ibid*., p. 323. This point is well-taken. Ibn Tufayl emphasizes that the actual mystical experience is ineffable and that he wishes to "give a brief glimpse of the road ahead" (GM:103) which might encourage his friend, to whom the work is addressed, to attempt to take the path.

91 *Ibid*., p. 323. The point that one might establish by such a comparison is that the whole of Ibn Tufayl's philosophy is not in contradiction with parts of al-Farabi's thought.

speaking of a "virtuous city".. But "the conception of this community is still within a Farabian framework...its religious law is a symbolic copy of philosophical truth and this is a basic Farabian concept."[92] Further, the deliberate elimination of the philosopher-king

> ...is the novelist's device to illustrate yet another cardinal Farabian principle: that the non-philosopher ought not to be addressed in philosophical language....By removing the philosopher-king, the author makes the hero in a dramatic way discover for himself the validity of this principle.[93]

Hence, Marmura shows that "far from being a repudiation of Alfarabi's political thought, the political aspects of this fascinating but enigmatic work are an endorsement of it, a dramatic defense of two of its cardinal principles."[94]

In establishing the relation between Ibn Tufayl's and al-Fārābī's philosophy, Marmura elucidates atypical facets of al-Fārābī While the result is extremely interesting, there are many points on which Ibn Tufayl does not agree with the general political philosophy of al-Farabi Marmura is aware of these yet he seems to disregard them in his general conclusion - somewhat surprisingly, given his otherwise *nuancé* interpretation Absal chooses withdrawal not only because this concession was allowed within the revealed law[95] but also because he was not allowed to choose an ascetic way of life within society, he needed to withdraw from the community because its legal ruler, Salāmān, had forbidden withdrawal from society.[96] We think that the complete failure of not merely the ignorant masses but also the learned elite that surrounded Absāl, point to a sterile spiritual State which by implication is not really

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92 *Ibid*, p 322.

93 *Ibid.*, p 323.

94 *Ibid.*

95 GM:156; LGAR:137

96 GM:163; LGAR.150.

"virtuous".[97] Further, Marmura himself notes that Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Bajjah "were on the defensive, vulnerable to the displeasure of the more religious conservative. This much we can infer from the cautious way they wrote"[98] and this may be the reason why Salāmān's defunct society is fallaciously labelled as "virtuous" by Ibn Tufayl.

The article is well written and shows how Ibn Tufayl's political philosophy was closely aligned to that of al-Fārābī's. It is sensitive to the enigmatic quality of the risālah which makes it prone to varied interpretation that could be supported by arguments. By addressing two such trends of thought such as the isolation of Hayy and the notion of the virtuous states and further, by examining these trends in the light of different approaches, it reveals that the comparison of Ibn Tufayl's thought to that of al-Fārābī's cannot be easily undermined Yet, the study also shows in what ways Ibn Tufayl is different from al-Fārābī - the author makes no attempt to fit Ibn Tufayl into a preconceived mould

2.3.3 Mohammed Arkoun

Arkoun attempts to see the role of the philosopher within society He elucidates this issue through the explicit example of Ibn Tufayl[99] and to an extent Ibn Rushd. Arkoun discusses how these two philosophers lived in a society which was subject to the Almohad ideology and controlled by the doctrine of the *malikite fuqaha'* He also

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97 See T. S Eliot, *Collected Poems,* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963). The metaphor used by Ibn Tufayl reminds one of T. S Eliot's poem, *The Wasteland* in which the myth of the Fisher-king's sterility affects the fertility of his people - One might likewise question whether Salāmān's logocentric approach makes it impossible for his subjects to read between the lines, the possibility for *ta'wil* did exist when Salāmān and Absāl were young friends but with Salaman's rulership, Absal needed to leave the mainland and even an elevated person like Hayy could not influence a single member in Salāmān's island

98 *Ibid.*, p. 316.

99 "Ibn Tufayl ou le philosophe dans la cite almohade," *Les Africains,* VI (1977), 263-287. Reprinted in *Pour une critique de la raison islamique,* (Paris: Editions Larose, 1984), pp 327-348

examines the historical accounts of al-Marrākushī, underlining the points which reflected the intellectual and psychological conditions of philosophical reflection during this period.

Arkoun feels that *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* can be read as the autobiography of Ibn Tufayl as well as a reflection of the problems that a philosopher had to face and the extent to which he could overcome them. Hence, he uses Ibn Tufayl as a case-study to examine the socio-political working of the Almohad *Maghrébine* society. Arkoun feels that Ibn Tufayl's reflection in the main body of the tale and in the prologue, aid in an understanding of the existing climate of the time. He notes that it was a period of cultural paradoxes and the works of Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd and Maimonides contribute to the emergence of a kind of intellectual activity in Western Islamic culture which is distinct from any similar activity that might have occurred in the East [100]

It was a milieu in which one had to be well versed in the application of law of the *Mālikite* creed in order to gain royal favour. Hence, philosophy or intellectual activity was the domain of a very select few who must have had to work extremely hard in order to hold royal favour [101] It was a time when even *Kalām* was considered irreligious. Religion was used merely as a means of legitimising the power of the *faqīh* (jurist) In this climate, some sort of resistance was offered by Ibn Tūmart and his successors but even the Almohad ideology necessarily, founded its legitimacy on the Qur'ān and hadith in order to disqualify the opinions of the Mālikite doctors [102]

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[100] *Ibid*, p 265.

[101] *Ibid.*, p 266.

[102] *Ibid*, p. 267.

With Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf, the brief flowering of philosophy began in Western Islam. Yet, works of philosophers like Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Rushd and Maimonides were written under an inquisitorial climate and Arkoun feels that these thinkers could be better appreciated through a sociological reading of their works.[103]

Through the accounts furnished by al-Marrakushi on Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Rushd, Arkoun highlights the extenuating circumstances under which the personality of Ibn Tufayl succeeded to emerge.[104] He points to the necessity of royal favours to "be known and appreciated" (as Ibn Rushd was after he was introduced by Ibn Tufayl to Abū Ya'qūb Yūsuf) in order to be able to exercise "philosophical activity" with some degree of independence. Ibn Tufayl was fortunate in this instance, to have retained the amity of the Prince but the more unfortunate Ibn Rushd had been exiled and most of his works were banned.

In order to belong to the very small elite who had access to a philosophical culture, one had to belong to a family of scholars, be connected to the power and well grounded in the Arabo-muslim culture of *adab, Qur'an, hadith, fiqh;* even those with such a background did not necessarily approve philosophical studies and some of them vehemently opposed it Philosophy it appeared (in the words of al-Marrakushi) was an "ornament of thought" limited to the very exceptional cases Even where it existed, the distinction between the elite and masses had to be maintained and in no way could it address the masses Hence, the philosopher-prince, Abu Ya'qub Yusuf maintained a different facet when conducting the State Affairs and probably limited his philosophical discussion to a small circle of intimate friends.

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[103] *Ibid.*

[104] *Ibid.*

Arkoun traces the development of Ibn Ṭufayl, in his society. Although the biographical details on Ibn Ṭufayl are scarce, Arkoun feels that one might understand Ibn Ṭufayl's character through his text, (i.e. the risālah). Arkoun classes Ibn Ṭufayl as one belonging to the class of "sages", venerated men somehow embodying the Islamic notion of the "Perfect Man"

In a study of the risālah, one has to take into consideration the form and the substance of the work. Arkoun notes that the risālah is the combination of a *form* whose content is literary and a *substance* whose content is philosophical.[105] He examines the different ways in which the risālah has been understood:

1. An empathic reading which enters directly into the semantic, intellectual and spiritual world of Hayy, as is the methodology employed by most Arab writers and by the early translators

2. An intertextual reading conforming to the History of Ideas methodology as has been undertaken by Goodman and Hawi which bases itself on preset Western Classical medieval models and excludes the social, psychological and ideological function of works in their native milieu.

3. A anachronistic reading which sees the risālah as "le précurseur génial des plus grands philosophes modernes!"[106] which has its adherants in the ideologists of arabism but is also found among writers of Western Universities Arkoun cites S. S. Hawi and L. E. Goodman as examples of such an interpretation

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105 *Ibid.*, p. 273.

106 *Ibid.*, p. 274.

Further, Arkoun examines the ideological function of Hayy and the *épistémè* or implicit thought in the risālah. He traces the *épistémè* in the risālah and notes that it is utilized in a socio-historical manner rather than in a metaphysical way since the postulates in the risālah reflect the "mental space" within which Ibn Tufayl worked. One factor aids another; for example, Hayy belongs from his birth to the elite who are endowed with an excellent nature *(fitrah)*, the natural environment is good, hence no *restrictions* prevail against his inquisitive reason. The ideal spirit embodied by Hayy, is possible because of the ideal mixture of simple elements, the ideal climate etc. these mixtures are only possible for certain men in certain "climates" and hence the elite/masses distinction is established.

Arkoun divides the text of the risalah into such postulates which bring out the relation between the work, the milieu and the mind by which it was created He points to the danger of two methodological errors which can be avoided if one is aware of the fundamental ideas of psychological history. The first error is to extract passages which are somewhat rational in order that one might compare Ibn Tufayl to Modern thinkers such as Descartes, Husserl etc. One might still compare Ibn Tufayl to al-Ghazali or Ibn Nāfīs since they belong to the same (i e cultural, psychological, historical) "mental space". The second error is the need -- or obssesion -- with some writers to assign at all costs, the sources of the risālah Undoubtedly there are echoes of earlier writers in the risālah but these are part of a collective memory and not a servile repetition.

Arkoun presents further a brief analysis of the relation between language and thought in the risālah which we have not analysed here.

2.4 Sami S. Hawi and the 'Philosophical' Approach

With S. Hawi, we see a completely new and startling approach. Hawi's thesis is to prove the philosophical basis of the risālah and its applicability to modern scientific thought.

> Ibn Tufayl's naturalism stems from his disposition as a scientist *assuming* the role of a philosopher... Therefore, Ibn Tufayl's naturalism commits science to the service of philosophy.[107]

He suggests that Ibn Tufayl's work could well have served as a basis for many modern thinkers such as Hume, Descartes, Husserl, Darwin, Haekel, Chardin, Ryle, Spinoza, Kierkegaard etc. This thesis is supported by analogical quotes that he interposes in his study The purpose of his study is also to prove the "radical and naturalistic" approach that Ibn Tufayl uses.

Hawi does not wish merely to prove the philosophical content of the risālah as a 'treatise' but he also wishes to prove that the form of the work, which he refers to in separate occasions as a story, fiction, and allegory,[108] is in adherence to philosophical principles This, Hawi feels, is made evident by the "methodical structure" of the work, by its contents which address the same issues that have also been used by philosophers like Ibn Rushd, in the 'normal' and 'nonfictional' form of the 'treatise.'

Hawi admits to two prevalent aspects in Ibn Tufayl's thought - the naturalistic i.e scientific, approach and the mystical approach. Hence, he traces the shift from an objective (=scientific/philosophical) perspective to a subjective (=mystical) end. Whilst

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[107] S. Hawi, *Islamic Naturalism*, p 88 The italicizing is mine in order to show the constant emphasis on the scientific element by Hawi.

[108] *Ibid*, pp.26, 30-32, 36 Hawi feels that the methodological approach and philosophical content justifies the definition of the risālah as a 'treatise', yet he is constantly on the defense and often comes close to contradicting himself although he always suggests an alternative possibility and hence avoids such a contingency

the initial section of the risālah adheres to a logical structure, the latter section has no logical basis since it a subjective approach. This is considered to be another point to support the view that it is the naturalistic and philosophical which is the main basis of Ibn Ṭufayl's thesis.

Although Hawi sees Ibn Ṭufayl as a 'naturalistic mystic', he also feels that Ibn Ṭufayl's empirical and scientific approach justifes the identification of the work as belonging to 'the philosophical' realm. The form of the work i.e. the story, could have been used by the author as a process of dissemination. This is possible and Hawi supports his arguments by the fact that philosophers like Plato had used the story to convey a message which is ultimately didactic and theoretical

Hawi sees the movement and development of Hayy's thought from a rigorous naturalisitic understanding of things to complete mysticism. Hence, one finds a separation between these two aspects of Ibn Ṭufayl's thought as viewed by Hawi He aims at examining Ibn Ṭufayl's epistemological approach as perceived through the workings of Hayy's mind.

With reference to Hayy's use of revelation as a mode of knowledge, Hawi notes that "the facts of revelation are subject to scrutiny and investigation by the philosopher" and gives the instance of Hayy's visit to Absāl's island and "his attempts to examine and study the revealed Law according to which its inhabitants live "[109] This is an erroneous judgement Whether Ibn Ṭufayl considered revelation as *the* best method may be a debatable issue but he certainly does not use the same analytic approach utilized in the examination of the various philosophical issues that Hayy studies in his 'Aristotelian' phase. In the text of the risālah, the facts of revelation are *not* subject to the same

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[109] *Ibid.*, p. 183.

scrutiny and investigation of the earlier phases of Hayy's life. In fact, Hayy had already used philosphy to its fullest extent and had passed from this stage to the stage of contemplation, which, Hawi admits, cannot be logically deduced. Hayy accepts Absāl's account of the rules that condition the 'revealed' religion with some reservation.[110], He questions the wisdom of some of its rules which allow the acquisition of wealth and the excessive consumption of food. Hayy himself had seen the necessity to organize a set of rules by his emulations which insured him against any sort of excessiveness. Later the mystic realizes that all men are not built for an ascetic life. What Hayy sees is a lack of understanding of the message of revelation by the masses Absāl himself observes that tradition was in harmony with Hayy's 'reason'.[111] Hayy is not able to fully comprehend the necessity of laws which might delimit man's spiritual capacity and it is his exposure to society which makes him aware that the different strata of society have different needs Yet, Hayy does not subject revelation itself to an analytic study· he questions the values of society and its ignorance of reality, whether clothed in symbols (as in the revealed message) or devoid of them (as in the mystical apprehension of Hayy).

Aiming towards a scientific approach, Hawi misses out much of the beauty of the work. He is so intent on proving Ibn Tufayl's modernity that he loses touch with the work itself and gives it a superficial facelift by isolating it from its cultural and sociological context Hawi says that one cannot find any *legitimate* objections of a methodological or logical nature to the *retrospective* application of modern philosophical tendencies in evaluating the views of previous philosophers and in comparing them with modern ones."[112] The result of this methodology is an

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[110] GM.161, LGAR·145-146

[111] GM·160, LGAR 144

[112] Hawi, *Islamic Naturalism*, p. 4.

examination of Ibn Tufayl's thought in the light of modern *Western* thought. By this approach, the author wishes to avoid the perception of an Islamic philosopher from merely a cultural perspective and seeing him in the light of a universal i.e. 'western philosophical' perspective.[113]

2.5 Lenn E. Goodman and 'philosophical anthropology'

Goodman approaches the risālah[114] from various stands such as

1. Educational Philosophy.
2. Religious Philosophy.
3. Man and Society

1. Educational Philosophy

Goodman feels that the book poses problems of educational philosophy Hayy represents something more than himself; he represents all mankind, which is evident by his spontaneous birth, his Adam-like position, his discovery of fire etc

Goodman sees points of comparison with Dewey's educational philosophy of freeing the child from the traumatic habit-forming atmosphere However, there also exist points of difference - Hayy is given free rein and progresses towards perfection, whereas Dewey's child still remains with the "socially useful behaviour" category It is because Hayy is endowed "with natural capacity for brilliance, boldness, curiosity, goodness, in other words his *fitra.*"[115] With his emphasis of this natural capacity, Goodman leaves the comparison with Dewey and places Hayy back in the world to

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[113] *Ibid.*

[114] *Ibn Tufayl's 'Hayy ibn Yaqẓān'* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972), pp 7-92.

[115] *Ibid.*, pp.15-16.

which he belongs in the first place (i.e. Islām).[116]

2. Religious Philosophy:

Goodman studies how Ibn Tufayl's philosophy relates to the three categories: rational, mass and mystic religion. He feels that the composition of the risālah is a rationalist's affair for it gives a rational introduction to the nature of mystical experience.

Mass religion, according to Goodman's interpretation, remains for Hayy, a veiled glimpse of truth since Ibn Tufayl suggests that it would not be possible, nor beneficial for society to transcend cultural categories of thought and value by which its very nature is formed

3. Man and society:

Goodman explores the use of the metaphor by Ibn Tufayl to render his notions of the relations of Man and Society which the author uses as a situative premise. Goodman also studies the role of nature in the risālah.

Goodman traces five basic metaphors which a study of the risālah suggests. These postulates are i) the basic vs the superstructure, ii) the natural vs the artificial, iii) element vs. complex, iv) primitive vs civilized and and the fifth being the attribution of a mythical time frame. Thus, theories begin 'Originally.': or 'Ultimately '.[117] These postulates could have a relevance to the risālah, if the work was to be studied in itself or within the milieu within which it was created. In an attempt to see the relevance of the risālah in a universal context, Goodman uses a 'western' frame of reference. With

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116 In Islam, the *fitrah* does not merely correspond to a materialistic or evolutionistic concept of "nature". It is not a directly analogous concept to the "tabula rasa." Goodman notes that because of his *fitrah*, Hayy is aware that he is never alone. In the language of the Qur'ān, Hayy is aided by this "god-given" gift Qur'ān, 30:30.

117 *Ibid.*, pp. 53-55.

reference to the relation of Man and Society, Goodman compares *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* with William Golding's *The Lord of the Flies*. Analogies are drawn between Ibn Tufayl's philosophy of Education and those of Rousseau, Dewey and Locke. With regard to a Philosophy of Religious Education, he places Ibn Tufayl in the same platform as W D Ross, Walter Lippman, Reinhold Niebuhr. If Goodman had seen the risalah from within the milieu and culture in which it was written and examined whether these postulates could exist in Muslim philosophy and thought, then his approach could have helped in a better understanding of the risālah. We do admit that the result of a comparison of the risālah vs. *The Lord of the Flies* in a thesis/antithesis situation brings forward some interesting observations on the working of the mind of the author but the *Lord of the Flies* could have been substituted by *Robinson Crusoe* or by any other story which has some common elements with the risālah.

Goodman's comparison of Ibn Tufayl's thought with the large body of Western literature and philosophy is somewhat arbitrary. He uses the established framework of Western thought as the point of reference for the interpretation of the risalah. Yet, we also note the genuine concern to reveal all the nuances of Ibn Tufayl's thought which causes Goodman to examine Ibn Tufayl's educational and religious philosophy in relation to similar developments in Western thinkers. However, he also notes that the risālah is more than a mouthpiece for Ibn Tufayl's religious or educational philosophy, if this were the case "its interest would be at least historical, but at best academic."[118] Hence, it is not that Goodman wishes to separate the risalah from the muslim milieu in which it was written (as he has been criticized by Arkoun), he himself notes that Ibn Tufayl "was born a Muslim in a Muslim country and he remained a Muslim all his life."[119] Rather, one might see his study as an *interpretation* of Ibn Tufayl's thought, by

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[118] *Ibid.*, p. 52.

[119] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

relating the story of Hayy to the cultural and philosphical development of man.

Chapter III

A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE RISALAH 'HAYY IBN YAQZAN'.

3.1 The Prologue

The Prologue to the risālah, *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* may be perceived as a part of and apart from the main story It is relevant to the story since it enunciates its purpose and it lays a foundation for the philosophy exposed in it. It may also be perceived apart from the fictitious elements, as an exposition of the state of philosophy in Medieval Islam. Another factor which draws it apart from the corpus of the story is that Ibn Ṭufayl is critical of his predecessors in it, while he himself succumbs to some of these "doubts" in the course of the risālah.[120]

This dual approach creates problems regarding the authenticity of the Prologue and makes one wonder why Ibn Ṭufayl wrote this introduction to his *philosophical romance* One may even speculate whether Ibn Ṭufayl himself is the author of the Prologue This point is reinforced by the fact that the Almohad historian, al-Marrakushī,[121] makes no mention of Ibn Ṭufayl's critique on his predecessors, which presents the possibility that the Prologue was appended by an ingenious scribe The contradictions between the Prologue and the main body of the text appear to confirm such a view[122] On the other hand, one may assume that the Prologue is a

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120 For example, Ibn Ṭufayl criticizes al-Fārābī for declaring that the souls of those who have not known God dissolve into nothing whereas he himself says in the main body of the risālah that those who have not known the One will not feel the "pain" and their "power will go to ruin with the body"(GM 137, LGAR 95)

121 al-Marrākushī's accounts are the closest historical records on Ibn Ṭufayl and his works. Later historians such as Ibn al-Khaṭīb, who belonged to the same region as Ibn Ṭufayl, Ibn Abī Zar' and al-Maqqarī also do not mention the Prologue when they speak of the risālah.

122 The question remains whether a scribe added the Prologue in order to tone down the more radical ideas presented in the risālah and make them palatable to the community. There is some evidence to support this view:

i. The contradictions between the Prologue and the main body of the text such as indicated above (no. 1)

ii The fact that it is not mentioned at all by any of the early historians, like

method of dissemblance of the author's real views which he could only express under

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al-Marrākushī and Ibn al-Khatīb

If the Prologue had been a later edition, this would also clarify certain contradictions

i. Possibly, al-Marrākushī would not have referred to the risalah as being on the "origin of human species" (Fagnan: 207) if it had originally been preceded by an account of the state of philosophy, which -- had it existed in the original -- would have been given due attention by the historian Further, critics have declared that al-Marrākushī may not have read beyond the first few pages of the risalah. Even if this were so, he would have drawn attention to the Prologue, which appears in the beginning of the risālah

ii. One of the so-called weak points of al-Marrakushī's testimony is his statement that Ibn Tufayl was Ibn Bājjah's pupil a statement that is repudiated by the author of the Prologue However, if Ibn Tufayl himself was not the author of the Prologue, then it is also possible that he studied and knew Ibn Bajjah. There is certainly enough evidence in the main body of the risalah regarding the influence of Ibn Bājjah's thought on Ibn Tufayl and his argument in the final run, verves closer towards Ibn Bājjah than Ibn Rushd, who picks up the issue regarding the reconciliation of revealed and rational religion where Ibn Tufayl leaves it, and provides a solution to the views expressed by Ibn Bajjah and Ibn Tufayl regarding the role of the philosopher in society This issue is discussed further in Chapter 5

iii. If the author of the Prologue is other than Ibn Tufayl, then this also removes the base for the polemics that have been raised by modern critics of the risalah regarding the "lack of originality" in Ibn Tufayl's thought, and who have supported their argument on the statements by the author in the Prologue, rather than in the main body of the text, regarding the influence on his thought, by various philosophers, especially al-Ghazāli and Ibn Sina

iv. Also, the statement that the risālah intends to unveil the secrets of the Oriental Philosophy -- which apparently finds no direct explanation in the main body of the text-- loses a great deal of its implications if it were not a part of the statement of its author Hence, there would be no need to justify this statement, made in the Prologue, in the main body of the text

This is not to say that the Prologue is completely estranged from the main body of the risālah Whilst one might see the Prologue as a separate unit from the main body, this is not the case with the brief Epilogue which occurs at the end of the text and appears to continue it The only link between the Prologue and the Epilogue is the fact that both refer to certain "secrets" to be partially disclosed and that both are critical of the "false" philosophers of the time. These "self-styled" philosophers remain unnamed - we do not know who the author was refering to, it does not appear that Ibn Tufayl was referring to the classical Muslim philosophers One might even justify the descriptive analysis of the classical philosophers in the Prologue as a manner of setting the field for a discussion on philosophy and mysticism. However, this alone does not establish the authenticity of the Prologue

We have not excluded the Prologue in our study of the risalah and have analysed it

the guise of a tale, susceptible to interpretation.[123]

The purpose of the Prologue is like a double-edged razor: to unveil the "secrets of the oriental philosophy *(asrār al-ḥikmat al-mashriqīyah)* mentioned by Ibn Sīnā"[124] and at the same time, to ensure that "scientific skill" is utilized in order to be able to express it in speech. The method of acquiring this truth is "to seek it diligently without flummery *(jamjamah)*." The author exemplifies how the experience of the truth in the visionary state *(ḥāl mushāhadah)* gives rise to such ecstasy that those who experience it are prone to reduce it to some generality since "tongue cannot describe it." Such were the descriptions by al-Hallāj (d. 309/922) and al-Bastāmi (d. 234/848 or later) and Abū Sa'id ibn Abi'l-Khayr (d. 440/1048), whose celebrated *paradoxa (shaṭaḥāt)* are quoted anonymously in the Prologue.[125]

i. The evaluation of Ibn Tufayl's predecessors' mystical experience and philosophy

The Prologue is basically an exposition of the relationship between metaphysics and mystical experience This theme is exemplified and amplified by a critical review and evaluation of the works of major Muslim philosophers The author also alludes to the relationship between mysticism and *sharī'ah* and the general validity of this relationship. The parallel threads of tension that exist between religion, philosophy and mysticism, which one is made aware of in the passing, encircle the entire section,

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in the like manner We merely wish to point out the discrepancies and possibilities on either side.

123 Once again, such a viewpoint has been used by critics to refute the literary validity of the risālah Whatever be the case, it is difficult to deny the literary felicity of the risālah even if we consider it as a vehicle for the philosophical arguments of its author.

124 Ibn Tufayl, *Hayy*, GM:95; LGAR:4. We will henceforth refer to the page numbers of the text of *Hayy* by indicating 1936 Arabic edition by Gauthier as LGAR: pg.no. and the English 1972 edition by Goodman as GM pg.no.

125 GM:95; LGAR:4.

untangle and plait time and again.

In order to express the difference between the rational and mystical perception, the author uses the metaphor of the blind boy, who is familiar with the city in which he lives. When he regains his sight, the objects around him would be just as he had imagined them to be but what would distinguish his present experience from his former awareness would be the feeling of joy. In the same manner, the knowledge reached by theory *(al-nazarīyah)* and by experience *(dhawq)* are the same except that the latter is more distinct and more experiental and consequently the joy felt through this method is like the experience of sight to the blind.[126]

i a) Al-Fārābī

The Prologue is highly critical of al-Fārābī. His theory of souls is criticized. He is also criticized on account of the "doubts" in his works on philosophy and for changing his views in different works. In his *Virtuous City*, al-Farabi notes that the souls who do not achieve perfection are doomed to infinite torture whereas in the *Political Regime*, he says that the souls of the wicked are annihilated. The Farabian notion of Prophecy is also criticized. The author of the Prologue is also critical of al-Farabi's limitation of Happiness, alluded to in his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*,[127] to this life and not the Hereafter and as for his contradictory opinions on these subjects as expressed by al-Fārābī in various works.[128]

i b) Ibn Sīnā

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126 GM·97-98; LGAR·7. This analogy of the blind boy recalls Plato's 'Parable of the Cave' in *The Republic*. This analogy is also used by Ibn Bajjah. See M. Mahdi, "Islamic Philosophy," *EB*, 1985, XXII, p. 21.

127 al-Fārābī commentary on the *Ethics* is not extant.

128 GM·100, LGAR·13-14

Ibn Sīnā is perceived in the Prologue as one who has expressed most clearly the stages of mystical perception reached by experience *(dhawq)* Quoting from Ibn Sīnā's *Ishārāt,* the author notes that this master had described the gradual progress of the devotee through preparation *(al-riyādah)* to the stage of tranquil contemplation *(al-sakīnah)* culminating with the stage where his inmost being is like a polished mirror facing the Truth. He soon loses consciousness of his self and is only aware of the August Divinity *(al-janāb al-quds).* His soul exists only as the one who contemplates the Divine. This is the stage of communion *(wusūl)* and this situation *(rutbah)* can only be reached by experience *(dhawq)* and not through the way of speculative perception *(al-idrāk al-nazarī).* It is noted that one may perceive the kernal of Ibn Sīnā's teachings in his works on "oriental philosophy" while merely Aristotelian philosophy, as exposed by Ibn Sīnā in the *Kitāb al-Shifā'* "is insufficient to achieve your purpose"[129]

i c) al-Ghazālī

al-Ghazālī is singled out in the Prologue as one who had experienced the mystical state and expressed it as well as he could. However, the Prologue is highly critical of al-Ghazālī[130] with reference to the following points

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[129] Atiyeh, "Hayy," p. 139 GM:96-97, 99-101, LGAR:6-7, 12, 14. Ibn Sīnā himself declares in the beginning of the *Shifā'* that this work do not represent his personal thought but is intended as an introduction to Aristotle and other Greek thinkers for students of philosophy *Cf.* T. Izutsu, "Ishrāqīyah," *ER,* 1986, vol. VII, p. 297 The allusions to the "Orient" by Ibn Tufayl are probably with reference to the "Orient" as mentioned in Ibn Sīnā's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān,* or possibly a reference to some lost works by Ibn Sīnā rather than his *The Logic of the Orientals* as it is available to us *Cf.* C. A Nallino, "Filosofia orientale ed illuminativa," pp. 433 ff. Nallino briefly examines the issue of 'oriental/illuminative' with reference to the manner in which this issue has been interpreted by various critics and translators of Ibn Tufayl's risālah He further sees the relevance of this issue in general Islamic thought with special reference to Ibn Sīnā and its continuation in Ibn Tufayl See also H Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital,* tr. W. R. Trask (New York. Pantheon Books, 1960) Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail,* pp. 59-61. Since a copious amount of literature is available on this issue, we have generally confined ourselves to indicating that Ibn Tufayl allusions to the "oriental philosophy" may also be seen in light of the arguments put forth with reference to Ibn Sīnā. See further in Chapter 4 for a more detailed discussion

[130] This is interesting with reference to the contemporary society in which Ibn Tufayl

1. Al-Ghazālī's works abound in contradictory strands of thought and he frequently denies in one book, what he has affirmed in another. The author compares the *Tahāfut al-falāsifah* to the *Mizan al-a'mal* to validate this criticism.
2. al-Ghazālī advocated a multiplicity of methods of teaching and expression which resulted in a confusion regarding his actual views
3. The frequent use of symbols *(ramz)* and hints *(isharah)* in his works result in a lack of clarity as to what he really means to convey

The author also notes that none of the esoteric books of al-Ghazali had reached Andalusia The *Mishkāt al-Anwār* was not considered to be among the esoteric books of Ghazālī Yet, the author gives al-Ghazālī the benefit of the doubt and counts him among those who may have found the Truth![131]

i d) Ibn Bājjah

In his assessment of Ibn Bājjah, the author of the Prologue declares that Ibn Bajjah had reached the highest level attainable by Reason but did not surpass it. Further, he declares that although the level attributed to Ibn Bajjah and the levels of intellectual investigation *(al-bahth al-fikrī)* and theoretical knowledge *(al-'ilm al-nazarı)* do not contradict each other, there remains the difference of the clarity *(al-wuduh)* of the experience. Hence, the author feels that Ibn Bajjah was in no position to censure the mystics for the pursuit of the bliss *(al-sa'adah)* of the experience to which he had no recourse. He is also critical of Ibn Bajjah's style of living, of his interest in worldly affairs and the neglect of his work which resulted in fragmentary and incomplete works.[132]

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lived, where the Mālikite tradition and what it represented, was quite prevalent as the quasi-official creed. It is also a mild rebuff to the existing ideology. Even when al-Ghazālī is praised, it is in a tongue-in-cheek manner.

[131] GM:95, 96, 101; LGAR:4, 5, 15-16

The main thrust of the Prologue seems to be that truth *(haqq)* must be attained through the stages of research *(al-bahth)*, theory *(al-nazar)* and experience *(al-mushāhadah)*;[133] that the rational and the mystical are very closely related and differ only in terms of intensity. It appears that the examples of Ibn Tufayl's predecessors are used not only to set the field for his own viewpoint, which is to be elucidated further in the main body of the risālah, but also to examine and to *sift* the various approaches that have been taken by his predecessors in addressing the relation between religion, philosophy and mysticism before Ibn Tufayl himself ventures into a description of his philosophy in the story.[134]

3.2 Hayy's Origins

> A light enclosed in a small piece of mud has reached the highest goal: it returns to the heights and leaves in the winding-sheet nothing but mud [135]

Ibn Tufayl offers two versions of Hayy's birth and leaves it to the discretion of the reader to affirm either one. Both the methods are dextrously used by the author to air his opinion on the mythical and scientific theories.

i. Spontaneous Generation

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[132] GM:96-99, LGAR:5-6, 9-10,12. Even though the author does not pay greater attention to Ibn Bājjah separately in this discussion, his name figures in various contexts when Ibn Tufayl's predecessors are discussed. Hence, Ibn Bājjah may be considered an important link between the past and the present.

[133] GM:102; LGAR 18

[134] See also Chapter 5 for the notion of Ibn Tufayl as a critic of his predecessors through the story GMEN:95-103; LGAR:3-20.

[135] A poem by Ibn Tufayl cited by al-Marrākushī in *al-Mu'jib*. The translation quoted is by A. Pastor, *The Idea of Robinson Crusoe*, p 81.

Ibn Tufayl begins the story with an account of Hayy's spontaneous generation (*al-tawallud al-dhāti*) on an Indian island -- probably ShriLanka[136] -- situated below the equator. This island was ideally situated and had a perfectly balanced temperate climate and "because a supernal light streamed down on it, it is the most perfectly adapted to accept the human form."[137]

In this island, in a piece of low ground, a mass of clay slowly fermented through a period of time, till the elements - heat, cold, dampness and dryness were in equilibrium. The central part of this mass was the most perfectly proportioned to form a human composition *(al-mizāj al-insānī)* and was aided by a number of other factors, such as the 'locale'. The clay "laboured" and churned and in the very middle of this viscous mass, a tiny bubble was formed, which was divided into two chambers by a thin membrane *(hijāb)*. This was filled with an aerial substance, to which was joined "the spirit which is God's and which continuously emanates from Him, like the light of the sun. When this spirit joined with that chamber, all the powers of the latter submitted totally to it, bowing to its sway and to God's command."[138] This bubble formed the *heart*. The heart was the receptacle of the 'spirit' i.e. the soul.[139]

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136 The locale of earthly paradise in Indian mythology and of the descent of Adam in Islamic tradition. The second English translation of the risālah by George Ashwell in 1686 refers to Hayy as an Indian Prince. See also Appendix B. The notion of earthly paradise is also suggested in different parts of the text, especially the references to the ideal climate and the absence of predatory animals. See also Ibn Tufayl's Educational Philosophy in section 4.8 of the thesis. Further, in many ways, the risālah may also be considered an Adamic myth. Ibn al-Khatib also refers to the tale as the story of Adam in the *Rawdat* which has been discussed in the former chapter.

137 GM:103; LGAR 20.

138 GM:107, LGAR.29. cf. Qur'ān, 15:28-29; 32:6-9; 38:71-72.

139 This idea of the heart as being the innermost organ and the centre of being is also relevant to *sūfi* thought. Hence, within the 'scientific' description, we have points relevant to a *'sūfi'* interpretation. *Cf* G. Bowering, *The Mystical Vision of Existence in Classical Islām* (rprt. New York-Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1980), pp. 157-165.

Ibn Tufayl further describes how the brain and liver were formed in a similar manner, but of substance which was less subtle *(latīf)*. The functions of these two 'organs' were linked to the heart and they were concerned with the preservation of the spirit. The relationship between the three chambers was reciprocal. Yet, the second and the third, in their own right, were masters of all the organs formed after them. The heart needed to be fed and its juices constantly replenished - hence the brain was in charge of "sensation and the liver delegated the function of nutrition."[140]

Meanwhile, ducts and passages were woven between the heart and the other two organs, which constituted the veins and arteries. All other organs, bones, flesh and skin were formed as in a human foetus. The whole process depended heavily upon the working mass of the fermented clay. When the embryo was ready, its covering was cast off and the dried clay cracked open The newborn infant, cut off from its sources of nutrition, began to cry. A gazelle who had recently lost her fawn, responded to the cry and adopted him as her own.[141]

i a) Theories of physical science

Ibn Tufayl takes a detour from the story of Hayy's birth and mentions the existing theories of heat and light, which considered the fourth zone of the earth to be the most temperate zone. He establishes a basis on which the equatorial region may be considered the most temperate zone He refutes the view that the equatorial region (i.e. the locale of the island) is unsuitable for settled life, basing his argument on the observations made by the earlier philosophers themselves. Ibn Tufayl states that the

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[140] GM:108; LGAR.32.

[141] The section on 'Spontaneous Generation is based on the text pages: GM:103,106-109.; LGAR:20,27,30-33

purpose of discussing in which manner the equatorial region might be considered the most suitable zone is so that he might validate the birth of Hayy through spontaneous generation.[142]

Using the same hypotheses, Ibn Tufayl draws an analogy between the 'spirit' and light. He illustrates the notion of the spirit which "continuously emanates from God,"[143] through the metaphor of light streaming from the sun. Transparent and inanimate objects are not lit by the sun and neither do they take up the 'spirit'. Plant species, like opaque objects, show the influence of the spirit in proportion to their receptivity. Animal species show its impact greatly, analogous to polished bodies. The creature that best takes on the spirit in himself and is formed and patterned in its mode, is man. It is with reference to the above that the Prophet said *God created Adam in His own image.*[144] Further, Ibn Tufayl appends that if the image grows so strong that its reality eclipses all other forms, burning everything else, it is like the mirror which reflects on itself. Such an event occurs only with prophets.[145]

ii. The second version of Hayy's origin

Across the uninhabited island, there was another large island ruled by a proud and jealous king who had forbidden his sister from marrying until he chose a suitable match for her. The princess however, had fallen in love with a kinsman named Yaqzan, whom she married secretly. She bore him a son. Fearing the wrath of her brother, she sealed the child in an ark *(tābūt).*[146] and entrusted him to the waves. A powerful current

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[142] GM:103-104; LGAR.21-24.

[143] GM 107, LGAR:28.

[144] GM:107; LGAR 29. Ibn Tufayl alludes to the famous hadith. See B. Furuzanfar, *Ahādīth-i Mathnawī* (Teheran: Dānishgāh, 1955), no. 342.

[145] These analogies are discussed in the text pages: GM:104-105, 107, LGAR:22,23-24,28-29.

[146] This is probably an allusion to the story of Moses. Such an 'event' adds to the

carried the ark to the uninhabited island and the high tide lodged it in a pleasant thicket, sheltered from the wind and rain and veiled *(mahjūb)* from the sun. The nails of the ark had loosened due to the battering of the waves. The hungry child cried and was heard by a gazelle. The child kicked at the ark till the loosened board fell. He was rescued by a gazelle who had recently lost her young to an eagle. The gazelle nurtured the child and cared for him, raising him and protecting him from any harm.[147]

3.3 Hayy's early development (till age 7)

Hayy's early development covers the period till he was seven years old, at which time we glimpse a movement from the 'natural' spirit to the rational. Hayy grew up under the tender care of the gazelle, nourished by her milk till he was two years old and later, fed with fruit and nuts She brought him to water when he was thirsty, shaded him from the sun and nestled him to herself when he was cold.[148]

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melodramatic quality of the tale. A parallel incident also occurs in the Arabic tale: *Dhū al-Qarnayn* which has been studied by Garcia Gómez as one of the sources of Ibn Tufayl's story See Garcia Gómez, "Un cuento árabe fuente común de Abentofáil y de Gracián," *Revista de Archivos, Bibliothecas y Museos,* XXX (1926), 1-66, 241-269 *Cf* A Pastor, *The Idea of Robinson Crusoe*, p. 138. H. Fradkin, "Ibn Tufayl's 'Hayy ibn Yaqzān': On the relationship of mysticism, prophecy and philosophy," P. hd, Diss. Univ. of Chicago, 1978. Fradkin notes that Hayy may be considered as a kind of prophet, due to the associations of his birth to those of Moses (p. 102) Finding certain evidences in the text which make it seem that Ibn Tufayl supported the "social account" of Hayy's birth, Fradkin also feels that Ibn Tufayl favoured the "social life" and Hayy's prophecy might be considered as akin to Moses rather than being Adamic in nature. Although the above referred version of Hayy's birth might be an allusion to the birth of Moses, the consideration of Hayy as being similar to Moses is otherwise debatable. Even this version of Hayy's birth has other precedents, such as has been related in the Arabic tale of the Alexander cycle which has been edited by Garcia Gómez.

147 GM:105-106; LGAR 24-26

148 GM:109; LGAR:33-34.

Hayy's learning process began with imitation *(hikāyah)*. Initially, he imitated the call of the deers and later, he could imitate all the bird calls and animal cries and could distinguish the different cries used for particular contingencies such as courtship, defense or summons. Hayy was able to express emotions, in the same manner as animals.[149] Later, he acquired the ability to fix objects in his mind even when they were not present.[150] He also discovered in himself, likes and dislikes Hence, Hayy found himself moving from sense perception to conceptual thinking [151]

Consequent to the development of his intellectual faculty, Hayy compared himself to other animals around him. He found them to be physically stronger and armed with natural weapons such as hoofs and claws He awaited similar developments in himself and was disappointed when they did not appear

It was when Hayy was nearly seven years old that he began to come to grips with his environment He tried to solve the problem of his nakedness by attempting to cover up with the aid of leaves He also began to realize the superiority of his hands, which helped him to use sticks as weapons of self-defence and hence made up for his lack of natural armour. Creative thinking came to the fore, when Hayy was seven years old, by his use of the skin and wings of a dead eagle as a protective covering These early garments also made him a fearful sight All the other animals were afraid of him and

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149 GM:110; LGAR:34.

150 *Cf.* Wolfson, "The Internal Senses in Latin, Arabic and Hebrew Philosophic Texts," in *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Religion* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1973), pp. 255-257 Wolfson discusses the two kinds of memory, one belonging to sense-perception or imagination and the other belonging to thought He presents briefly the theories of Aristotle, Plotinus, John of Damascus and Ibn Rushd with reference to the first kind of memory which are very similar to those of Hayy's experience at this stage.

151 GM:110; LGAR:34-35.

thus he gained superiority over them.[152]

3.4 Hayy's Youth (till 21 years)

I. The death of the gazelle and its repercussions in Hayy's life

The death of the gazelle marked the beginning of a new process of learning. This event confronted Hayy with the meaning of life and death and its relevance to "the entity" *(al-shay')*.[153] Earlier Hayy had been looking after the old and sickly gazelle, by leading her to the greenest pastures and feeding her with the choicest foods. When the gazelle died, Hayy was left uncertain as to what had actually occurred. He was overcome with grief and for the first time experienced the emotion of sorrow which he did not fully understand.[154] At this stage, Hayy left behind the dependence of childhood and began to grow up. He no longer remained a servant to his environment. From now on, he moulded his environment to suit his needs and confronted his problems using the tools of empirical and logical speculation.

Hayy had observed that an obstruction *('ā'iq)* of the senses caused them to cease functioning, at least temporarily; he knew that if he blocked his ears, he could not hear till he had removed the obstruction.[155] Based on this premise, he examined the gazelle carefully and realized that there were no external impediments that might have prevented her from functioning. Since he found no physical defects, Hayy reasoned that an internal organ may be obstructed. This is the beginning of inductive reasoning in

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[152] GM:110, LGAR.35.

[153] GM:111; LGAR:38. Goodman alternatively uses 'spirit' and 'soul' for the arabic *shay'*. Ibn Tufayl does not easily 'name' whatever he is talking about. Only later does he speak of the soul and the vegetative/animal soul of medieval science and philosophy.

[154] GM:111; LGAR.38.

[155] GM:112, LGAR:39.

Hayy: he observed a situation, the lifelessness of the gazelle which raised the problem in his mind regarding the cause of this phenomenon; then, with the help of his past experiences, he framed a hypothesis to explain the phenomenon.

Hayy had earlier observed that all parts of the animal body were solid except the three cavities of the chest, the skull and the stomach. He reasoned that the vital-organ which had ceased to function must be contained in one of these cavities Since the whole body stood in need of this organ, he felt that that it must be the organ that was centrally situated. He had felt such an organ in himself (i.e. the heart) which continued to beat and which could not be easily obstructed like the senses Hence, Hayy sensed that an obstruction to the heart alone could cause the cessation of all bodily organs.[156]

Hayy cut open the gazelle's chest in the hope that he might remove the impediment. At first, he mistook the lungs for the central organ that he was seeking but he soon discovered the heart, situated centrally between the two lungs and protected by them When Hayy cut open the heart, he saw that it contained two chambers one was filled with congealed blood and the other chamber was empty. Through his own experience, Hayy knew that the loss of blood alone could not have caused the death of the gazelle. He discerned that it was the entity *(al-shay')* which had occupied the empty chamber, that had rendered the gazelle life When that entity *(al-shay')* left the body, life also departed Hence, Hayy discovered that the body just a vehicle for the entity *(al-shay')* which resided in it He realized that what had characterised his mother, the gazelle, was this entity *(al-shay')* which had departed forever [157]

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[156] GM:112; LGAR.40

[157] GM:113-114, LGAR:41-45.

Hayy had realized the vulnerability of the human body and especially of his 'heart' and had consequently always protected it from harm when pitted against other animals In order to examine the delicate organs in the gazelle which might have been hurt, Hayy had used chips of stone and splinters of wood with which he cut open her chest. The use of these primitive tools indicated that Hayy had passed from the animal stage and now was able to solve problems in a practical manner.[158]

Hayy observed a fight between two ravens, where one of them killed the other and proceeded to bury it He condemned the act of killing but perceived the ethics behind the burial and proceeded to bury the carcass of the gazelle in the same manner [159]

Hayy began to think and question as to what had given the gazelle 'life' and how 'it' was related to the body He realized that the body was just a tool and his affection was transferred to the mover of the body [160] Hayy now reflected on the being which had moved and governed the body of the gazelle and observed that the rest of the deers were of the same form and figure of the gazelle This observation led him to the conclusion that all of them were governed by an entity similar to that which had governed his mother By inductive reasoning, Hayy came the conclusion that every plant and animal belonged to a species and he wished, more than ever, to know whether there were any other beings like him.[161]

ii. The discovery of fire

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[158] GM:113; LGAR:41-42.

[159] GM:115; LGAR:46.

[160] GM:114-115; LGAR:45.

[161] GM.46; LGAR:115.

Hayy observed fire for the first time when he came across a burning thicket which had caught fire through friction. He was fascinated by this phenomenon, in its everchanging elements, its brightness, its upward movement towards the celestial bodies and its power to consume everything. At first, he tried to grasp it, but he burnt his fingers. He then caught hold of a halfburnt stick and took it to his cave [162]

Hayy tended the fire in his cave, where it burned day and night It provided him light and heat when the sun had set. He felt it to be a part of the celestial bodies He used to throw various things into the fire in order to test their combustibility. In this manner, he discovered the art of cooking, when he threw in a fish into the fire Henceforth, Hayy devoted more time to fishing and hunting [163]

Hayy equated the nature of fire (warmth) with the substance *(jawhar)* that had departed from the heart of the gazelle He had observed that the body of a living animal was warm and became cold after death In his search to discover the substance of life and whether it resembled the substance which constituted fire, Hayy decided to dissect a wild beast. When he cut open the heart of the beast, he found a hot vapour - the animal died instantly. Hence, Hayy concluded that it was the hot vapour *(al-bukhār al-ḥārr)* that had moved and directed the body of the animal and its departure from the heart had caused the animal's death.[164]

iii. Empirical research

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[162] GM:47-48, LGAR:115-116.

[163] GM:48-49; LGAR 116

[164] GM 116-117,LGAR:49-50

By means of dissection and vivisection, Hayy became familiar with various organs. He found that every animal was one in respect to the 'spirit' which dwelt in the heart and was diffused in the other faculties. This animate spirit *(al-rūḥ al-hayawānī)* was the source through which all other organs functioned; for example, the nerves derived the spirit from the brain, which derived it from the heart. Hence, it was the spirit which endowed the senses with their particular functions; it was that which made the nose 'smell' and the eyes 'see' Consequently, Hayy perceived that when the spirit departs from the body, all the senses stop functioning and the being dies.[165]

By this time, Hayy was also more comfortable in his environment and drew from it the sources which allowed him to live a more comfortable life and face the odds of a sometimes hostile milieu Hayy had begun earlier with the invention of indigenous tools He now made himself clothes and shoes from the skin of the animals that he had dissected We see the development from leaves, to the feathers of the eagle and now to 'modern' garb. Observing the swallow[166] he built himself a dwelling place with a storehouse and a pantry He also kept poultry, made stronger weapons from the horns of animals. He domesticated wild horses and built saddles and bridles for riding. Hence, at the age of twenty one, he was the practical master of his world.[167]

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165 GM:117-118, LGAR 51-52

166 A swallow never really builds himself a home but uses the one abandoned by other birds For Hayy also, shelter was just a means of sustenance - a necessity rather than a luxury

167 GM 118-119, LGAR 53-55.

3.5 Further learning (till year 28)

i. Hayy's Classification of Bodies

From his observation of animals, Hayy extended the periphery of his study to all the bodies that surrounded him - animal, plant, mineral, water, stone, vapour, snow and fire. He observed that amongst themselves, there were points of similarities and differences. With reference to their common qualities they were one but in view of their differences, they were many. He had earlier observed this point in his study of animals He also saw how the various organs in his body created a plurality which was resolved in his person as a single entity Hence, all being was one with reference to the spirit It was this which was its real self *(fi dhātihi wa haqiqati dhatihi)* Hayy concluded that the individuals of different species were like parts of the body and the spirit which actuated all of them was the same and was one.[168]

Perceived as a whole, all animal species have in common the functions of sensation, nutrition and movement All these actions proceed from the animate spirit - hence the whole animal kingdom may be perceived as one in this manner.[169]

In a similar manner, the entities of every plant species showed common characteristics and all species agreed in the functions of nutrition and growth. Hence, Hayy felt that they must have in common, a spirit analogous to the 'animate spirit.'

Then, Hayy viewed the animal and vegetable kingdom as congruent He perceived that both agreed in the functions of nutrition and growth Although animals showed some additional functions such as sensation, apprehension and movement, these qualities were also present in plants in a lesser degree they extended their roots in the

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[168] GM:119-120, LGAR:55-57.

[169] GM:120; LGAR:58.

direction of nutrition and some plants turned towards the sun.[170]

Viewing inanimate objects, such as stones, earth and water, Hayy perceived that all of them had in common the notion of extension to the three dimensions *(&3d)* - length, breath and depth. However, these dimensions were susceptible to change and these objects existed in different states. For example, water existed as solid, liquid and gas but each change presupposed the ability to exist in the other states. Hence, one could perceive inanimate objects as a whole, united by the notion of extension.[171]

Taking the three categories together, Hayy observed that all of them were united by the fact that they were bodies, although they differed in terms of function. Hence, if bodies were viewed in the abstract, outside their particular function, they could all be perceived as one, unified by their common characteristics.[172]

ii. The essential nature of bodies

Hayy perceived that all bodies have a tendencey to move either upwards or downwards - water moves downwards unless obstructed and smoke moves upwards. However, this quality is something that is added to the body and does not belong to it in its essence It is because of the attribute of weight or lightness that bodies are distinct from each other. All bodies have in common their corporeality *(al-jismīyah)* (the fact of being body) although this corporeality could not exist *per se*, separate from its attributes.[173]

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[170] GM:59; LGAR:120-121.

[171] GM:60; LGAR.121.

[172] GM.121-122, LGAR:60-61.

[173] GM:122-123, LGAR:61-64.

Hence, Hayy concluded that all bodies consisted of corporeality *(al-jismiyah)*, and a factor or factors superadded to their corporeality which was their 'form' *(surah)*. In the former aspect, all bodies are one. It is the latter aspect which gives them their distinctive features, individuality and multiplicity. This was Hayy's first lesson in metaphysics, as knowledge of these forms is derived not through the senses but through speculative reasoning *(al-nazar al-'aqlī)*.[174]

Hayy speculated that it was really the 'form' of a body which was responsible for its functions and peculiarities. He arrived at the hypothesis that the animate spirit *(al-ruh al-hayawānīyah)* must also possess a form superadded to its corporeality, which the philosophers' call 'animal soul' *(al-nafs al-hayawāniyah)*. Similarly, plants must also possess their peculiar form which may be called the 'vegatative soul' *(al-nafs al-nabātīyah)*. Inanimate objects too have their form which is responsible for their properties. This is also referred to by philosophers as their 'nature' *(tabi'ah)*.[175]

In his study of the soul, Hayy considered the physical objects of the world in accordance to their forms. He discerned a hierarcy of forms. For example, earth, minerals, plants, animals and all heavy bodies participate in a given mode of behaviour brought about by their downward movement. A class in this category, i.e. plants and animals have the characteristics of the first form plus they also have another form superadded to them, through which nutrition and growth occurs. A group of this class i.e. animals, have the first and second form in common with inanimate objects and plants but also have a third form superadded to them, from which arise the functions of sensation and movement. Moreover, Hayy perceived that every species of animals and plants showed characteristics peculiar to it. These differences, Hayy concluded, must

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[174] GM:123; LGAR 64

[175] GM:123; LGAR 64-65

be due to some additional form peculiar to the particular species.[176]

Hayy perceived that some objects possessed a 'simple' form, while others possessed a richer and more complex form. He felt that the nature of forms could be best understood through the four basic elements - earth, water, air and fire.[177]

Hayy was by now familiar with the notion of 'forms,' but he had not fully understood the nature of corporeality. He surmised that the four elements partook of a common entity i.e. materiality, which was itself devoid of factors which differentiated bodies. In order to establish a commonalty, he examined an attribute in which all bodies share with regard to their corporeality, i.e. the notion of three-dimensional extension, *(al-imtidād ilā al-aqtār al-thalāthah)* but he could not find any body which possessed merely extension and nothing more. There was something in which extension subsisted and a body was a combination of extension plus some further 'principle' *(shay')* in which the extension subsisted. Hayy experimented this principle with clay, changing its dimensions: the clay, in spite of being moulded into different dimensions, remained the same and this is how Hayy evolved the categories of Form and Matter. Shape and Dimension that kept changing represented to him the notion of Form and the clay that remained constant represented the notion of corporeality or Matter *(hayūlā)* devoid of all forms.[178]

Hayy had now left behind him the sensory world but was overwhelmed by the thought of entering the intelligible world (*al-'ālam al-'aqlī*) in which things could not be perceived by the senses. He then turned to observing the simple sensory objects (*absat*

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[176] GM:124-125; LGAR.66-68

[177] GM:125, LGAR:68-69.

[178] GM:125-126; LGAR:69-72.

al-ajsām al-mahsūsah) in order to understand the unqualified notions of form and matter.[179] At this stage, Hayy was left feeling bewildered. With the discovery of the overwhelming notion of an unqualified body which could not be perceived by the senses, Hayy felt alienated and alone and longed for the world of the senses and simplicity.[180]

iii. Inference regarding the Immaterial Agent

Observing the constant change (*tabaddul*) of one form into another, as in the case of water which changes into steam and ice, Hayy inferred the existence of a cause, as the Efficient and Ultimate Cause of all these phenomena The actions which he had earlier attributed to the form of bodies now appeared to him as proceeding from this Agent *(fā'il)*. This Agent was also the source of the changes of forms and the forms were nothing other than the disposition of the bodies to act in a particular way In reality, it was the Agent who was responsible for those acts [181]

Hayy yearned to know this Agent *(fā'il)*. He first looked for it/him among sensible things, but these were liable to change and corruption and hence could not be the Agent. Hayy was 28 years old at this time.[182]

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[179] GM:126; LGAR:72.

[180] GM:126-127, LGAR:72.

[181] GM 127, LGAR:72-74.

[182] GM 128; LGAR:74-75.

3.6 Further learning (till year 35)

i. Search for the Immaterial Cause amongst the heavenly bodies

Hayy looked at the heavens for an answer. He noted that the heavenly bodies were also governed by the notion of three dimensional extension. Inferring that the heavens were finite, Hayy also proved that they could not contain the ultimate cause of creation.[183]

ii. The Idea of the Universe

Observing the various bodies in the heavens - the stars, the planets, the moon and their movement, their rising in the east and setting in the west, Hayy was able to ascertain they were spherical bodies and moved in circles. Considering the whole orb of the heaven, it appeared to him that the earth, water, air, plant and animals were all contained in it Hayy perceived the whole orb as an animal whose senses were the stars, whose spheres were the limbs and the world of generation and its objects were like the fluids of the stomach The whole was like a macrocosm *(al-'ālam al-akbar)*. Hence, all that existed was like a single individual. In this way, Hayy came upon the idea of the Universe.[184]

iii. Is the world eternal or originated in time?

Ibn Tufayl leaves this issue an open question by elucidating that the world can be proved to be eternal *(qadīm)* or originated in time *(hādith)* Whenever Hayy assumed the world to be eternal, his reason proved that infinite regression was not possible. Hayy also knew that the world could not exist without temporal events, which presupposed that it could not precede them and what cannot precede temporal events must necessarily come into being in time [185]

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[183] GM:128-129, LGAR 75-77.

[184] GM:128-130, LGAR.78-81.

[185] GM:130-131, LGAR.81.

On the other hand, when Hayy assumed the world to be created in time, he encountered another set of problems. The notion of the world coming into being *ex nihilo* could be comprehensible only if one were to assume a time before the time when the universe was created. Since time is an inseparable part of the universe, it is inconceivable that the origin of the universe came at a "time" before the origin of time.

Further, if the universe came in time there must have been some cause to bring it into being. Hayy questioned: Why did the Cause bring the world into being at a particular time rather than before? Had some change occurred in the Cause? Could some outside force have effected the change? Hayy knew this was impossible for Nothing exists but He.

Hayy found that the implications of either of these beliefs were the same - they both pointed towards the existence of an Incorporeal Cause which was independent of created beings (*mawjūdāt*) in His Being (*wujūdahā*) Hayy was thirtyfive years old By this time, his mind was attuned to the world of the intellect (*al-'alam al-ma'qūl*).[186]

3.7 Final phase of Hayy's "learning process" (till 49 + 1 years)

i. Knowledge of the Immaterial Agent

Every creation in the world shifted Hayy's thought to the Creator His attention was diverted from the crafted *(al-maṣnū')* to the Craftsman *(al-ṣani')* Hayy wished to know the Immaterial Agent Since He (i e the Craftsman) was without cause *(la sababa li wujūdihi)*, He could not be perceived through the senses or the imaginative faculty *(al-qūwah al-khayālīyah)* Further, Hayy realized that since the Necessary Being was

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[186] GM: 131-135; LGAR:81-90

without physical attributes, He could not be perceived through the senses.[187]

Hayy was curious as to how exactly he had acquired knowledge of the Necessary Existent Being *(al-wājib al-wujūd)*. It seemed likely to Hayy that he had apprehended the Divine Essence through his own essence (*dhāt*) which was also immaterial. At this stage, there is a definite shift in Hayy's method of investigation. Although he did not completely abandon the scientific mode, it was a longing *(shawq)* which led Hayy to explore the various possibilites using the contemplative mode. External observation gives way to an internal exploration. Now, he searched within himself for the 'quality' which had discovered the Necessary Existent Being which he knew was not physical.[188]

Hayy now realized that the reality of his essence (*haqīqat dhātihi*) was not the body which was enclosed in skin. All his thoughts were now concentrated towards his 'essence' through which he had apprehended the Sublime Necessary Existent Being *(al-sharif al-wājib al-wujūd)* [189]

ii. The 'human' essence and the Divine Essence *(al-dhāt)*

Hayy wanted to know whether his essence (*dhāt*) had a beginning or was eternal *(dā'im)*, whether it was prone to disintegration and decay. He reasoned that since it did not contain the predicates of physical things, it could not be liable to corruption or destruction He also wished to know whether the essence could exist when separated from the body [190]

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[187] GM 135; LGAR:90-91

[188] GM:135, LGAR 92

[189] GM·136, LGAR:92.

[190] GM 136, LGAR·92-93.

In a quest to understand the essence, Hayy perceived that all his faculties either worked potentially or actually at a given time. For example, the eye does not lose its potential to see a given object, even when its gaze is not fixed on it. Ibn Tufayl alludes to the different levels of physical perception in order to describe the different levels on which one may perceive the Essence (*al-dhāt*) Hence, a man who never actually perceives but remains "forever potential" is like a man born blind. A man who had previously enjoyed the sight of a beautiful object yearns for it; even if he loses his eyesight, he longs for the vision and feels the pain of loss If a man, after knowing the Perfect Being, who is beyond even the attribution of perfection, loses his perception of Him then he would be subject to infinite torture *(ālām lā nihayah)* till death overtook him. If a man has known the Supreme Being and exists in a state of constant awareness till he dies, then he will continue in that state of infinite bliss There exists another category of those who have no knowledge of the Supreme Being. They will not feel any pain as they will not have any sense of loss [191]

Hayy now perceived that his self-perfection (*kamāl dhātihi*) and rapture (*lidhdhah*) meant the constant (*al-dawām*) and actualised (*bi al-fi'l*) vision (*mushahadah*) of the Existing Necessary Being *(al-mawjūd al-wājib al-wujud)* Through concentration (*al-fikrah*), he aimed to attain the constant awarness without disruption of a vision of the One which would grant him the highest knowledge However, Hayy found himself distracted either in order to fulfil his bodily need or due to external interruptions He was tormented with the thought that death might overtake him in such a moment and hence he would be denied the bliss of continuous ecstasy He decided to search for some cure to this malady [192]

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[191] GM.136-138, LGAR 94-96.

[192] GM 138, LGAR 97

In his attempt to learn the method by which he could acquire this knowledge, Hayy observed the different bodies in order to ascertain whether these had any knowledge of the Existent (*al-Mawjūd*). He observed various animals to see whether he could learn anything from them but discovered that their life span was spent satisfying their appetite for food, shelter and sensual pleasures and that they were virtually unaware of the Existent. He realized that they would perish to nothingness.[193]

Looking at the sky, Hayy found the stars and planets to be bright and remote from change and corruption. It appeared to him that besides their bodies, they possessed essences (*dhawāt*) by which they knew the Necessary Existent Being (*al-wājib al-wujūd*). Consequently, he felt that the heavens must know the Necessary Existent Being and constantly enjoy the vision.[194]

Hayy noted that among the earthly bodies, subject to corruption, he was the only one who possessed an identity like the stars To examine this premise, he studied the various forms of bodies which were in a constant state of change and came up with some general observations Most bodies were composed of a mixture and were prone to degeneration Hayy further observed that compound bodies in which the elements were combined in a harmonious way were more disposed towards life If the forms were joined in such a manner to matter that they were indivisible, then life would be most durable and manifest in such a being Hayy also realized that the vital spirit (*al-rūh al-hayawānī*) is well balanced and securely maintained in the heart and is the

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193 GM.138, LGAR:97-98. Further in the text, Ibn Tufayl describes the masses in a similar manner to the above description of animals See below in section 3.9.

194 GM:139; LGAR:98-99.

stablest form of life.[195]

Hayy observed in himself a soul (*nafs*) like the soul of the heavenly bodies. Other animals did not possess it and this suggested that he had been created for a noble purpose. Hayy came to the conclusion that the entity (*al-shay'*) which endowed him with the knowledge of the Necessary Existent Being was the "knowing" entity (*al-shay' al-'ārif*) from the divine command (*amr rabbānī ilāhī*), not subject to corruption and which could not be described by any attribute of the body nor could it be apprehended through the senses or through imagination.[196]

ii. The Three emulations

Hayy had observed three aspects of his nature.

1. With reference to the body (*al-badan*), he resembled irrational animals (*al-hayawān ghayr al-nātiq*)
2. With respect to the animate spirit (*al-ruh al-hayawāniyah*) which resided in his heart (*qalb*), he resembled the heavenly bodies (*al-ajsam al-samawiyah*).
3. In his immaterial essence (*al-dhāt*), he resembled the Necessary Existent Being (*al-mawjūd al-wājib al-wujūd*).

To satisfy these three aspects of his nature, Hayy planned out an itinerary to charter his life according to these assimilations so that he could experience the Vision of the Divine.[197]

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[195] GM:99-103; LGAR:102-103.

[196] GM:141, LGAR.104-105.

[197] GM:142-143; LGAR:106-107.

Hayy recognized himself as composed of two parts - the lower part belonged to the world of degeneration and was subject to sensory things. Since it was linked to his real self, it needed to be preserved. His nobler part by which he knew the Necessary Existent, bore some resemblance to Him. Like Him, it transcended the physical. Hence, Hayy saw the necessity to attain His Attributes and mould his character to His by accepting both the outward and the inward.[198]

ii a) The first emulation

Hayy's imitation of animals served to nourish his body and protect it from harm and injury. It was a hindrance to the Vision but it was necessary for the preservation of the animate spirit. He planned a programme in such a manner that he confined his physical needs to the minimum. He imposed dietary restrictions upon himself and limited his intake to vegetables and the pulp of fruit which would in no way affect the species. He decided that he would eat eggs or the flesh of animals only if fleshy fruits and herbs were not available. Hayy decided that he would eat just enough to live and only when he felt weak and in need of nourishment. To maintain the spirit, he would also protect his body and have a roof above his head as shelter.[199] Initially, Hayy was reluctant to eat anything since this entailed the destruction of a work of the Creator but he realized that complete abstinence led only to the weakening of his body which was one of the more excellent creations of the Creator.

ii b) The second emulation

Hayy now modelled himself on the attributes of the celestial bodies

a. in their relation to the world of degeneration such as warmth, cooling, radiation of light;

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198 GM:142; LGAR:107-108.

199 GM:143-145; LGAR:109-113.

b. their properties in themselves such as transparency, luminosity, purity, transcendence and their circular motion;

c. their attributes in relation to the Necessary Existent.

Hayy felt that the attributes of heavenly bodies were a source of goodness. He emulated this quality by destroying such things as were harmful to plants and animals. He watered plants, fed animals, removed a stone which obstructed the flow of a river and participated in such virtuous actions. Hayy also observed that Heavenly bodies were pure and bright. In his emulation of this quality, he kept his body and clothes clean and also applied perfume to them. Observing that heavenly bodies moved in circles, Hayy would also circumambulate the island and whirl in circular motions. Observing that heavenly bodies enjoyed a constant vision of the Divine Being, Hayy also concentrated on the contemplation of the Divine Being, withdrawing his thoughts from sensible objects.

Through the emulation of the heavenly bodies, Hayy was able to attain the vision of the Divine Being but his bodily faculties would just as quickly assert themselves and interrupt this vision.[200]

ii c) The third emulation

In his consideration of the Divine Being, Hayy observed two kinds of attributes:

1. Positive attributes (*sifāt al-ithbāt*) such as Knowledge, Wisdom and Power.
2. Negative attributes (*sifāt al-nafiy*) such as Immateriality and Freedom from the attributes of the body.

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200 GM:145-147; LGAR:113-117.

With regard to the positive attributes, Hayy observed that to know Him was to be like Him, for Knowledge and Essence were not two different things.

In imitating His Negative Attributes, Hayy had to free himself of the properties of the body and contemplate only the Divine. He would pass days in contemplation in a cave, without eating anything. In deep contemplation, Hayy would lose awareness of everything but the essence (*al-dhāt*). Through constant contemplation (*mujāhadah*) he lost consciousness of the "heavens and earth and all that is between them"[201] and even his own identity; there was nothing but the One, Self-Existent Being. Hayy experienced the Mystic Vision: "which no eye has seen or ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man to conceive."[202]

iii. Hayy's Mystical experience

Ibn Tufayl warns his readers that the state experienced by Hayy cannot be expressed in words and can truly be known only through the experience itself. Nevertheless, images and figurative language could convey something of the experience. Ibn Tufayl first makes some observations on the quality of the experience before initiating his readers to the Vision, albeit via symbols.[203]

When Hayy experienced the mystical state, all paradoxes resolved themselves in the Essence (*al-dhāt*) and he perceived his own essence (*dhātihi*) as identical to the Essence of the Truth (*dhāt al-haqq*). Nothing existed but the Essence. Ibn Tufayl used the analogy of the sun and the spreading of its light to resolve this issue: the light of the sun seems to be multiplied, according to the multiplicity of the bodies it makes

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201 Qur'ān, 56:6. GM:149; LGAR:120.

202 This is a hadīth Qudsī whose earliest known records can be traced to the *Corinthians* ii 9. See also *Isaiah* lxiv 4. GM:147-149; LGAR:118-121.

203 GM:149; LGAR:121-122.

apparent, while in reality there exists only one light.[204]

The second notion that Hayy perceived was that 'to know the essence is to have the essence'. Since his essence had knowledge of the One, so he knew the One through His Essence but since the essence is not multiple, Hayy deduced that his essence was identical to the Essence of the One.[205]

Notions such as 'much' 'little' refer to bodies - the Essence cannot be measured in quantity - it is immaterial. Moreover, this notion , whether it is one or many is difficult to comprehend in the sensible world and even more difficult with regard to the Divine, since even to consider Him 'One' denotes quantity. The truth can only be known through direct experience or through the 'heart'.[206]

iii a) **Hayy's "Ascension"**

Having given his readers a working hypothesis of the mystical experience, Ibn Tufayl goes on to elucidate a "glimpse" of the Vision attained in a state of total absorption with the Divine Being.

Hayy saw that the highest sphere had an immaterial essence which was neither the essence of the One nor the sphere itself nor anything different from them.[207] In the second sphere, which is the sphere of the fixed stars, Hayy perceived an essence which was neither the essence of the *haqq*, nor the essence of the preceding sphere nor the

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[204] GM:150; LGAR:123

[205] GM:150; LGAR.123-124.

[206] GM:150; LGAR:125.

[207] Ibn Tufayl uses the analogy of the image of sun in a mirror to explain Hayy's ascent through the ten spheres which are in fact equivalent to the classical theory of Ten Intellects, the "essence" of the highest sphere hence being the equivalent of the Prime Intellect.

sphere itself. It was like the reflection of the image of the sun from one mirror to another. In a similar manner, Hayy perceived the essence of the various spheres, which were neither the essence of the One, nor anything separate from it. They were like the image of the sun reflected from one mirror to another. Hayy experienced, in each of these essences, such beauty and splendour as "eye hath not seen, nor ear heareth, nor hath it entered the heart of man to conceive."[208] Finally, Hayy experienced in the lowest sphere i.e. the world of generation and corruption, an essence which was not the same as those that preceded it, nor was it different. This essence had 70,000 mouths and each mouth had 70,000 tongues,[209] each of which glorified the Essence of the One.[210] Then, Hayy saw his own essence and other essences as part of the Essence - if one could speak of parts and whole which are relative with reference to the Essence. Hayy also perceived those "distorted" essences which were like the sun reflected in an unpolished (rusty) mirror, turned away from the sun and which were afflicted with great pain and sorrow because of their privation.

After a while, Hayy became conscious of his "self" and returned to the "sensible world." He longed to return to the state he had just experienced. Through his contemplation, these spells became longer till it became easy for him to enter into such a state. When Hayy was fifty years old, a new experience came to his threshhold - his

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208 GM:152-153; LGAR:129. See also no. 202.

209 An allusion to the hadīth attributed to the Prophet Muhammad: "God has seven thousand veils of light and darkness. See B. Furūzānfar, *Aḥādīth*, no. 128.

210 This is a probable allusion to the Active Intellect. In Ibn Tufayl's risalah, Hayy's experience with the Active Intellect is quite different when compared to Ibn Sīna or al-Suhrawardī. For example, in Ibn Sīnā, the Active Intellect *is* Hayy himself as the Sage-Initiator whereas Ibn Tufayl's Hayy is not the Active Intellect. Neither is the encounter with the Active Intellect (i.e. the Sage) the starting point of the neophyte's quest - in Ibn Tufayl, it occurs at the culmination of the protagonist's mystical experiences. See H. Landolt, "Suhrawardī's 'Tales of Initiation'," to be published in *JAOS* 107, 4, (1987).

meeting with Absāl.[211]

3.8 Hayy's encounter with Absāl

It is at this stage in the story that one perceives the other side of the picture. We are told that in the island across Hayy's island, there lived two friends - Salāmān and Absāl. Salāmān was the ruler of the other island. The two friends had grown up together - both were religiously inclined and believed in the law, although Salāmān was the literalist and Absāl looked for the inner meaning of the law *(bāṭin al-shar')*. Absāl, requiring something more of society than it could offer and being unable to experience the ineffable within its structure, moved to the island which was believed to be uninhabited where he began to pray.

Hayy came across this curious spectacle of a creature engrossed in rituals of which he knew nothing. Hayy approached him but Absāl, conditioned by the patterns of society, considered Hayy as some kind of savage who posed a threat to him and his faith and so he took flight. Hayy finally overcame him. When Absāl realized that Hayy did not know how to talk, he decided to teach him the symbols of language in order to gain Divine Favour. Absāl offered Hayy some food which he had brought from the island. Hayy reluctantly tasted the food and liked it. He regretted the action immediately as it went against his dietary principles.

Hayy, realising that the encounter with Absāl was a distraction, tried to return to the vision through contemplation but he found that he had lost the facility to do so. Hayy realized that he needed to understand Absāl and what he represented, in order to whet his curiosity and only after that would he be able to return to his earlier ways.

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[211] GM:152-154; LGAR:127-132.

Absāl found Hayy an able student and quick to learn. Hayy related his experiences to Absāl who recognized in them the truth and Absāl perceived that the Angels, the Day of Judgement and such events described in the Book were symbols of that truth. Hayy, on the other hand, learnt a great deal regarding the pattern of society and the picture was not very appealing. In fact, he was deeply troubled that men could live in a state so far removed from the Divine and wished to rescue them. Absāl himself hoped that Hayy could help a small circle of friends who were more advanced than the rest.[212]

In his attempt to understand religion and society, Hayy was faced with some basic issues: What was the necessity of the metaphor when the truth could be perceived as it is? Secondly, Why did man enjoy life and its bounties in excess when he could eat just enough to live? Further, Hayy did not understand the laws with reference to trade and usury which seemed superfluous to him as he had no conception of sin. Hence, Hayy felt it a necessity to reveal to mankind the truth as it was, so that they would have no need of symbols.

3.9 The meeting with Salāmān

Due to fortituous circumstances, a ship which had lost its course, was driven to the island. The crew agreed to take Hayy and Absāl to Salāmān's island. At the other island Hayy met Salāmān and was introduced to Absāl's friends and companions. Hayy tried to explain the inner truths of the religious experience but found that the majority of people were not willing to listen and were content to live the lives of animals. Hayy now realized the reason why the prophet of God had couched his message in symbolic language in order to address the masses according to their capacity.[213]

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[212] GM:156-162; LGAR:136-148.

3.10 The return to the island

Hayy realized the futility of his mission which could do more harm than good. He now saw that the state of nobility (*maqāmihi al-karīm*) was not in the stead of the people in Salāmān's island. Yet if they followed even the exoterics of the positive religion, they would win salvation of a kind. He bid farewell to Salāmān and his people and exhorted them to follow the law and warned them against the neglect of religious rites and the love of the world. Hayy and Absāl returned to their island and passed the rest of days in meditation.[214]

3.11 The Epilogue

In conclusion, Ibn Tufayl declares that the story of Hayy ibn Yaqzān, Salāmān and Absāl makes one understand many things which had hitherto been kept hidden and which are not found in books or modes of discourse. The story is about the hidden sciences which can only be understood by those who have the knowledge of God. The reason why Ibn Tufayl wished to reveal the secret, which had hitherto been jealously guarded, was to refute the selfstyled philosophers of the time. Nevertheless, this secret is still hidden by a thin veil, which can easily be uncovered by people of discernement but which would thicken and could not be breached by those who are unworthy. The author hopes that he has inspired those to whom this work is addressed, to venture along the road which would lead them to a discovery of the mystery of mysteries.[215]

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213 GM:163-165; LGAR:150-151.

214 GM:164-165; LGAR:154-155.

215 GM:165-166; LGAR:151-152.

Chapter IV

AN ANALYSIS OF THE MAJOR THEMES

4.1 How to read the risālah-

The critical question that one encounters when entering into a study of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* is: How does one approach such a study? We have already noted that this Andulasian thinker was well versed in the diverse fields of mathematics, astronomy, physical sciences, philosophy and mysticism. This familiarity shows itself in *Hayy ibn Yaqzān,* wherein Ibn Tufayl utilizes his knowledge of these diverse subjects to the greatest advantage possible, without any real digression from the subject-matter of his book. This is because the greater part of the risālah deals with the *growth* of its protagonist, Hayy who relives the complete development of human civilization.

Within this framework, Ibn Tufayl is able to expound his 'scientific' theories and speculative dialectics through the enquiries of Hayy. In the latter section of the risālah where Hayy encounters Absāl and Salāmān, Ibn Tufayl endeavours to explore issues related to religion, philosophy and mysticism, within the social strata of society The extent to which the diverse approaches of the author have affected recent scholarship and interest in the risālah has been examined earlier in Chapter 2 of the thesis

Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* has been generally referred to as a *philosophical romance.* The form and content of the risālah lend themselves to various interpretations. It serves on the one hand, as text-book material in the secondary and higher secondary schools of the Arab world; on the other hand, it is considered a vehicle of metaphysical ideas and of the confrontation of Aristotelian and Platonic notions within the Islamic milieu. It is not surprising to note that the risālah has been compared to Kipling's *Jungle Book,* to Edward Rice's *Tarzan,* to *Romulus and Remus* and so forth. One might veritably find congruent points through such comparison and we would say that comparisons are healthy, if not taken to the extreme.

A study of the risālah, *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* reveals that there are two major elements prevalent in the book, on whose basis the work may be evaluated. the literary element and the philosophical element. Our method in this chapter will be to analyse the themes of the book by examining these two modes of expression The literary and the philosophical modes being used in a single work presuppose a point of coincidence and combination. Hence, the purpose of this chapter is also to study how the author creates an edifice which is aesthetically satisfying as well as philosophically illuminating.

The first issue that one encounters and which has to be dealt with at the grassroots level[216] is the question of definition Such a question may be of greater relevance to the literary theorist and is not directly textual The risalah has nevertheless been interpreted in different ways by various critics of the work One might ask Is it an allegory, a *récit d'initiation*, a philosophical romance or a philosophical treatise? Where does one draw the line between 'myth' and 'philosophy'? Is such a distinction justifiable in the risālah? Even though the book has been subjected to myriad definitions, most of its critics do not give their reasons for classifying it under a particular *genre* and quite often, the book is not fully understood due to the rigidity or the looseness by which it is defined [217] One may perceive how crucial this issue of definition is by the very fact that

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216 i.e. before it is considered redundant and grows to be a 'weed' in the same way as Ibn Bājjah's (d. 1138) philosopher is considered a weed existing in a corrupt society. *Cf.* Ibn Bājjah, "The Governance of the Solitary," trans by L. Berman in *Medieval Political Philosophy*, ed. R Lerner and M Mahdi (Toronto The Free Press of Glenco, 1963), p 127.

217 Pastor, *opcit.* Pastor makes an interesting attempt to study the risalah as an allegory but he lacked access to the direct sources and background in Arabo-Muslim thought and necessarily builds his argument on some of the translations and other Spanish works Fradkin, *op cit.* also takes up the issue of the literary character of the risālah in his dissertation

1. the work has been seen as belonging to so many different genres.

2. Generally, these definitions are shrouded in an ambiguity and the same or a similar definition has been perceived in different ways by different critics.

4.2 The 'récit d'initiation'

> ...la signification de moments caractéristiques, ceux qui sont à désigner comme "récits d'initiation". En conjoignant cette dernière expression à celle d'"hermétisme", nous en faisons par là même ressortir un caractère fondamental, . étant la palingénésie ou la "répétition" persane d'un "archétype" spirituel ..[218]

Such a definition by Corbin is in reference to the initiatory recitals of al-Suhrawardī but the "repetition" of certain "spiritual archetypes" through the visionary recital also reflects the possibility of some relationship with other "initiatory tales" such as Ibn Tufayl's risālah

We examine further some of the other points which are associated with the *récit d'initiation* or the Mystical Recital. First of all, there are the two dominant figures of the Guide or the Initiator, also referred to as the *Shaykh*, the *pīr*, the *'Alim* who might or might not be or represent an angelic entity such as Gabriel or the Peripatetic 'Active Intellect',[219] and the neophyte or the 'initiated' There is also the 'encounter' between the neophyte and the quasidivine or angelic entity who initiates the mystical aspirant, and a number of 'visions' which are analogous to the stages of the mythical journey undertaken by the neophyte.[220]

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[218] H. Corbin, "Le Récit d'Initiation et l'Hermetisme en Iran," *Eranos,* XVII (1949), 122.

[219] For the various levels and the different forms of the 'initiator', see H. Landolt, "Suhrawardi's 'Tales of Initiation'," to be published in *JAOS*, 6-7.

[220] H Corbin, "Le récit d'initiation," p. 128.

A basic distinction between the allegory and the *récit* is that the message of the allegory may also be conveyed through a rational exposition whereas "the mystical recital says precisely that which can neither be said nor made known other than under the form of visionary symbols perceived by the reciter; ... It is because the *récit* is the theosophical doctrine which becomes a real event in the world of the *Malakut*."[221] Further, what constitutes the 'mystical recital' is the ability or even the necessity for the rational exposition to be expressed in the mystical recital, i e "the doctrine becomes a real event."[222] Speaking of the "visionary *risala*", Thackston briefly notes that ". [the] treatises are concerned primarily with the initation of a neophyte, or aspirant, into the spiritual realm."[223]

We have chosen to compare Ibn Tufayl's risālah with three other 'recitals', all of which are 'initiatic' in the general sense that they all convey an 'esoteric' message of a kind. Corbin has also referred to Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* as a *récit d'initiation* and a *roman philosophique*.[224] The recitals by Ibn Sina and al-Suhrawardi will be examined as belonging to the genre of the *récit d'initiation.* They have also been linked

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221 Corbin, "Sohrawardi et les Platoniciens de Perse," *En Islam Iranien*, vol 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), p 190

222 al-Suhrawardī, *L'Archange Empourpré: quinze traités et récits mystiques traduit du persane et de l'arabe par Henry Corbin* (Paris Fayard, 1976) Corbin divides the fifteen treatises into two sections The first five treatises are an exposition of the *Ishrāqī* doctrine In the second section, the doctrine becomes the living event of the soul What Corbin wishes to emphasize through such an arrangement is the 'passage' which is what may be considered the 'récit d'initiation' "Ce passage ne peut en effet être exprime autrement que sous la forme d'un récit d'initiation spirituelle, et cette initiation est celle qui donne naissance au Sage integral . un sage passé maître aussi bien en savoir philosophique qu'en experience mystique" (p. xvii)

223 W. M Thackston, *The Mystical and Visionary Treatises of Shihabuddin Yahya Suhrawardi* (London The Octagon Press, 1982), p. 5 *Cf* H Landolt, "al-Suhrawardi's 'Tales of Initiation," g-2.

224 Corbin, *Histoire de la philosophie Islamique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1986), p 329

with each other due to their mystical orientation.[225] We begin our study with an even earlier Ismā'īlī example, *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* which Corbin refers to as *roman initiatique*, the latter being a narrative attributed to the Ismā'īlī Yamanite *dā'ī*, Ibn Hawshab Mansūr al-Yaman (d. 302/914).[226] We will also examine the elements of 'myth', 'allegory', 'romance' and 'treatise' in the risālah in order to perceive the extent to which these elements exist within a consideration of the risālah as an initiatory recital.

4.2.1 The risālah and 'al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām'

al-'Alīm w'al-Ghulām is an 'initiatory tale' which elucidates the ideal of being an Ismā'īlī. The story is cast in the dramatic mould of a dialogue which is interspersed with narrative passages. The main character is the 'Alīm or Sage, the Ismā'īlī emissary whose name remains unknown, who in the course of the story, entrusts his knowledge to his pupil, Sālih, whose name is revealed only in the latter part of story. The other characters include the *shaykh* (the representative of the Imām), al-Bukhturī who is Sālih's father, Abū Mālik and some minor characters.

There is a double 'quest' which divides the book into two main sections: first, there is the initation of the pupil (i.e. Sālih) and then, the pupil who is now the teacher, initiates his own pupil. Hence, there is the continuous transmission of the legacy of trust. The *da'wah* calls for a "spiritual rebirth" and the teacher gradually exposes Sālih to the esoteric aspect of Ismailism. The culmination of the neophyte's exposure to

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225 H. Corbin, "Ibn Tufayl," *Encyclopeda of Philosophy*, 1967, IV, pp. 109-110. T. Izutsu, "Ishrāqiyah," *ER*, 1986, X, pp. 296-300.

226 *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* was probably written before the establishment of the Fātimids in the Maghrib. It authorship is sometimes attributed to Mansūr al-Yaman's grandson, Ja'far ibn Mansūr. An edition of the Arabic text is being prepared by Dr. J. W. Morris. See also W. Ivanow, "The Book of the Teacher and the Pupil," in *Studies in Early Persian Ismailism* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1948), pp. 85-113. H. Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne ou l'Esoterisme et le Verbe," *Eranos*, XXXIX (1970), pp. 41-142. We have utilized the partial translations and commentaries by H. Corbin and W. Ivanow in our analysis.

Ismā'īlī gnosis is in his encounter with the *shaykh* and the ritual of his initiation as a *dā'ī* (lit. one who invites).

The scene changes in the second part of the story. Sālih returns to his hometown and meets his father. Sālih is able to appease his father's anger and exposes him to some of what he has learnt in order to prepare him for the later meeting with his master. Their natural relation has been been reversed. Sālih is now spiritually, the father of al-Bukhturī. Sālih and his father's practice of the esoteric religion creates some disquiet in the town. The Elders turn to 'Abd al-Jabbār Abū Malik, the learned *mullā* of the town. Abū Mālik advises them to remain open to a quest of the truth. Abu Mālik, along with some of the townsmen, goes to see al-Bukhturī. In the ensuing dialogue, Abū Mālik understands the secret that is the essence of Isma'īlī gnosis. Now Sālih is the initiate and Abū Mālik the neophyte who will eventually be initiated and hence maintain the continuity of the *da'wah*.[227]

This brief summary of the story does not convey its symbolic reality. We hope, however, that an examination of the elements that this Ismā'īlī tale shares with the other initiatory tales, may serve to illustrate something of its meaning.

We have chosen to compare *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* with *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* for several reasons:

1. In order to examine the 'genre' to which both these works belong and the 'form' of the two works.
2. The 'purpose' of these two books.
3. The 'structure' that is utilized by the two authors.

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[227] See Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne" *op. cit*. for a more detailed summary.

4. The 'characters' in the two works and their interrelation.

5. The salient features that are common to both the works.

al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām is a manifest example that there existed a very early precedent to the risālah, even if it is not in complete concurrence with *Hayy ibn Yaqzān.* There are differences between the two works in content and to an extent, in form. With regard to its form, *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* shares various characteristics with *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām.* But *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* is more like a 'novel' than a 'dramatic piece'. We note that Ibn Tufayl primarily uses the narrative form. Hence, the action is imbued with an *a priori* nature. Although there are several incidents in the biography of Hayy which have a high dramatic appeal, the reader is informed of them *a posteriori* since the risālah is basically a biography.[228] With reference to the mode of communication, the author of *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* uses three approaches:

1. Basically, he uses the dialogue.
2. He also uses the monologue, or the internal rendering of the notions introduced -- as in a *dramatic monologue,* -- where a person relates and reflects events and occurence, anticipating an audience.[229]
3. We also have the anonymous narrator.

Hence, we are able to perceive the existence of a form of the risālah prior to Ibn Tufayl, but similar to it.[230]

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228 The risālah could belong to, what is referred as "armchair drama," meant to be read rather than dramatized, whereas with *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* there still exists the potential for dramatization.

229 One might differentiate the dramatic monologue from the soliloquy where the character speaks to himself, and does not address his audience; the dramatist uses the soliloquy, when he wishes to makes his audience aware of the internal conflicts of his characters.

230 However, the rarity and the unique position of this risālah and the other ones that we examine cannot be underestimated. See also S. M. Yusuf, "Arabic Literature: poetic and prose forms," in *A History of Muslim Philosophy,* ed. M. M. Sharif (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrasowitz, 1963); II, 1012-1013.

A comparison of *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* with *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* reveals that both the works have a similar purpose. Both *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* and *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* tell a *tale* in order to reveal the *haqīqah*, the *sirr* and the method of seeking this knowledge.[231] In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām*, the narrator[232] illustrates to his disciples, the belief of the "people of the truth" through the medium of a story. The purpose of the work as revealed in the Prologue and Epilogue is to reveal the "secrets" of those who have the 'knowledge' of God."[233]

With reference to the 'structure' of a literary work, *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulam* appears to have all the necessary requisites that constitute a dramatic piece:

1. One may divide the dramatic piece into three parts, consisting of a Prologue and two Acts, which may be subdivided into Scenes which are interspersed with interludes by the narrator.[234]
2. We have the 'movement' and the 'change of scene' which are considered important to the formal structure of drama.
3. There is character-development; Sālih and Abu Malik both lose their pomposity, as experiences develop their characters. Hence, there is some sort of *catharsis*.[235]

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231 Ivanow, p. 89.

232 i.e. an 'ālim, henceforth referred to as the narrator in order to distinguish him from the 'ālim in the story that is narrated by him. Corbin calls him *récitant anonyme*. See "L'Initiation Ismaélienne," p. 50.

233 GM:95; LGAR:3.

234 *Cf.* Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne," pp. 49-50. The interludes play a similar role to the *chorus* in classical Greek drama, where the chorus intervened to inform the audience of the events which occured through a period of time and which could not be dramatized due to the paucity of time.

235 *Cf.* Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne," pp 49-50, no. 6.

Further, whereas *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* uses the 'interlude' to provide a break in the action -- a little breathing-space to the reader -- Ibn Tufayl intervenes in the course of the narrative, either as the author, wishing to clarify some theoretical issue;[236] or as the prose-poet.[237]

As with *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* the risālah may also be roughly divided into a Prologue and two chapters; chapter one consisting of Hayy's development in the island and chapter two, being his encounter with Absāl and society. Even though Ibn Tufayl does not use the dramatic form, the work is not devoid of dramatic appeal.[238]

In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* there are five main characters: the narrator, the Sage/'Alim, who is the personification of the Ismā'īlī *dā'ī;* Sālih, the neophyte and disciple who will become a Master in the second part of the book; Abū Mālik, the *mullā;* Sālih's father, al-Bukhturī; and the *shaykh* who is the substitute for the Imām. Besides these characters, there are the minor characters such as the inn-keeper, the people of Sālih's town and the *'ulamā'*.[239] One finds striking parallel figures in Ibn Tufayl's risālah. Hayy may be compared to the 'Alim, Absāl to Sālih, and Abū Mālik to what Salāmān could have been. But the great difference is that Abū Mālik is in the end "converted" or initiated too, whereas Salāmān is not. We also perceive the presence of the author in *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* as

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236 LGAR:126, GM:151.

237 Within the main body of the text, there is not a single verse of poetry by the author himself. Ibn Tufayl *quotes* some verses by al-Ghazālī and others in the Prologue. However, his prose is extremely lucid and at times, quite poetical.

238 We think that Ibn Tufayl was being very logical in presenting the risālah in the narrative form, rather than through the dramatic medium, since his protagonist had not learnt to speak. *Cf.* GM:149; LGAR:121.

239 Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne," p. 50.

1. The Philosopher, who introduces the subject and draws it to a conclusion.
2. The Narrator, who relates the story of Hayy, Salāmān and Absāl.
3. The Interlocutor, who interrupts the narration and intervenes with an evaluation, a comparison, a poetic analogy and so forth. He is also the link between the reader and the narrator.[240]

In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* despite the dramatic form, one also notes the presence of the anonymous narrator "qui se confond avec l'auteur"[241] and who is responsible for the interludes, much in the same manner as the "interlocutor" in *Hayy ibn Yaqzān.*

Both the tales have a similar beginning. The author of *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulam* begins:

> It has reached us that certain bodies of the faithful and some individual *dā'īs* asked their teacher...[242]

Ivanow refers to this method as "reminiscent of what is called 'framework story' in fairy tales."[243] The Prologue to the risālah begins with a similar formula: "You have asked me to unfold to you as well as I am able, the secrets of the oriental philosophy..." and further, in the beginning of the main body of the text:

> Our forefathers, of blessed memory, tell of a certain equatorial island, lying off the coast of India, where human beings come into being without father or mother.[244]

This seems to be a custom usage in the manner referred to by Ivanow.[245]

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240 The diverse roles of the author has also been examined by M. Arkoun and H. Fradkin. See Fradkin, "Ibn Tufayl," pp 18-21. M. Arkoun, "Ibn Tufayl," p. 275 Fradkin examines how the author speaks in different voices to address a public and private audience. Arkoun also studies how one might distinguish between the voices of the narrator and the addressee. Both the authors agree that the various roles are not exclusive and are interchangable.

241 Corbin, "L'Initiation Ismaélienne," p. 50.

242 Ivanow, p. 88.

243 *Ibid.*

244 GM:103; LGAR:20.

245 The method of narrating the story in *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* is a dramatic monologue

In order to be an 'ālim in the truest sense, even the person who has obtained a "glimpse" of the truth must emigrate to faraway lands in order to attain the *haqīqah,* as is the case with both Absāl and the 'Alim.[246] One notes that Absāl leaves his land in order to come to terms with himself and to seek salvation and spiritual triumph in a life of solitude[247] whereas, although contemplation plays an important role for both Absāl and the Sage, the neophyte in *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* is initiated to become the teacher and a *dā'ī* with an active role in society. The motif of emigrating to foreign lands in general mystical literature symbolizes the severance of all worldly, material relations. There somehow exists the notion that in order to be close to the Divine, one must become a stranger amongst men.[248]

With Hayy himself, the question of withdrawal does not arise in the same manner as with Absāl and the 'Alim, due to the fortituous circumstances surrounding his birth. Hayy does not need to emigrate to forsaken lands since he is *born* in such a milieu. This is one of the aspects in which Ibn Tufayl's risālah is unique in comparison to its predecessors and successors. In the mystical allegory, the external journey of the traveller symbolizes an internal journey; the external trials aid in the resolution of certain internal problems. This is the manner in which the journey in *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* and other works of a similar nature might be understood. However, in Ibn

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and a dialogue. Gauthier also suggests that Ibn Tufayl uses a conventional beginning but later critics, such as Fradkin and Garcia Gómez try to trace his predecessors. Ibn Tufayl's usage in this instance seems to be a matter of stylistics.

246 Corbin explains this as the need to pass on knowledge to a disciple according to Ismā'īlī doctrine. See "L'Initiation Ismaelienne," p. 51.

247 GM:157; LGAR:138.

248 Ibn Bājjah, "The Governance of the Solitary," pp. 122-133. W. M. Thackston, trans., *The Mystical and Visionary Treatises, p. 9.*

Tufayl's risālah, Hayy is placed in an island outside the human periphery;[249] he does not need to travel outside himself, physically or symbolically. One grants that he faces all the trials and tribulations that any neophyte on the path necessarily encounters. These encounters have their psychological impact on his development and they *literally* and metaphorically help in his growth.[250] Hence, we are introduced to the notion of the *quest* and the *journey* in both the books.

In the story, *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* the 'Alim enters a small café in a unknown little town[251] and gets into a discussion with a group of inhabitants and attracts the attention of an *educated*[252] youth called Sālih who desires to augment his knowledge of the *zāhir* with the *bātin.*[253] The two persons enter into a dialogue.

The neophyte is filled with a desire to find the person "who possesses the knowledge of the absolute truth, or his trusted agent,"[254] whereas Hayy is eager to

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249 Hayy's island recalls an earthly paradise, far removed from the imperfections of civilization. However, it may not be considered an ideal commonwealth of the Platonic or Utopian variety. We will examine further in section 4.10 why Ibn Tufayl presents an earthly ideal but does not advocate one.

250 Hayy's 'journey' is divided into seven phases, each of a duration of seven years. Hence, the stages of 7 x 7 years have both a literal and symbolic connotation. See below for further commentary on Ibn Tufayl's use of numbers.

251 Corbin comments on the subtlety and the discreteness of the Isma'ili *da'wah. Cf.* "L'Initiation Ismaelienne," p. 53.

252 For the notion of education in the risālah, see Goodman, "Introduction" to *Ibn Tufayl's 'Hayy ibn Yaqzān',* pp. 7-22. See also a recent Arabic edition of the risālah entitled, *al-Fikr al-tarbawī 'inda Ibn Tufayl,* ed 'Abd al-Amir Shams al-Dīn (Beirut: Dar Iqrā, 1984), pp. 29-60. The editor examines educational theories in the risalah in his introduction.

253 *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* is considered to be among the clearest expositions of the Ismā'īlī doctrine of the *zāhir* and *bātin. Cf.* H. Halm, *Kosmologie und Heilslehre der Fruhen Ismā'īlīya* (Wiesbaden: Deutche Morgenlandische Gesellschaft, 1978), p. 134.

254 Ivanow, p. 90. The Ismā'īlī doctrine of Imāmah and *da'wah* system is alluded to.

discover the source of the truth itself since he discovers 'knowledge' not through the external intervention of any other being, divine or terrestrial.

To find his way to the 'person' who is the source of true knowledge, Sālih has to comply with certain conditions: he is bound to secrecy and to treat all matters with a certain respect - i.e. pose questions only when permission is granted. Hayy also has to go through various self-imposed restrictions, but he is not bound to secrecy. Therefore, he is able and *willing* to confide all that he has learnt, not only to Absāl but to the larger sector of society. However, the people are unable to understand him. Ibn Tufayl uses the situation to ironize on the ignorance and the inability of the masses to understand the 'truth'. It is an important part of Hayy's education - this is one of the reasons why he is injected into a society which otherwise has nothing to offer to a man of his stature, other than educating him of its developed vices.[255] Directly or indirectly, the necessity of 'secrecy' is indicated in both cases. Even though Hayy exposes the 'secret', it remains unknown because the people do not possess the ability to understand. Hence, Ibn Tufayl notes in his Epilogue that he also has clothed the 'secret' in his story with a thin veil, which may or may not be uncovered, depending upon the discernment of the readers. Thus, in both the works, there exist some 'restrictions' associated with initiation and the rituals required to attain the *haqīqah.*

The notion of *wilāyah* is also similiar in both cases. Once he is initiated and has taken the oath, Sālih enters "the *awliyā'* of God."[256] In *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* also, there is the repeated usage of *ahl al-wilāyah,* mostly contrasted with *ahl al-nazarīyah.*[257]

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[255] GM:163-164; LGAR:151-153.

[256] Ivanow, p. 91.

[257] This issue will be discussed further in the thesis.

Another parallel that pervades both the works is the cosmology and the symbolism of numbers, especially the number seven, which has its special niche in Ismā'īlī thought. The significance of number seven figures in the lesson rendered to Sālih, who learns that the *kun fa yakūn* (Be and it becomes)[258] formula contains seven letters (in Arabic script), that there are seven heavens, the symbols of the Seven Prophets and seven earths, symbols of the Seven Imāms of every Prophet and seven days in a week.[259] Other numbers, such as *two* and *twelve* are also discussed. In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* there is no discussion on the unique position of 'one' as the base of all numbers, whereas the final understanding Hayy reaches is that all "essences" are of the "Essence" and are one. In *Hayy ibn Yaqzān,* the number seven also plays a very significant and symbolic role besides contributing to the structure of the whole story, since Hayy's 'learning process' is divided into seven periods of seven years.[260]

The two works share common ground in their symbolism of light. In the risālah, *nur* connotates the expansion of the grace of God and objects are lit according to their capacity to receive this light which flows unceasingly from God. In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* there is a distinction between *material* or visible light and *spiritual* light.

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258 Qur'ān, 2:111.

259 The use of numeric cosmology is prevalent in both the works *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* already shows the traces of an elaborate cosmology although in this text, it might seem quite basic when compared to later Ismā'īlī thought, but one should rememember this work is amongst the earliest surviving literature of the Isma'ilis. Whereas Hayy's vision and ascension of the seven spheres is symbolic of the prophet's *mi'rāj,* Ibn Tufayl does not allude to the lifting of the seven veils in this instance. This is quite surprising since *h-j-b* and its derivatives are frequently used in different contexts in the text

260 This suggests a close parallel to the Ismā'īlī pattern of the seven prophetic *dawr,* each containing seven imāms. One might also see the structural similarities between Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* and Abū Ya'qūb al-Sijistanī's *Kashf al-Mahjūb* which is, interestingly, divided into seven *maqālat,* each containing seven sections. See al-Sijistānī, *Kashf al-Mahjūb,* ed. H. Corbin (Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve; Teheran: Institut Franco-Iranien, 1949)

> Material light is deposited in the sun and other luminaries whereas Spiritual light is enshrined in the 'houses' of prophethood ...those who receive His inspiration ...reveal it to ordinary mortals.[261]

The notion of light in both the works affirms the continuity of divine inspiration. In *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* light is often equated to the 'spirit' *(rūḥ)* which joined the "mass of clay" through the command of God, due to which Hayy was created. Further, Hayy equated fire with the heavenly bodies whom he perceived as being 'pure' receptacles of the 'essence'. But while *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* still affirms the notion of the Guide, *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* shows the possibility for the exceptional individual to attain this *light* without any mediation. In both cases, however, it remains a 'grace' issuing forth from the divine and which entails certain extraordinary qualities on the part of the recepient.[262]

In keeping with the relation of the visible with the spiritual, we are told that everything has a *zāhir* (visible) and *bāṭin*[263] (hidden) aspect. The analogy of the body and soul is given, where body represents the *sharī'ah* while the soul represents *dīn* i.e. the esoteric doctrine of religious knowledge.[264] The doctrine of the *zāhir* and *bāṭn* which also occurs in *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* is central to *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām.*

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261 Ivanow, p. 93 This symbolism of light is used to explain an Ismā'īlī *da'wah* system of the *natiq* (=Prophet), *wasī* (successor) *Imām, bāb* (Door i.e. to the Imām), *hujjat* (representative), *naqīb* (officer), and the *'ulamā'* (teachers). *Cf.* Ivanow, p 92, no. 1. For a more detailed exposition of this system, see Abbas Hamdani, "Evolution of the Organizational Structure of the Fātimī Da'wah; the Yemeni and Persian Contribution," *AS,* III (1976), p. 89.

262 In the risālah, the *Philosophus Autodidactus* is 'aided' by his innate *fitrah,* the locale etc. to be the receptacle of the spirit. However, the Qur'ānic view and the view held by muslim mystics does not really correspond to a materialistic or evolutionistic concept of "nature" or the equation of *fitrah* with *tabula rasa;* it is, finally considered to be "god-given (*fitrat Allāh*). Gauthier and Ibn al-Khatīb (cited in Chapter 2) also refer to the importance of the *fitrah.*

263 In fact there is a *bāṭn* of the *bāṭn* just as Ibn Tufayl leaves a thin veil, even when he reveals the secret through his story.

264 Ivanow, p. 94.

4.2.2 Ibn Ṭufayl and Ibn Sīnā

With reference to Ibn Sīnā's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* and *Salāmān wa Absāl*,[265] we use these as a basis of comparison for reasons which are somewhat different from the first example. Briefly, these two risālahs share an almost identical title with Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*. Further, the stated purpose of Ibn Ṭufayl's risalah is, according to the Prologue, "to unveil the secrets of the oriental philosophy mentioned by Ibn Sina." and it is also mentioned that Ibn Ṭufayl *borrowed* the names of his characters from Ibn Sina. This is probably true; it has also resulted in confusing the two books with each other.[266]

An idea also existed that Ibn Ṭufayl's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* is the Arabic version of Ibn Sīnā's recital - a notion suggested by Ibn Khallikān.[267] Further, the attribution of the theories of Spontaneous Generation -- actually referred to in Ibn Ṭufayl's risalah -- by Ibn Khaldūn as belonging to Ibn Sīnā's risālah added to the confusion that was repeated time and again. This also resulted in the attribution of Ḥayy's spontaneous generation to Ibn Sīnā's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*.[268] Our examination of the risalahs and studies in recent scholarship have confirmed that, apart from the *dramatis personae* and the use of the genre, Ibn Ṭufayl does not seem to have included much of Ibn Sina's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*.

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265 See M. A. F. Mehren, ed., "L'Allegorie mystique Hay ben Yaqzân," 1st fasc. *Traites Mystiques d'Abou Alî al-Hosain b. Abdallah b. Sînâ ou d'Avicenne* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1889) and H. Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, trans. by W. R. Trask, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960). *Cf.* A. M. Goichon, "Ḥayy ibn Yaḳẓān," *EI*^{2}, III, 330-334.

266 Mehren, "L'Allegorie de Hay ben Yaqzan," pp. 8-9. Corbin, "Ibn Ṭufayl," *EI*^{2}, 109-110.

267 "perhaps he (i.e. Ibn Sīnā) wrote it in Persian, and so we may have an Arabic translation of it, made by Ibn Thofeil" - cited by Goichon in *EI*^{2} p. 331.

268 Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqadimmah*, II, 371-372.

What makes Ibn Sīnā important within this typology is the mystical qua oriental philosophy which was to be the inspiration for later writers such as Ibn Tufayl and al-Suhrawardī to venture into the realms of mystical experience treading the path of intellectual speculation. The risālah shares some common elements with the Hermetistic version of *Salāmān and Absāl* that had been translated from the Greek by Hunayn ibn Ishāq [269] One might question whether Ibn Tufayl borrowed these details from the Hermetistic version or whether these details were taken from Ibn Sīnā's version of the tale.[270] Hence, the very fact that Ibn Tufayl uses the same *dramatis personae,* even though he departs from the story and philosophy of Ibn Sīnā, calls for some sort of an awareness on the part of the reader

1. as to how the genre had been used prior to Ibn Tufayl;
2. what was the thesis presented by Ibn Sīnā and
3. a knowledge of the symbolic character-types of the *dramatis personae* and how these symbols are transformed by Ibn Tufayl.

It has been said that Ibn Tufayl's risālah lacks the symbolic richness of Ibn Sīnā's tale of the same title and we concur to some extent with this view[271] but we also wish to show how Ibn Tufayl's treatment is so unique and unconventional in comparison to the other works with which it shares common ground.

Without undermining the beauty of Ibn Sīnā's risālah, one notes that

> Le style d'Ibn Tufayl est beaucoup plus beau, plus fertile en imagination; son exposé doctrinal est mille fois plus clair, plus étoffé, plus riche en aperçus, tandis que le recit d'ibn Sînâ est très lourd, trop chargé d'allégories, alambique et partout, susceptible de plusieurs

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269 For further details regarding the Greek tale that had been translated into Arabic by Hunayn ibn Ishāq, see Corbin, *Avicenna,* pp. 209-223

270 *Ibid.,* pp. 223-242.

271 *Cf.* Arkoun, "Ibn Tufayl," p. 273 Corbin, *Avicenna,* p. 135.

interprétations.[272]

What more does one need to illustrate the extent to which Ibn Tufayl departed from his predecessor. However, one can neither avoid the issue whether Ibn Tufayl, with the aid of his clear style, shorn of ambiguities likewise presented a clear thesis of the problems that he addressed. These problems were undoubtedly different from those addressed by Ibn Sīnā:

> Les problèmes traités dans les deux récits ne sont pas les mêmes. Un des thèmes majeurs du récitv [sic] d'Ibn Tufayl est le problème de l'accord entre la philosophie et la religion, puis celui de la double vérité· vérité pour le vulgaire et vérité pour l'élite, puis celui de la societé humaine ıci bas - trois problèmes complètement absents des préoccupations du récit aviciennlen.[273]

Brockelmann alludes to Ibn Sīnā's recital as a "dry allegory" when compared to Ibn Tufayl's "epistemological fantasy" [274] However, H. Corbin's work has established the symbolic verity of Ibn Sīnā's work.[275]

Mehren also notes·

> Ainsi la personnification de la notıon philosophique *Hay b. Yaqzân;* a provoqué l'ouvrage très renommé, mais d'un contenu bien différent, d'Ibn Thofeil;[276]

In this context, Badawı also remarks:

> Sı on compare le récit d'Ibn Sînâ avec celui d'Ibn Tufayl, on s'aperçoit tout de suite de l'énorme difference entre les deux aussi bien du point de vue de la composition littéraire que du point de vue du contenu

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272 Badawi,"Avicenne en Espagne musulmane pénetration et polemique," in *Milenario de Avicena* (Madrid· Instituto Hispano Arabe de Cultura, 1981), pp. 13-14

273 *Ibid*, p. 14

274 C. Brockelmann, *A History of the Islamic Peoples,* tr J Carmichael and M. Perlmann (New York: G P Putnam's Sons, 1944), p 210

275 Corbin, *Avicenna, op. cit.*

276 Mehren, "L'Allegorie Hay b. Yaqzan," p 8.

philosophique.[277]

Ibn Ṭufayl's use of the same *dramatis personae* implies that he meant to convey something similar to his readers; if not the deep symbolic figuration of Ibn Sīnā then, at least some sort of representation to a greater or lesser extent. As for the meaning given to them by Ibn Sīnā himself, one notes that according to his *Kitāb al-Ishārāt* (III,105) " Salāmān is a figure typifying thyself, while Absāl is a figure typifying the degree that thou hast attained in mystical gnosis."[278] Corbin notes that Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzi, in his commentary on Ibn Sīnā's *Ishārāt,* perceived that Salāmān must represent Adam and Absāl, Paradise,[279] while Nasīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī perceives Ibn Sīnā's Salāmān as the typification of the thinking soul *(nafs nāṭiqa)* and Absāl as typifying the *intellectus contemplativus.*[280] Such a degree of symbolization would not fit into an interpretation of Ibn Ṭufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* but one can possibly trace a few similarities in the characters portrayed by Ibn Ṭufayl. For example, Rāzi's interpretation of Salāmān as representative of man and Absāl as Paradise is not entirely out of context with reference to Ibn Ṭufayl, where Salāmān represents 'the outward civilized being' and Absāl as the one who seeks beyond the world i.e. the other world or Paradise.

Similarly, Corbin's understanding of Ibn Sīnā's Salāmān as the practical intellect would also correspond to Ibn Ṭufayl's Salāmān, since Salāmān is in this case, the representative of the exoteric of the Divine revelation.[281] Comparing Ibn Ṭufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* with Ibn Sīnā's, Corbin notes

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[277] Badawi, "Avicenne en Espagne," p. 13.

[278] The translation is by H. Corbin: see *Avicenna,* p. 206.

[279] *Ibid.,* p. 207

[280] *Ibid.,* p. 227.

[281] *Ibid.,* pp 227-228.

> For Ibn Tufayl also, this name is that of the absolute hermit, mysteriously abandoned or spontaneously born on a desert island; in the absence of any human master and of all social falsification, the hermit becomes the perfect Sage.... Salamān...typifies the practical and social spirit and Absāl, contemplative and mystical.[282]

Hence, the manner in which Salāmān and Absāl have been interpreted in Ibn Sīnā do contribute to some extent to our understanding of these characters in Ibn Tufayl. Furthermore, one could say that Ibn Tufayl felt free to transform the characters, just as Ibn Sīnā himself, in his own version of the *Recital of Salāmān and Absal* departs from the Hermetistic version, which had been translated into Arabic by Hunayn Ibn Ishāq and was known to Nasīr al-Dīn Tūsī and later, amplified by Jāmī, in his version of the tale.[283] As for the figure of Hayy, he is only the *shaykh-Initiator* (or the Active Intellect) for Ibn Sīnā, while for Ibn Tufayl he has a personal history and is a human being (albeit an extraordinary one).

There might well be other similarities between the recitals of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Tufayl; for instance, one notes that in Ibn Sīnā's *Salāman and Absal,* the manner in which Absāl is rescued by a wild beast is almost identical in many details to Hayy's rescue.[284] It is true that the upbringing of an abandoned person by animals is not unique to either Ibn Sīnā or Ibn Tufayl and is a motif that is prevalent in early literature. However, the link between the two philosophers makes it probable that Ibn Tufayl borrowed these details from Ibn Sīnā. In the same manner, one might find many congruent points between the two writers' risālahs but the treatment of the matter as well as the purpose of the two works cannot be said to be identical. Within a framework which serves as a base for both the writers, Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Sīnā created their works according to the ideas and ideals that they wished to present.

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282 Corbin, "Ibn Tufayl," *EP,* 1967, IV, p. 109.

283 For a discussion of these masters, see Corbin, *Avicenna,* pp. 205-206.

284 *Ibid.,* p. 225.

4.2.3 Ibn Ṭufayl and al-Suhrawardī

There is a nuance of difference regarding the comparison between Ibn Ṭufayl and al-Suhrawardī and the link that binds these two authors to Ibn Sīnā. First, on the basis of historical records, we know that Ibn Ṭufayl and al-Suhrawardī were not too far apart in time although geographically, they were located in the West and in the East, respectively. This raises the question of historical influence but also that of a similar phenomenon occuring in Eastern and Western Islām simultaneously. We address this issue very briefly since it is basically conjectural, but we think it to be an interesting one, as is the brief flowering of philōsophy under an otherwise hostile milieu during the reign of the Almohads.

The second point of reference between al-Suhrawardī and Ibn Ṭufayl is their allusion to Ibn Sīnā's *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* and *Salāmān wa Absāl.* Both of them also use the genre of the initiatory tale to convey their experiences. Third, both of them attempted to illustrate or elaborate Ibn Sīnā's oriental or illuminative philosophy[285] and certain similarities in their works, have caused recent critics and early historians alike to link them both to the *Ishrāqī* tradition.[286] The theme of "oriental" philosophy which had been briefly alluded to by Ibn Sīnā, is elaborated and emphasized by al-Suhrawardī in his philosophy of *ishrāq.* The light imagery is also present in Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah The purpose of this comparison is not to uncover the exact points of similarity between the authors but rather, to examine how these writers have moulded the same raw material to suit their particular view-point. Hence, the value of Ibn

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285 See also A. Amīn, ed. *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān fī Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Ṭufayl wa al-Suhrawardī* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif lil-Ṭibā'ah wa al-Nashr, 1959) The modern reader may be unsure as to what 'oriental philosophy' really is inspite of the proliferate and diverse views on this issue. *Cf.* Corbin, *Avicenna,* pp 271-278. See above no. 129.

286 see S. Munk, "Ibn Tofaïl," in *Mélanges,* pp. 413. G. Quadri, *La philosophe arabe,* p. 166. H. Z. Ulken, *La Pensée de l'Islam,* pp. 529-530

Tufayl's work may be perceived not just through similarities and complementary traits but also in its contrasting views in relation to his predecessors.

al-Suhrawardī, possibly in the same manner as Ibn Ṭufayl was able to perceive something missing in Ibn Sīnā's "oriental philosophy" and intended to fill in this gap. He complains in *Qissat al ghurbat al-gharbīyah* (A Tale of Occidental Exile).

> When I saw the tale of Ḥayy Ibn Yaqzan, I was struck by the fact that although it contained marvels of the spiritual words and profound allusions, it was devoid of intimations to indicate the greatest stage, which is the 'great calamity' that is stored away in divine books, deposited in the philsophers' symbols and hidden in the tale of Salaman and Absal put together by the author of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan* only at the end of the book, where it is said:'Sometimes certain solitaries among men emigrated towards Him',[287]

Hence we see that al-Suhrawardī attempts to depart from Ibn Sīnā by divulging the greatest stage, alluded to by Ibn Sīnā. We note further that Ibn Ṭufayl's aim is seemingly identical i.e to indicate the "secret" which had been partially revealed by Ibn Sīnā in his own risālah.[288] Like Ibn Ṭufayl, al-Suhrawardī elsewhere alludes to the "treasures hidden under a thin veil" which can be discovered by the discerning reader.[288] But in the case of al-Suhrawardī, the notion of the "Orient of Light" becomes *central* whereas in Ibn Ṭufayl, it is barely alluded to and furthermore only in the Prologue rather than in the main body of the text.[289]

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287 al-Suhrawardī, *The Mystical and Visionary Recitals*, p. 100.

288 al-Suhrawardī, "Kitāb al-Mashārī' wa-l-Mutārahāt," in *Opera Metaphysica et Mystica*, ed. H. Corbin (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaasi, 1945), I, pp. 483-484.

289 GM:95, 103; LGAR:3, 20. S. H. Nasr classifies al-Suhrawardī's works into five categories

1. The large didactic and doctrinal treatises in Arabic consisting of the *Muqāwamāt, Mutārahāt, Talwīhāt* and the *Hikmat al-Ishraq* which expounds the *Ishrāqī* doctrine.

2. Shorter didactic treatises whose subject matter is somewhat like the tetraology, written both in Arabic and Persian.

3. The shorter initiatory and mystical romances. They include *Qissat*

With al-Suhrawardī, one notes a certain amount of flexibility in his use of the genre. Unlike Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān,* the initiatory tales by al-Suhrawardī are deliberately symbolic:

> Each treatise deals with a particular 'situation' within the spiritual universe. There is no expounding of doctrine explicitly but the depicting of a scene in which all the actors as well as the background symbolize the different facets of the journey of the initiate towards spiritual realization and union with the 'Beloved'.[290]

Thus, while one might see certain similarities between the initiatory recitals of al-Suhrawardī and Ibn Tufayl's risālah, there are also many differences - the initiatory recitals of al-Suhrawardī have a certain quality which unites them and although, each risālah is different, they need to be seen as a whole. A point of similarity and difference between Ibn Tufayl and al-Suhrawardī is the figure of the 'Guide'. Ibn Tufayl's Hayy might be equated to the Sage in Ibn Sīnā's risālah but in al-Suhrawardī, there are various figures of the 'guide'. This "enigmatic figure" takes up different forms, sometimes "the figure of the initiator appears split in two: in a single recital, as in "On the State of Childhood" where he is the schoolmaster (*shaykh*) and the *sūfī pīr* who

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al-Ghurbat al-Gharbīyah (A Tale of Occidental Exile), Awāz-ı par-i Jıbra'īl (The Chant of Gabriel's Wing), Lughat-ı mūrān (The Language of the Ants), Risālah fī hālat al-tufūlīyah (Treatise on the state of childhood), Rūzī bā jamā'at-i sūfiyān (A Day with the Community of sūfis), Risālat al-abrāj (A Treatise on the Nocturnal Journey), safir-ı sīmurgh (The Song of the Griffin) and *'Aql-ı surkh (The Empurpled Angel).* These tales, which are the *récits d'initiation* of al-Suhrawardī, may be considered together since they epitomize the elements associated with the 'recital' which has been discussed above.

4. The treatises whose authorship is somewhat uncertain.

5. Translations and commentaries.

6. Prayers and supplications.

See *Three Muslim Sages* (New York: Caravan Books, 1976), pp. 58-59.

290 "The Persian works of shaykh al-Ishrāq Shihāb al-Din Suhrawardī," *IQ,* XII, (1968), p. 4.

bears the features of an angel. Elsewhere, he appears as the "Active Intellect" and the "Eternal Wisdom".[291]

With Ibn Tufayl, the tale presented is of a different calibre; it is much more structured and more formal and is quite close in such aspects of presentation to al-Suhrawardī's didactic treatises. Like the risālah, these treatises also utilize technical terminology without being too artificial, although they also contain symbolism and the language of *ishrāqi* wisdom.[292]

As in *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* just as one might trace the phases in Hayy's life, starting with physics, to biology, psychology and metaphysics, so can one see such movement in al-Suhrawardī's tales. Again, both the authors use the language of the Peripatetics in their physics, but utilize an illuministic and mystical doctrine in metaphysics. However, Ibn Tufayl tends to use the language of the peripatetics to a greater extent and hardly utilizes the technical vocabulary of the *sūfis* whereas it is difficult to draw a line between al-Suhrawardī's 'doctrinal' and 'mystical' works Sections of his 'treatises' are very mystical and many of his mystical works are also informative on 'scientific' and 'practical' matters such as geographical information on different climates and spheres etc.[293]

There is one other difference between the two writers. With al-Suhrawardī, there is the constant reference to the ancient sages - Greek and Persian, whereas although the views of Ibn Tufayl's predecessors are summarized in the Prologue to the risalah, he

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291 For further details on the diverse roles of the *shaykh-initiator* in al-Suhrawardī, see H. Landolt, "Suhrawardī's 'Tales of Initiation'," g. 6. See also H. Corbin, *L'Archange Empourpré*, xvii-xix.

292 Nasr, "The Persian Works," p. 5.

293 See also Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, pp. 64-66, 74-76.

does not refer to them directly in the text of his risālah. Both of them turn to an earlier precedent which however, is different in each case. Further, the worldview which Hayy comes up with in isolation, concurs with Aristotelian and Neoplatonic precepts and hence is generally in confirmation of the views of his predecessors.

The symbolic language is used by al-Suhrawardī to establish the presence of immutable archetypes -- a kind of "Platonic Forms" -- and hence, one might say, to relate between exoteric forms and esoteric knowledge. In Ibn Tufayl also, the reconciliation between religion and philosophy is not a facile affirmation since Hayy's isolation is a means of establishing the existence of permanent ideals and relating these to temporary, exoteric manifestations. There is no angelic 'encounter' as with al-Suhrawardī. One might say that the heavenly locale in which Hayy lives precludes any necessity for the divine intermediary encounter and allows Hayy to perceive the *haqīqah* through his own efforts.

4.2.4 A Summary of the comparison

We summarize below the points of conjunction and the difference that have come up in our comparison of the 'recitals' by Ibn Tufayl, al-Suhrawardī, Ibn Sīnā and *al-'Alım w'al-Ghulām.*

1. All four authors aim to convey an "esoteric" kind of knowledge to their readers Ibn Tufayl conveys the idea that 'philosphical arguments' (*bahth*) represent a stage which aids in the understanding of this knowledge, which in itself can only be obtained through "contemplation" and "experience". This emphasis on the "experiential mode" of knowledge exists *al-'Alım w'al-Ghulām* too, but in this Ismā'īlī work, there is a greater emphasis on the *shaykh* who initiates the neophyte. al-Suhrawardī, elsewhere alludes to the combination of the speculative method and mystical experience.[294]

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[294] See the *Muqadimmah* to the *Hikmat al-Ishrāq* in *Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques* (Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien, Paris: Librairie Adrien Maisonneuve, 1952), II, pp.

2. In Ibn Sīnā, the point of departure is the "oriental" philosophy which is alluded to in his *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* and which is juxtaposed against the "occident". This, of course, is a spiritual typology rather than a physical geography. In al-Suhrawardī's *Ghurbat al-gharbīyah,* the city of Qayrawān symbolises the West. In Ibn Ṭufayl also, there is the complete contrast between the two islands which represent two different and contrasted worlds.

3. The purpose of the tales is to "unveil the secret". The discovery of this mystery is the fate of certain "solitaries - men who emigrated towards Him" such as Ibn Sīna's 'Hermit', Ibn Ṭufayl's Ḥayy, the 'Alim, as well as Absāl. In this stance, Ibn Ṭufayl departs from his predecessor by assigning Hayy the solitude free from human contact from the very beginning. The difference is that Ḥayy is no longer the "Guide" (i.e the *shaykh* or "Sage" in Ibn Sīnā) -- at least not from the beginning, although later in the story he assumes his traditional role -- rather, he is the "solitary" after Ibn Bajjah and the ideal *human* being (not an Angel-Intellect).

4. The discovery process leads to a journey and a quest; Ḥayy's journey is not merely symbolic but includes his own personal history and *actual* development: physical, psychological and spiritual. In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* the journey is very important since it ensures the continuation of the *da'wah* and hence, of Isma'ilism. In al-Suhrawardī, it is the journey of the soul and its passage from the material world to the divine. Ḥayy's life is also the enactment of the eternal journey but due to his unique vantage point, Ḥayy is in himself -- and in his experiences which are free from the temptations and impurities of daily life -- the truth without symbols. where there is no disguising of truth, there is no need for symbols.[295] In Ibn Ṭufayl, the journey is literal and symbolical and is divided into seven stages - each stage marking the end of a particular phase as well as indicating a step forward. Since Ibn Tufayl, within the structure of the 'story'

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[295] See below the discussion of Ḥayy as representative of *ḥaqīqah* in section 4.5.

itself, assigns Hayy with his unique role that allows him to 'grow up' outside society and in contact with the Divine, he (i.e. Ibn Ṭufayl) is able to use recital in a manner which is very different from its earlier use - whose ultimate purpose remains the same according to the statement by their authors, i.e. to reveal the secret that is esotericism.

5. Education implies "growth" and "awareness" in the different thinkers. We see that Sālih who is considered an educated youth from the beginning, grows further in wisdom through a gradual learning process. Even though Ibn Ṭufayl's Hayy is born under fortunate circumstances, his learning process continues through his life. He reaches the pinnacle of knowledge at the mature age of 50 years. Ibn Sīnā's Hayy is a combination of youth and wisdom; his visage revealed the freshness and beauty of a youth combined with the maturity and wisdom of a sage.[296] In *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām,* spiritual growth reverses the natural relation between father and son. After his 'initiation', Sālih is spiritually, the father of al-Bukhtarī, his biological father.

6. Both Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī were pioneers of the trend labelled 'intellectual *sūfism'.* This is illustrated by the allusions to mysticism in his *Ishārāt* as well as in his *Recitals.* Ibn Ṭufayl himself, in the Prologue, is critical of the *Shifā'* which represented Ibn Sīnā's "rational philosophy", but is filled with praise when he refers to the *Ishārāt.* Thus, with Ibn Sīnā, we have a number of works adhering to the Peripatetic School which may contain elements of mysticism. However, the Avicennian recitals may be perceived apart from his philosophical works.[297] In al-Suhrawardī also, intellectual speculation is one of the stages that precede mystical experience. He theoretically separates the two genres i.e. the treatise and the recital, although one finds that the

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296 Corbin, *Avicenna,* p. 137.

297 This is not a universal view, see A. M. Goichon's article "Hayy ibn Yakzān" in *EI*^{2}, III, 330-334 She feels that Ibn Sīnā's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* adheres very closely to the other major works of its author in their philosophical content. See also Georges C. Anawati, "Gnose et philosophe" in *Etudes de philosophie musulmane* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1974), pp. 160-173. Anawati succinctly sums the two approaches that have been taken by A. M. Goichon and H. Corbin

two often interlap in his works. In the prologue to his magnum opus, *Hikmat al-Ishrāq*, al-Suhrawardī advocates the combination of the two methods. In his recitals, al-Suhrawardī explores through the 'tale', the 'philosophy' which has been theoretically expounded in the treatise and which becomes somewhat redundant in the realm of experience (i.e. two different modes) which the recitals usher in. Ibn Tufayl presents not merely the 'mystical recital' but also expounds theoretical speculations within the genre. He employs the genre in such a manner that he presents both the mystical experiences of the recital and the theoretical disquisitions of the treatise. In Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān*, one is presented theory in a form that is apparently clear and devoid of obscure symbols - at the same time, its purpose is not divorced from conveying the same 'message' that the symbolic representation aims at.

What is the effect of this combination and what are the results? How does it compare in the final analysis with the other presentations?

1. By using the 'tale' for the didactic presentation of theories which are generally assigned to the 'treatise', Ibn Tufayl retains the clarity of expression and the value of logical exposition associated with the treatise; at the same time by using the form of the tale, he imbues these theories with a modicum of actuality
2. Through the use of the mythical elements, Ibn Tufayl reenacts mystical experience and the value of that experience.

However, there remain questions open to interpretation: One may well assume that this is a deliberate attempt on the part of the author to leave space for the *ta'wil* which is so essential to the recital, as used by Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī. Ibn Tufayl uses the tale in order to appeal to various readers and allow them to 'understand' the experiences it engenders according to their capacity. Thus, he present three types of

characters for the reader to associate with: Hayy, Salāmān and Absāl.[298]

Another issue that we examine is whether Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* gains or loses due to its author's particular approach. We note that the mystery which is so important in the enactment of the myth is found in a pallid form in Ibn Tufayl due to his logical presentation, although it is not entirely lacking.[299] H. Corbin possibly refers to the risālah as a *récit d'initiation* in order to indicate that it is not completely devoid of the symbolic element which is associated with the recitals of Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī. *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* may be considered a *récit d'initiation* in the sense of being an invitation for the neophyte to be initiated to knowledge of a kind.

The risālah may not be considered to be a typical *récit d'initiation* in the particularized sense in which it is used by Corbin in his works on Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī where the prerequisite archetypal figures such as the Angel as the Inititator and the initiated neophyte and the 'encounter' between them are an essential part of the visionary recital. Unlike Ibn Sīnā's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* and al-Suhrawardī's angelic "guides", Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* does not from the beginning, act as a shaykh or sage: rather he is in himself the "neophyte", whose learning process, accomplished by himself in his solitary island, replaces the formal initiation by another teacher. It is only at the end of Hayy's "learning process" that he envisions the "essences", including the one corresponding to the traditional notion of the Active

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298 See below section 4.5 on 'Character types'.

299 If we were to compare the birth of Christ with the birth of Hayy, we would note how the miraculous sense of awe and sacredness that surrounds the birth of Christ is lacking in Hayy's spontaneous generation. Although the birth of Christ and of Hayy may be considered as miracles, which are extraordinary events which occur only through the grace of God, while one harkens the sense of the 'sacred,' the other presents the sense of the 'scientific'. This is just an example to illustrate our point. On the other hand, whereas the initiate in *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* has to die to the self, the very spontaneous generation of Hayy --his being born alive by the spirit absolves him from having to die to the self, in order to live.

intellect; but they cannot be said to play the role of the initiator as in Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī.

Yet, we note that general and *sūfī* notions of initiation are a distinct part of the risālah. One of these elements may be seen in the fact that Hayy's learning process is structured in periods of 7 x 7 years. It is at the end of these 7 cycles -- corresponding to the coming of the *qıyāmah*[300] in early Ismā'īlī history -- that Hayy has his mystical vision of the "essences". Following this, we have a kind of "encounter" between the "shaykh" and "neophyte" in the second part of the risālah : Hayy's meeting with Absāl. Interestingly, however, this "encounter" does not lead to a one-way initiation, but the roles of *shaykh* and neophyte now seem to be interchangeable. For, while Hayy opens Absāl's mind for the deepest Truth, he also becomes Absāl's disciple in so far as the rules of the other island are concerned. Hayy initiates Absāl into a comprehension of his religion as concurrent with mystical 'truths'. Absāl initiates Hayy to the knowlege of the revealed religion. This exchange of roles sets Ibn Tufayl's *récıt d'initiation* rather apart from its Avicennan and Suhrawardian counterparts. It has, however, a famous precedent in the *sūfī* tradition, namely, the "encounter" between Abū Yazīd al-Bastāmī and Abū 'Alī al-Sindī: the latter, while being al-Bastāmī's teacher in *tawhīd* and ultimate truths *(haqā'ıq)*, was his disciple in the practice of religious obligations.[301]

In *Hayy ıbn Yaqzān* the notion of the 'quest' and the 'journey' occur in a different way when compared to other initiatory tales because Hayy is from the very beginning on his island and will be so again, at the end! There is no sudden realizatıon of the futility of worldly attachments and the start of a quest towards the Truth; with Absāl

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300 See also D. B. Macdonald, "Kıyāmah," *EI*, II, 1048-1051.

301 Abū Nasr al-Sarrāj, *Kıtāb al-Luma' fı al-Tasawwuf* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1914), p. 177. See also R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslım Mysticısm* (London: Athlone Press, 1960), pp. 93-94.

there is such a movement but Hayy's cirumstances make these 'norms' unnecessary. Neither is there a return to the simple and pure ways of the natural order of being -- as one probably perceives in the educational philosophy of Dewey and Rousseau -- mainly because of the lack of contact with the social order. The experiences and perceptions of Hayy would have been exceptional if he were within society and would probably have been imbued with a sense of the supernatural. In his situation, although the experience is no less exceptional, there is no basis for comparison with the experiences of other human beings. Further, Hayy's experience and life in harmony with nature aids in his treading the path towards the Mystical Vision. The atmosphere in Hayy's island is definitely much more naturalistic and rational than in Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī and there is no explicit intervention of supernatural figures or agents but Hayy ends up with the mystical vision of the One, of which all Nature is but a shadow. The clarity of the work and its simplicity ought not to detract from its message which is very close to what is expressed in the symbolic works of Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī. Hence, the risālah has highly symbolic overtones although it does not use the methodology of the symbolic works by Ibn Sīnā and al-Suhrawardī.

Although Hayy has no *murshid,* it is the 'spirit' which transforms a mass of clay, which initiates Hayy to Life. Nature sustains this life and initiates him to her mysteries. *Yaqzān* also denotes Hayy's "spiritual father" or guide[302] More specifically, with reference to polar relationships, both Hayy and Absāl are initiators for each other. Hence, both are essential to each other. Hayy had the potentiality for perfection since he had been born through the "spirit" and possessed the innate "god-given" disposition *(fitrah)*[303] but he needed to be injected into society in order to understand the

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302 One might recall that Sālih, in *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* becomes the "Spiritual father" of his physical father

303 The Qur'ānic notion of *fitrah* as a gift from God to man has been discussed in Chapter 2 See also Gauthier, *Hayy Ben Yaqdhân,* pp. xii-xix.

uniqueness of his position and the nature of this grace. Only with his inception into society does Hayy understand although he may not appreciate the practical needs of society.

4.3 Further considerations of the genre:

One of the major problems in interpreting the risālah is its position between the realms of religion, myth and philosophy - which has kept alive the issue of critical interpretation through the centuries, at any rate in the western interpretation of the risālah. Today, when the distinction between the East and West is no longer so self-evident, if not with reference to ideologies then at least in the manner in which scholarly studies are pursued, one might reasonably expect the understanding of the risālah in terms of distinct 'genres' to be lowered, in order to appreciate the risālah, not merely for what it stands but also for what is, in itself. In order to elucidate the above factor, we shall briefly comment on the relevant points which allow us to perceive the point of conjuction between myth and philosophy and then explore their relevance to the risālah under study.

Just as in the interpretation of the risālah as an allegory, one has to be aware of the varied interpretations and usage of the term 'myth' and perceive in which manner and to what extent the risālah may be considered a myth. Most critics find it easier to consider the risālah as an allegory rather than a myth, since the idea of the myth immediately conjures up the notion of the primordial impulse in archaic societies, as well as the association with the symbol which in some ways, the rational presentation of the risālah seems to deny. Yet, the risālah, with all its rationality is more akin to the myth in 'form', since it tells a tale *(mythos = story)* and in content, since it is developed in the lines of an Adamic myth. Hence, it is closely related to the genre of the myth

whose main purpose is linked with the study of "origins".[304]

One might say that the primary level of the 'myth' is its use of the tale to actualize the fundamental questions raised in archaic societies. One might define this level as the movement from *mythos* to *logos*. These two words are often seen in contrast to each other. Both these words are translatable as "word" or "speech" but whilst *mythos* is the word for a story concerning gods and *superhuman beings*, *logos* elicits "argument".[305] At the Secondary level, there exists the tendency to philosophize, as it had been employed by the Christian gnostics and the early Isma'īlīs, who were aware of philosophical precepts and were familiar with the works of Plato and who employed the 'myth' in the light of such a background.[306] This approach may be defined as the movement from the *logos* to *mythos*. In this sense, Ibn Tufayl is very Aristotelian and begins from the concrete world and moves to the spiritual. Both these levels are metaphysical, rather than rational since they deal with *'origins'*. Yet, they are not distinct from each other and often interlap, a good example of which is the Bible. Hence, we see that if one were to understand 'myth', 'allegory' and 'symbolism' within the context of their 'noble' history, and outside the general usage of fiction (= falsity), then one may well perceive these definitions to be interchangeable. Even if Ibn Tufayl uses a tale, he develops the story within Aristotelian precepts and yet avoids being logocentric.

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304 *Cf.* Ibn al-Khatīb, *Rawdat*, pp. 281-284.

305 For a general discussion for the "religious expressiveness" in which the "myth" functions and responds to, see K. W. Bolle, "Myth: an overview," *ER*, 1986, X, pp. 261-262.

306 See H. Halm remarks on "gnostic Myths" in Ismailism in his *Kosmologie*, pp. 115-127. Halm studies how the Adam/Iblis myth takes on a gnostic meaning with the early Isma'īlis and how it is related to the sophisticated cosmological system which evolved in Ismā'īlism.

The rational activity and the speculative dialectics of Hayy's approach may affirm the philosophical thesis but they do not deny the mythical one. The issues that the risālah raises regarding the destiny of Man - his origins, issues regarding creation, the interaction between the sacred and the profane, all these questions are the common bases of both mythology and philosophy. The difference between the two modes lies in the method of approach - whereas 'myth' is 'story', philosophy uses the rationale of argument and syllogistics. We consider the risālah to be an example that the notion of Islam as a 'rational' and 'nonmythical' religion is not so self-evident. Hence, Ibn Tufayl has the advantage and the ingenuity to utilize the methodologies of both the fields to address issues which they have in common His treatment of both the realms within a single structure is, in many ways, unique. It elucidates that whilst one may separate the genres in form, if not in content, yet this does not deny the possibility that they can co-exist not only in 'content' but also in the treatment of the 'content'.[307] Due to the close relation between 'myth' and 'reality',[308] there no longer exists the need to undermine one at the expense of the other, especially in the case of the risalah under study, in which the two genres converge.

The definition of the risālah as a 'philosophical romance' captures the movement from myth to philosophising. Yet it still does not suggest the mystical element which according to Ibn Tufayl himself, is the ultimate goal of the risālah. It is a definition that has been commonly used by the critics of the risālah.

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307 See E. Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1944). Cassirer considers the "symbolic form" of myth and religion to be directly related to a series of the other symbolic forms of language, history, art and science. He sees the movement between the different symbolic forms He states. "In the development of human culture we cannot fix a point where myth ends or religion begins. In the whole course of its history, religion remains indissolubly connected and penetrated with mythical elements" (p. 87).

308 See also M. Eliadé, *Myth and Reality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975)

We have also come across various other references to the risālah within the Spanish tradition. Cruz Hernandez[309] has undertaken some relevant studies on Ibn Tufayl. There is also the thesis pointed out by Menendez y Pelayo and further elaborated by Emilio Garcia Gómez that Ibn Ṭufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* shares with other works such as the Spanish writer, Balthasar Gracián's (d. 1658) *El-Criticon*,[310] a common Arabic version of the tales that surrounded the figure of Alexander, who was popularly alluded to as "Dhū al-Qarnayn".[311]

It is possible that when Ibn Ṭufayl alluded to "our ancestors" with reference to the story of *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān;* he had in mind one of the tales that surrounded the figure of Alexander. Garcia Gómez has made a comparative study of the Arabic tale entitled *Hikāyat Dhī al-Qarnayn Abī Marāthib al-Himyarī wa qissat al-sanam, Malik wa bintihi.* which may have been the common source of Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah and Balthasar Gracian's *El Criticon.* This source also shares some common details with the Hermetistic version which appears to have been Ibn Sīnā's source for his *Salāmān wa Absāl.* One wonders if Ibn Ṭufayl was familiar with the Hermetistic version which was translated into Arabic by Hunayn ibn Ishāq or whether his source for the analogous details was Ibn Sīnā's tale summarized by Ibn Ṭufayl.

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309 Cruz Hernandez, *La Filosofia Arabe,* (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1963), 229-250; *idem. Historia de la filosofia Espanola,* (Madrid: Associon Espanola, 1957), I, 369-418; *idem. Historia del Pensamiento en al-Andalus (Madrid: Bibliotheca de Cultura Andaluza, 1985).*

310 W. M. Watt, "Iskandar," *EI,*[2] 1969, IV, p. 127.

311 Garcia Gómez, "Un Cuento arabe, pp. 1-67, 241-269. *Cf.* Gauthier, *Hayy,* pp.vii-xiii. A. Pastor, *The Idea of Robinson Crusoe,* pp. 126-144. Pastor also gives us a summary of the early Arabic tale (pp. 132-144) which is said to be the source of *El Criticon.* and Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah. *Cf.* A.H.Habībī, *Nigāhi bih Salāmān ō Absāl-i Jāmī* (Kabul: Anjuman-i-Jāmī, 1964), pp. 16-18.

If we really wish to ascribe "sources" for the tale used by Ibn Tufayl, we need to look at:

1. The Hermetistic version of the tale which had been translated into Arabic by Hunayn ibn Ishāq.
2. The Avicennan version of *Salāmān and Absāl*, which is available in the summary made of it by Nasīr al-Dīn Tūsī.
3. The Arabic tale which has been studied by Garcia Gómez in relation to the risālah.

The first two tales have been related to Ibn Tufayl's risālah in the first place due to the allusion in the Prologue of the risālah, that the names of the *dramatis personae* had been originally used by Ibn Sīnā. We find some analogies between Ibn Tufayl's risalah and the Avicennan *Salāmān and Absāl* such as the manner in which Ibn Tufayl's Hayy and Ibn Sīnā's Absāl were rescued by an animal, but as we have indicated earlier, such similarities are common to a body of literature rather than these two specific tales.

Garcia Gómez wished to show how the common source of both the *Criticon* and *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* is the Arabic tale referred to above, which he had first discovered in the Escurial Collection.[312] His study aimed to refute the statement made by Gauthier that the first part of *El Criticon* was a clear imitation of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, by indicating that the actual source of *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* and *El Criticon* was this Arabic tale.[313] To this end, he draws the analogies between these two stories such as a) the island which is centrally situated and which is alluded to as Arin and Sarandip in the *Hikāyat*. b) The abandonment of the child in similar cirumstances in both the tales. c) The rescue of the child by a gazelle who had lost her kid. d) The rational discoveries by

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312 Garcia Gómez, "Un cuento árabe," p. 3.

313 Gauthier, *Ibn Thofaïl*, p. 52.

the protagonist of the world that surrounded him and his uniqueness. e) His imitation of animals. f) The *Wazīr* teaches the Prince how to speak. g) The fortituous circumstances which resulted in a return to the original island. h) The mission of the Wazīr and the Prince to teach the inhabitants the truths of religion is a success but Hayy and Absāl are unable to reveal the *haqīqah* to the masses. i) The prodigal child being forgiven by her father in the *Hikāyah*- details which are not there in Ibn Tufayl's risālah.[314]

However, there are many differences between these two tales which we refer to briefly since these do not form the main purpose of our study. Firstly, the narration is a story within a story i.e. it is narrated to the king (i.e. Dhū al-Qarnayn) by a monk (*rāhib*). The story does not contain a detailed exposition of its hero's growth, neither does it follow the rational exposé used by Ibn Tufayl in the greater part of his risālah. There is no mystical experience, no quest for the vision of the One and so forth. Even the focus of parallel incidents in the two tales are reversed; such as the encounter between the Prince and the Wazīr. The prince flees out of fear and is pursued by the Wazīr. In Ibn Tufayl, it is Hayy who pursues Absāl. The element of fear does not exist on his part; Hayy feels that Absāl is one of those higher beings who had attained the vision of the Truth and he wished to know him better. Yet Ibn Tufayl may have been familiar with this tale since some of the details of the 'story' of Hayy do coincide with the *Hikāyah* but such details are not uncommon to general epic narratives.

Figure 10 illustrates how many such elements are considered to be common in the creation of an epic. Some of the details of the *Hikayah* which are absent in Ibn Tufayl's risālah are the confrontation between the animals and the Hero, the presence of the serpent and the dragon and other quasimythical figures and incidents. Moreover, what

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314 Gómez includes an edition of the Arabic tale in his study, "Un cuento árabe," pp. 265-269.

Over against this "natural" biography we can set, in dramatic or ironic juxtaposition, the life-cycle of the epic hero. Purely for convenience I propose that we conflate the analyses of J G von Hahn,[20] Lord Raglan,[21] Jan de Vries,[22] R Jakobson and M Szeftel,[23] and finally, in a rather different category, Joseph Campbell.[24] As opposed to the Solomon Grundy pattern of birth, baptism, marriage, sickness, death, and burial the first four of these display, despite considerable variations in detail, the following structure:

Antecedents and Birth	1 Mother a royal virgin (princess) (H,R,V,P 2) 2 Father a god (foreigner, king, near relative of mother, animal) (H,R,V,P 2) 3. Extraordinary, miraculous conception (R,P 3 6) 4. Marvellous birth (born by Caesarian, illegitimate) (H,V,J,P 7) 5 Attempt on life at birth (R) 6 Reaction of nature to marvellous birth (J)
Infancy and Youth	7. Signs of his ascendancy (prophetic discourse) (H,J,P 8) 8 Life threatened (abandoned, spirited away) (H,R,V) 9. Reared by foster-parents (animals, shepherds, mythological beings) in a distant land (H,R,V) 10. Taught reading, writing, occult sciences (J) 11. Manifests special properties (high spirited, thought to be mad) (H,V,P 13-15) 12. Nothing on his childhood (R)
Struggle and Victory	13 Departure for a distant land (H,R P 62-70) 14. Preparations for struggle (supernatural help, military equipment) (V,J,P 71 89) 15 Struggle with enemy (dragon, monster, king) (V,J,P 102-5) 16. Victory (H,R,V,J,P 108-9)
Return	17 Triumphant return (H,J,V,P 120) 18 Marriage (R,V,P 151) 19 Slays persecutors at home (frees mother, kills younger brother) (H,V,P 149 50) 20. Becomes king (H,R) 21. Founds cities, makes laws (H,R)

Figure 10: Extract from "The Search for the Prickly Plant," by J. Blenkinsopp in *Structuralism: An Interdisciplinary Study*, ed. S. Wittig (Pittsburg, Penn.: The Pickwick Press, 1975), p 67.

is of relevance to Ibn Tufayl's use is not the myth itself, but the use of the myth to convey those elements which are common to religion, philosophy and myth.

Hayy ibn Yaqzān has also been referred to as a "philosophical allegory"[315] or an "allegorical prose-poem".[316] As a literary mode, the allegory has remained an unresolved issue in theoretical criticism. The *allegory* is often viewed in a pejorative sense as

> ...wooden, barren, ineffective or ugly... It is a statement which expresses the furthest reaching truths about ourselves and the world ... in a lopsided, referential, indirect mode.[317]

On the other hand, the term *allegoria* has its own 'noble' history. It has been considered as a form which expresses higher realities which may be understood only through the *tale*.[318] In order to highlight the importance of this notion, an allusion to the "allegorical sense" of Scripture in medieval History, and the problem of *ta'wīl* as used by Muslim theologians and philosophers, will have to suffice here.[319] *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* may be considered an allegory to the extent that there is some sort of 'typification' in it, but if one were to understand the allegory as being an artificial

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315 T. J. de Boer, "Ibn Tufail," *ERE*, 1961, II, p. 72.

316 A. Pastor, *The Idea of Robinson Crusoe*, p. 121.

317 Paul de Man, "Pascal's Allegory of Representation," in *Allegory and Representation*, ed. S. J. Greenblatt (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1981), p. 2.

318 Plato used the allegorical tale for the purpose of education. The Greeks and consequently, Islamic philosophers from al-Fārābī to Ibn Rushd advocated the necessity of addressing the different strata of society in a manner befitting their understanding. Although Plato ridicules 'tales' such as those of Homer as the propagation of 'falsity', he himself uses various 'tales' in order to convey metaphysical realities. It is this distinction which separates the two aspects of the 'tale' that has to be taken into consideration while defining the risālah as an allegory. Plato's parable on the cave shares some similarities with *Hayy ibn Yaqzān*. In this sense, the risālah might be considered an allegory but unfortunately most critics of the risālah do not clarify what they mean when they refer to the risālah as an allegory and consequently, convey the notion that it is an allegory, since its characters adhere to unreal typification. See also Irmgard Christiansen, *Die Technik der allegorischen Auslegungsswissenschaft bei Philon von Alexandrien* (Tubingen: Mohr, 1969). This is a brilliant study of the allegory, in the context of its 'noble' history, with special reference to Philo.

319 R. Paret, "Ta'wīl," *EI*, IV, p. 704. Corbin, *Avicenna*, pp 28-34, 50, 162, 260.

personification of purely abstract principles, then we would do little justice to the risālah by referring to it merely as an allegory. In terms of the modern distinction between "allegory" and "symbol",[320] the term "symbol" would be more appropriate.

Majid Fakhry also refers to *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* as an allegorical novel and a philosophical allegory.[321] The question has been addressed by other critics such as de Boer who put forth various reasons why Ibn Tufayl needed to use the 'allegorical story' to enunciate philosophical issues. However, according to Ibn Tufayl himself, the reason why he uses the 'tale is precisely because it is more direct and experiential and not merely theoretical. While referring to the encounter between Salāmān and Hayy, Fakhry adds:

> This adept Salāmān of the outward and literal, however, was not very disposed to listen to the mystical and allegorical disquisitions of Hayy.[322]

Our interpretation of the textual section referred to by Fakhry would be that Salāman was unable to understand the message that Hayy wishes to convey precisely because Hayy does not convey it in the allegorical mode that was used in the traditional religion -- not due to its narrow message, but due to the necessity of reaching a variegated populace. It would be difficult to deny the "allegorical" elements in the risalah but what is essential to our understanding of Ibn Tufayl is his use of the allegory. According to

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320 *"Allégorie* a un sens presque toujours péjoratif: on signale la "froideur", la pauvreté, la fadeur des allégories. C'est que les élément qui forment l'allégorie *n'ont pas d'intérêt propre,* ni même souvent de signification quelconque, en dehors du rôle qui leur est intentionnellement attribué. Elles sont nécessairement artificielles et presque tourjours compliqées. - Au contraire, le symbole peut être vivant, évocateur, parce que l'image y a un intérêt propre; elle vaut par elle-même en même temps que parce qu'elle suggère; quelque chose des sentiments qu'éveille le symbole enrichit donc l'idée symbolisée." (Th. de Laguna). Cited by André Lalande, *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophié, s.v.* "Allégorie," 37-38

321 M. Fakhry, *A History of Islamic Philosophy,* (2nd. ed; New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1983), pp. 264-265.

322 *Ibid.,* pp. 269-270.

Ibn Tufayl, it is the "outward" which is in reality "allegorical" and not the *bāṭın* which Hayy experiences. Hence, it is not Hayy's "disquisitions" that are "allegorical"; on the contrary, Salāmān's "rules" are "allegorical" in the true sense, because they disguise the Truth (experienced by Hayy directly) in images. Such a confrontation between the *zāhir* and the *bāṭın* may also be perceived in the exchange between Hayy and Absāl which has been clearly elucidated by Gauthier:

> C'est seulement *après* que notre solitaire est parvenu de lui-même à cette connaissance intégrale, d'abord discursive, puis fondue en une indivisible unité par l'illumination de l'intuition extatique, c'est alors seulement, qu'Açal survient pour lui faire connaître non pas la moindre *vérité* nouvelle, mais uniquement des *symboles imaginatifs* de certaines hautes *vérités* philosophiques, symboles appropriés à la faiblesse d'esprit du vulgaire, et dont l'ensemble constitue proprement, avec certaines dispositions légales et certains détails rituels, qui ne sont point des *vérités* des ordres, la religion prophétique. Ce n'est pas Açal qui vient *éclairer:* c'est Hayy qui donne à Açal la clef philosophique, l'interprétation, adéquate, de ces symboles religieux obscurs, dont les théologiens ne savent proposer que des interprétations *dialectiques,* divergentes et plus ou moins erronées. Hayy, en effet, expose le *premier* à Açal sa science, sa philosophie, sa mystique; et Açal s'avoue à lui-même "que toutes les traditions de sa Loi religieuse relatives à Dieu, à ses anges, à ses livres, à ses envoyés, au jour dernier, à son paradis et au feu de son enfer, ne sont que des *symboles* de ce qu'avait aperçu à nu Hayy ben Yaqdhân."[323]

Ibn Tufayl wishes to unveil, through the risālah, the secret that shrouds the apprehension of the Reality and the only way this could be expressed is through the tale of Hayy, Absāl and Salāmān, which would *point out* the path that can only be traversed by each individual through his own experiences.

If Hayy had couched his 'message' in the allegorical mode, then his message would have been similar to the message of the revealed religion and may have been understood by the people, in varying degrees. The presentation of this problem is wrought with irony. Ibn Tufayl himself does not allow his protagonist to use the similie

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[323] Gauthier, *Hayy ben Yaqdhân,* p. xviii.

or the allegory to express the experience of the Reality to the masses. Yet the symbolic metaphor is used by Hayy, albeit as the author-narrator, to express Hayy's mystical experience and Ibn Tufayl himself needs to use the 'mode' of the 'story', possibly to protect himself from any serious allegations of heresy.

One might examine whether *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* may be considered as an allegory in the sense that the tale is the only way in which something of the divine could be understood by mortals. Hence, the allegory would no longer be considered 'fiction' in its etymological sense of the 'false'. *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* may more easily be understood as an allegory in this sense shorn of its negative connotations as 'didactic literature' or a 'false artificial form.' Hayy, Salāmān and Absāl are also 'real' characters (note: not real people). They are 'superhuman' but they share with 'normal' human beings not only the characteristic of 'humanness' but the 'essence' of humanity - they are the stuff that life is made of.

The definition of the risālah as a 'philosophical treatise' tends to ignore the literary element of the story in the book: it sees the story as merely as a garment (or a shroud!) for the philosophical content. It is a rigid definition which allows no scope for the 'imaginative' element and which raises questions as to why Ibn Tufayl needed to use the 'genre' if he could have conveyed the matter within the scope of a 'treatise'.

Hayy ibn Yaqzān is closely related to the 'treatise' in that it is "a systematic presentation of ideas", but these ideas are developed within the framework of a story, which has its own relevance and which is an integral part of the risalah. By calling *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* a philosophical treatise, one would be reducing literature to theory. In *Hayy ibn Yaqzān*, the characters are not subbordinated to the author's thesis - they are

interesting in themselves and are not mere marionettes controlled by strings. The manner in which Ibn Ṭufayl deals with the relevant issues may point to an unconscious propaganda regarding these issues but it does not reveal the specific design of the writer of a philosophical treatise. What makes a work of art immortal is not the specific doctrine (which generally is not original) held by its author, but the whole quality and texture of thought and imagination that goes into it. This is certainly true of *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*. Hence, both the form and the content of the risālah are important and cannot be radically separated.

However, there are certain aspects of Ibn Ṭufayl's work which tend towards what one might call "rational mysticism" of which Ibn Ṭufayl may be considered a chief exponent. According to the thesis presented by P. Merlan, even the works of Ibn Rushd are not divorced of the mystical element and may be perceived in the light of rational mysticism whose precedents may be traced back to the neo-Aristotelian concepts i.e. the sources of the philosophy of Plotinus.[324]

The fact that Ibn Ṭufayl does not use the treatise as a mode of expression points to several things: He may have used the genre of the 'tale' to express views which he could not have expressed in the 'factual' form - hence the literary form would be a process of dissemination of the philosophical message that it contained. This, however, does not entail his readers (or critics!) to consider it as a philosophical treatise. One may more accurately note that his younger contemporary used the philosophical treatise to tackle some of the issues which Ibn Ṭufayl addresses in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān*. Since Ibn Ṭufayl uses the story as a mode of expression, one cannot consider it a philosophical treatise *per se* and we have to accept the literary element as part and parcel of the author's presentation.

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[324] *Cf.* P. Merlan, *Monopsychism*, pp. 53-55.

Hence, we have dealt with the issue of definition by comparing the risālah with other narratives as well as by examining it as a myth and allegory. In terms of its components, the risālah belongs both to the literary and philosophical realm as we shall examine below.

4.4 The structure and the division of the book

The idea that the structure and division of the book is important, has gained adherents in both the camps - literary and philosophical. Its logical structure has created an interest in its philosophical themes which address a problem that is considered to be one of the major issues in the Islamic world i.e. the reconciliation of religion and philosophy; this also reflects a relevant issue in the political milieu of Ibn Tufayl's time.

Viewed in the literary mode, the book reveals a structure which is geared to a well-defined composition. Beside contributing to the structure, the division of Hayy's development into seven stages forms the skeleton upon which the various incidents in his life are built up to form a whole. The movement from one stage to the other endows the book with a harmony, as in a musical piece. There is an upward movement from one stage to the other till it reaches a crescendo and then there is the falling movement, a device to release the tension. Within these seven cycles, there are four definite stages - like four quartets: Hayy's childhood which lasts till he is seven years old; his youth (the inquisitive enquiring mind) - till he is twentyone years old; the metaphysical quest which begins when he is twentyone years old and culminates with his mystical perfection when he is fifty years old[325] and his encounter with Absāl and Society.

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325 After the seven septenaries, Ibn Tufayl gives his mystic an additional year before he attains the "Vision"; whereas each seven year period generally indicated the completion of a particular phase of "learning" by Hayy, it is *after* the 7 x 7 years

Generally, the end of each phase of seven years years is marked by some 'event' which changes or further develops the direction of the action. Hence, when Hayy is seven years old, he covers himself up with the feathers of an eagle. This distinguishes him from the other animals around and marks the end of his imitation of the animals around him. There is also a psychological and philosophical anthropology implicit in these phases. Hence, there is an overall physical, mental and spiritual development.

The divisions in the book follow the classical pattern in a dramatic medium - exposition: Spontaneous Generation; crisis: the Death of the gazelle and discovery of the spirit; climax: the Mystical Experience and anti-climax: the failure to affect society and the return to the island. This indicates that the literary mode is not just used as a method of dissemination - it has meaning in itself and must also be appreciated for art's sake. The work as a whole consists of three component parts - the Prologue, the Story and the Epilogue.

Hayy's mystical qua philosophical pilgrimage presupposes Shakespeare's later division of the seven stages in man's life. The use of the number seven is also symbolical. This division contributes both to the literary and philosophical approach. As a literary work, *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* has a definite structure which is enhanced by its subdivisions: we have a preliminary Introduction, which is quite like the Prologue of a dramatic piece in which the author or the chorus introduce the purpose of the book.[326] However, there exist certain differences between the form and content of the Prologue

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that Hayy gains the true knowledge of the "Essence" through his own experience One wonders why Ibn Tufayl marks Hayy's experience by the 49 plus 1 year - is it to anticipate the movement from one completed mode of knowledge i.e. the mystical experience towards a new and different exposure to society? Ibn Tufayl is however, silent about this departure from the normal structure that he undertakes in his risālah.

326 The division of the work has been briefly examined above in comparison to other tales.

and the main body of the risālah which suggest that the Prologue might have been a later addition to the text.[327] The division of Hayy's physical and mental journey is equivalent to the path of the mystics towards the Vision of the Divine and is closely aligned to the *sūfī* path.

4.5 Character types

The characters in this risālah do represent *types* which are to some extent, parallel to the later *Comedy of humour* characters in English Drama, who are typified according to the prevalent humour in their biological make-up. Yet they are not the 'flat' characters generally associated with the 'Comedy of Humours' allegory. Ibn Tufayl certainly intended to get across a message and he used his characters for such a purpose but he steers clear from the moralistic overtones which are embodied in such allegories.

Although *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* cannot be considered an allegory in the pejorative sense, there is undoubtedly some sort of *typification* as far as the *dramatis personae* are concerned. Ibn Tufayl uses several methods to produce certain characteristic ideals in the mind of the reader which we will study in this section. These methods lend themselves not only to a general literary interpretation but also reveal the dextrous skill of their author in moulding his material to fit various requirements. We have examined the 'typification' in the risālah in the different contexts in which it has been utilized.

1. as a mode of allegorization;
2. in comparison with the existent 'types' in Ibn Sīnā.
3. as representative character types.

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327 See above no. 122.

4. as representation of 'working models' that existed in the society of Ibn Tufayl's time and so forth.

5. Hayy as representative of mankind.

6. Hayy used as the spokesman for Ibn Tufayl's scientific frame of mind.

The symbolic figurization is self-evident: Hayy represents something more than himself. By the very virtue of his birth, he is set apart from the rest of mankind and represents from the very beginning, the potential for perfection. Yet, he is representative of mankind at its best. Again, his birth as a human being apart from any awareness of the human race endows him with the role of the primordial man - this role is extended through his self-discoveries. His role in the discovery of fire make him a representative of the first man. It also brings about a confrontation of the relations between the mystical and practical elements in man; it is not really Promethean since Prometheus also represents individualism[328] and the role of man as Man against God whereas Hayy represents man as the 'image' of God -- the *Insān al-Kāmil* and the submersion of the self.

Every event in Hayy's 'normal' life aids in the consummation of the Divine: His discovery of fire may not be considered Promethean since Hayy does not steal the "fire". While the whole risālah might have represented to some the Renaissance ideal of Man as Man, it appears to us that all signs of individualism are submerged within a "divine plan" which assists itself all the more strongly, outside the aid of a "messenger". On the other hand, Hayy's role and his discovery of fire may equate him with Prometheus as embodied in Hermetistic gnosis, where the Promethean element represents the

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328 Such a view of Prometheus in the spirit of the Renaissance is exemplified in the English Romantic poet, P. B. Shelley's (d. 1822) lyrical drama, *Prometheus Unbound,* where he modifies the Greek legend to exemplify the liberation of the soul of man from the bonds of tyranny that bind it in the name of God.

individual soul which does not bow to collective rule.[329] Hence, Prometheus is the Man of light whose fetters represent the terrestrial Adam.[330] This aspect also concurs with the role that Hayy plays in the risālah, being the receptacle of light and symbolising the soul of terrestrial man. Undoubtedly, Hayy may be associated with the *Insān al-Kāmil* -- the microcosm -- or the image of the Divine as Man, but no war is waged against the Gods as is the case with Prometheus. Further, Hayy cannot be seen as representing a "culture hero" who hastens the pace of progress; he does not bring fire to men, but discovers it for himself. Hence, Ibn Tufayl speaks more like an anthropologist putting his theory of the invention of human culture in the form of a romance using *a mythos*, but not creating a *mythos/drama* in the sense of an archaic poet.

Even in a world that is marked by a balance, Hayy is distinct from the animals around him. His psychological development as a being apart from the other animals, physical differences and the use of his hands as superior to the fore-limbs makes Hayy a 'higher' animal. However, Ibn Tufayl is not really concerned with biological evolution. Hayy is human from the beginning and even the notion of Hayy's spontaneous generation corresponds with the actual development of the foetus in the womb. The emphasis is rather on the "cultural" evolution of man. There is also the emphasis that man, whether he is born in an isolated or populated land, is a being apart from other animals. Yet, Hayy's birth under the favourable climate of the island puts foward the cause for nature over nurture. Hayy, in his self-education, is more "cultured" and "noble" than the masses of Salāmān's island who are "no better than animals" due to their greed and corruption.[331]

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329 Corbin, *Avicenna*, p. 19

330 *Ibid.*, pp. 232-233. See also the gnostic Adamic myth in early Isma'ilism which has been discussed by H. Halm, pp. 87, 104-109.

The question now remains as to how Ibn Tufayl uses his characters to reflect the muslim 'ideal'. By assigning specified roles to his characters, Ibn Tufayl relives the different stages of the 'way' of the mystic to the divine. Each character represents a stage as well as the culmination of a particular 'state'. Hence, Ibn Tufayl uses his characters as a 'thin veil' to guide aspirants on the path. We think that Ibn Tufayl created his characters in such a way that they would represent the different levels of such a religious experience: i.e. the three-fold way of *sharī'ah, tarīqah* and *haqīqah.* This threefold way has been described as a reflection of the meaning of *tasawwuf* in accordance with the *sharī'ah* the Muslim law, the *tarīqah* the Mystical path, and the *haqīqah*, the Truth.[332] Ibn Tufayl gives an added dimension to its meaning through the characters of the risālah.[333]

Salāmān is an extreme representative of the *sharī'ah* - unable and unwilling to look beyond the letter of the law for fear that he may be somehow tempted away from the path which leads to God. Absāl is representative of *tarīqah* i.e. the *path* itself. He is aware of the law and is able to interpret it in such a manner that it adheres to his mystical yearnings - he is nevertheless bound to symbols *(majāz)* and needs to interpret the letter of the law in order to perceive its spirit. Absāl is representative of muslim mysticism or *sūfism.* In a sense, Absāl the *coincidentia oppositorum* between Hayy and Salāmān.

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331 GM:163; LGAR:151-152.

332 See al-Sarrāj, *Kitāb al-luma'*, pp. 27-28.

333 See also A. Schimmel, *The Mystical Dimensions of Islam* (Chapel Hill: Univ. of Carolina Press, 1975), pp. 98-99. Schimmel elucidates the use of this threefold way in *sūfi* literature.

Hayy is representative of the *haqīqah* - the stage where all paradoxes and differences are resolved and no longer exist; the stage where the perception of the truth is independent of symbols; where one is aware of the perennial truths which transcend religion, caste or creed. Ibn Tufayl's characters also play different roles at different stages of the book thus avoiding a static representation. The ideal that Ibn Tufayl is somehow espousing is a cross between Hayy and Absāl. Hayy, in himself, represents something that is distant and not possible for most human beings. Although he is not divine -- Ibn Tufayl does not endow him with suprahuman characteristics -- Hayy is the product of fortituous chance or a divine plan, whose odds are rare. Even the circumstances surrounding his birth are used for a double-faceted purpose: a) In order to allow Ibn Tufayl to express his scientific views; b) In order to emphasize the perfect balance of elements and humours which alone could allow such an occurence. Even while promulgating the theory on 'spontaneous generation', Ibn Tufayl informs his readers that such an event could take place in the most ideal circumstances only over a long period of time.

4.6 Major issues of a literary nature

As we have examined earlier, the reaction to the risālah in the West has been an ongoing process since it was translated into Latin in the 17th century. What made the risālah so attractive to Western readers? We think that the answer lies in the "literary themes" that the risālah evokes, which in themselves, have played an important role in the shaping of western society. We briefly examine these 'western' themes and see how they relate to a work which is 'eastern' in nature.

The *Philosophus Autodidactus* was the starting point of this dialogue. The "Self-taught Philosopher" confirmed a theme, that was gaining a stronghold in the

western world whose pivot was moving from God to Man. Whether *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān* was conceived in this way by its author is questionable but it was certainly amenable to such an interpretation.

Another theme that the risālah evoked was of a mystical nature and sparked a dialogue and minor controversy in the England of the late 17th and early 18th century. This was the period when the Quaker Movement was just being established. The "Children of God" rejected all modes of ritualization and believed in the "Light".[334] One of their strong adherents and leaders was George Keith, who was the first translator of the risālah into English. Keith perceived in the risālah, the mode by which man, not merely by the Philosopher's Reason but through the light of nature, could achieve knowledge of God. The mystical aspect of the work and its unorthodox message also brought forth praise from Leibnitz.[335]

However, the emphasis on the "unorthodox" modes of gaining knowledge of the Divine were considered to be dangerous to the Christian faith and representative of "enthusiastik notions": this was the reaction of S. Ockley who added an appendix to his translation of the risālah (1709) which indicated that some of the theories expounded by the author (i.e. Ibn Tufayl) had to be taken cautiously and should not be interpreted in accordance with the views of the Quakers or Christianity.

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334 One can also see what Ibn Tufayl had in common with Adolf Von Harnack (1851-1930), a German Church Historian whose works reflect the "essence of Christianity" and call for an "undogmatic", "perennial" and "cultural" approach to religion. The gospel that Harnack advocated "requires no metaphysical foundations, no articulation in binding dogmas, no elaborate ritual, and no institutional guarantees." One can see some similarities in Ibn Tufayl's thought and Harnack's notion of a "timeless humanity" See also David W. Lotz, "Harnack," *ER*, 1986, VI, pp. 198-199.

335 See G. Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science* (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkens, 1927-1948), II, 286.

The next theme which we discuss here is the "RC" theme - a theme which is constantly alluded to in the recent scholarship of the risālah. One might question : Why "Robinson Crusoe"? Can one really equate Crusoe to Hayy anymore than one can to the Quakers? Why was the Crusoe theme considered to be inspired by the risalah? Its adherents note that Daniel Defoe (d. 1731) wrote his book in 1719, a few years after the first Latin (1671) and English (1674) translations of the risālah had been published - hence, he could have been inspired by Ibn Ṭufayl's presentation of Hayy, alone in his island. Yet, even if Defoe was familiar with the Latin version, he does not really continue on the same lines as Ibn Ṭufayl. His hero is a 'grown' rational man of the world, who copes with the situation of finding himself in a deserted island. Undoubtedly, Defoe's RC also has its message, is critical of society and aims to present the view that some correction was required This is the extent to which any comparison of the two works might reach; further comparisons could only result in a farcicial state of superficial similarities. However, the idea of RC does not end here. What makes the theme of RC attractive to the critics of the risālah was the growing interest in themes of the hero of the narrative and the stronger footholds that the 'novel' was establishing around this time. This was the period when the English novel was being definitely established as a 'genre'; when a new genre of the 'picareque' hero was gaining popularity in the works of D. Defoe, Jonathan Swift and Joseph Conrad The fact that the risālah was published in England just before the advent of such novels, which begins with Defoe, has tempted people to see in the risālah, an early precursor of the Robinson Crusoe theme.

This theme is also linked to the theme of the Romantic Ideal and the Noble Savage. Once again, the risālah may be seen as an early precedent of these themes that gained a stronghold in the works of Rousseau and the Romantic Poets who were influenced by

the French Revolution. The basic point associated with the Noble Savage was the idea of "primitive simplicity", also canonized in European literature in *le bon nègre* who embodied all the attributes that man possessed in the Paradisal state before the Fall (or before he was exposed to the revealed religion in the case of Ibn Tufayl): natural goodness, innocence, physical beauty and freedom from the wickedness of "civilization".[336] In Ibn Tufayl, the case presented is the same qualitatively but the emphasis is, quite naturally, related to the cultural, religious, eastern milieu of Islam.[337] For example, this natural goodness and innocence in Hayy is presented through the mystical notion of *fitrah* which is the natural disposition of the soul towards the spiritual.[338] This idea is very important to the understanding of the risālah.[339]

The use of the Utopian ideal is another instance of a literary theme which merges on the philosophical. The description of Hayy's birth and the favourable climate in a island which seems to be a world by itself, evoke the description of the Utopian Paradise, where there is no sin, no shame, no predatory animals etc. Hayy is aware that his nakedness is a differentiating weakness between him and the animals and hence, he covers up but the themes of sin and shame do not enter here.

This theme of native innocence is related to the creation of a Utopian/Paridisal State. The elements in Hayy's island that evoke a paradise are undeniable but one has to be more cautious to read in Ibn Tufayl, the presentation of a Utopian Ideal, whether

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336 See also C. J. Brauner and H. W Burns, *Problems in Education and Philosophy* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 135-136.

337 Theoretically, Ibn Tufayl lived in the West i.e. in Spain and and North Africa but in terms of modern day understanding, Ibn Tufayl lived in a milieu which was 'eastern' in its nature.

338 S. H. Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 17, 33.

339 See L. Gauthier, *Hayy Ben Yaqdhân*, pp. xiii-xvii. L. E. Goodman, *Ibn Tufayl's 'Hayy Ibn Yaqzân*. pp. 13-16, 64-65.

one relates it to More's *Utopia*, Plato's *Republic* or al-Fārābī's *Virtuous City*. Neither can we relate Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah to Golding's *Lord of the Flies* or George Orwell's *Animal Farm* using the premise of a 'thesis/antithesis' situation. The reason for caution is based on the final result of Ḥayy's experiences: the return to solitude. This suggests that even if Ibn Ṭufayl is advocating an ideal State, it is an individual state; it is the state of the soul. Hence, Ibn Ṭufayl is not advocating the radical division from society, which Ḥayy's return to the island seems to suggest. What Ibn Ṭufayl seems to be saying is that in order to be attuned to the higher world, the individual must consciously purify himself of all material and bodily vices by avoiding the excessive indulgence of these things. The ascetic state perfectly embodies the rejection of any excesses. Ḥayy's encounter with society shows him that it is not the message itself which is wrong, the message, necessarily has to be clothed in symbols in order to reach the masses, but a rigorous literalism can only lead to a lack of understanding of the message. Hence, Ḥayy's paradisal state does not actually suggest the ideal Commonwealth.

The literary themes that the risālah evokes, easily mix with the philosophical content and the confrontation of issues of a religous and social context. What the risālah confirms is that these issues are of a universal context and are recreated -- with variations -- in the minds of writers and philosopher belonging to different times and different worlds. Hence, the labelling of 'themes' is only in order to bring them into focus and in relation to a body of works.

The use of irony by Ibn Ṭufayl is mild and aesthetically satisfying Ibn Ṭufayl shows a great literary skill in the use of 'irony' which is effective without being obvious and ornate. There are many instances in the risālah where Ibn Ṭufayl uses irony He uses it

In order to emphasize Ḥayy's uncorrupt nature and contrast it with the general suspicious attitudes of "civilized" society. We note that when Hayy and Absāl first encounter each other, Absāl thinks that he could teach the 'primitive' Hayy all about religion; it is when they are able to talk to each other that Absāl realized that Hayy was a much greater "elevated" soul, who had already reached the stage that he hoped to achieve and was striving after. Also the latter part of the text is replete with Qur'ānic passages which are used in a ironical way by Ibn Tufayl. Ibn Tufayl describes the state of the people who literally adhered to the word of the Law, in the words of Law itself, as being no better than animals. Surely, Ibn Ṭufayl is being ironical in quoting the Qur'ān, to those who use it to justify their "material" cravings and live under a false sense of virtuosity. What Ibn Ṭufayl is apparently saying is that the Qur'ān might cater to material upliftment and organized living, but those who crave for these things are deeply admonished, and the same book also speaks of finding a deeper meaning, which is discovered by Absāl. Hence, one is given the choice of either being ignorant of such meaning in the Qur'ān and living "virtuous" albeit superficial lives, or living deliberately "corrupt" lives, whose consequences are punishable, or seeking the real and deeper meaning of the religion.

We illustrate another example of Ibn Ṭufayl's use of 'irony' which occurs in the early part of the text. When Hayy is seven years old, he covers himself up with the wings of an eagle. Hayy had been conscious of his nakedness, which drew him apart from the other animals. He had patiently awaited the growth of antlers, which were a part of the other deers with whom he lived. Ironically, he wears the wings of the eagle, in order to be like the other animals but this makes him a fearful sight and consequently, all the other animals became afraid of him and he is able to gain superiority over them.

The literary felicity of the risālah can also be seen in the handling of literary forms, like the metaphor. Ibn Tufayl uses various analogies in the risālah such as that of the light streaming from the sun in relation to the receptivity of the spirit by various bodies; the metaphor of the orator addressing a multitude; the analogy of the blind boy; Hayy's ascent through the spheres in relation to the reflection of the sun on a mirror or on water. The philosophical content, being presented through the experiences of Hayy within the mode of the 'tale' also makes it comprehensible to a general public and the easy, flowing style aids in the understanding of such themes.

4.7 Major issues of philosophical nature

Ibn Tufayl himself admits in the Prologue that the truth may be perceived through speculative reasoning and/or mystical contemplation. This twofold approach to truth is perceived as identical in meaning but differing in 'force'. In the tale itself, he utilizes a threefold approach. truth as perceived by the philosopher/scientist, the mystic/*sūfi* and the masses. Ibn Tufayl notes however that there are differences in the experience between these levels, hence establishing that the truth as perceived merely through the works of Aristotle, al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā's *Shifā'* remains a half-truth His younger contemporary, Ibn Rushd assimilates the doctrine of the two fold truth by seeking a conjunction between religion and philosophy within the precepts of the revealed law and by distinctly classifying the three sections of society as having their particular functions and limits.[340]

Man, according to Aristotelian precepts, is considered a political animal, but solitude may also be considered as an inward asceticism of the soul. It is independent of the active political state. Hence, such an inward state requires withdrawal from

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340 See G. F. Hourani, *Averroes: on the harmony of religion and philosphy* (London: Luzac & Co, 1961), pp. 32-35.

political activity, whether one lives in an actual political state, as is the case with Ibn Bājjah's *Mutawahhid* or in Hayy's island. Ibn Ṭufayl is moving a step further from Ibn Bājjah - what he is saying is that if one cannot live in harmony with oneself and nature in a political state, where material temptations are hard to resist, then one has to withdraw. He is not against society as such, since Ḥayy attempts to 'convey' the truth to the people of Salāmān's island. Further, Ibn Ṭufayl is also saying that philosophy or mysticism is only a method, albeit the best method, to achieve the truth.

Ibn Ṭufayl clearly states that Salāmān is himself a virtuous man, his circle consists of virtuous godfearing beings and it is the fear that they might step out of the boundary of what is conventionally 'religious' and 'lawabiding' that prevents them from being openminded to Ḥayy. It is also in this sense that religion and philosophy are in harmony with each other. This harmony or reconciliation does not deny the doctrine of the twofold truth. Rather, we see it being set down in definitive terms in Ibn Ṭufayl, even before it is established as a parameter by Ibn Rushd. It is interesting to note that this idea was picked up from the original Greek/Platonic notions of addressing people according to their capacity to understand and was tempered by al-Fārābī in a muslim context and further developed by Ibn Sīnā, al-Ghazālī, Ibn Ṭufayl and Ibn Rushd.

The doctrine of the two-fold truth is denied by Ibn Bājjah who refuses to conciliate the role of the philosopher in a corrupt society. The Philosopher might exist in the Perfect City where there is no need for the physician or the jurist. Hence, the question of a reconciliation is closed.[341] Ibn Bājjah radically separates the philosopher from the society in which he operated. With Ibn Ṭufayl, there is a tentative realization that (political?) circumstances might warrant such a withdrawal, whereas Ibn Rushd asserts the possibility that one might develop within society itself distinct places for the

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[341] Ibn Bājjah, "The Governance of the Solitary," p. 122.

different modes of perceiving the truth.

It has been a trend for critics in Islamic philosophy to label its adherents either as Aristotelian or Neoplatonic due to its Hellenic origins. However, even with al-Kindī, the earliest Islamic philospher who presents his views within a definite framework, we find that the views of both the above-mentioned schools had been utilized and transformed by the Muslim mind to suit its particular purpose. Of course, it is impossible to *clearly* distinguish between "Aristotelian" and "Neoplatonic" since this confusion took place even before Islam. However, trends can still be discerned: the *ishrāqi's* are traditionally (not just by orientation!) labelled as the "Platonists of Persia" and Ibn Rushd wanted to be a "pure" Aristotelian.

In the last few decades, heated debate has occurred regarding the definition of "Islamic /Arabic Philosophy" and the range of such a definition.[342] With Ibn Sīna, we can discern, at times, the intrusion of the Persian mind into the influx of the Arabic writer. This becomes pronounced with al-Suhrawardī, who searched for the origins of philosophy in a Persian heritage. Ibn Tufayl was a Muslim of probable Arab origin (al-Qaysī) from the Maghrib, who lived in a community whose greater number were of berber origin. The contacts with people of different cultures may have left some mark in his philosophy. These background details should also be taken into consideration when we attempt to classify a particular thinker as 'Aristotelian' or 'Neoplatonic' especially since Aristotle, Plato and some Neo-platonic thinkers were confused with each other, consciously or unconsciously ever before the faux pas over the *Theology of Aristotle* (i.e. Plotinus) occurred. In relation to the critical output on this issue, Ibn Tufayl has been variously classified as an Aristotelian or a Neoplatonist, and shows the influence of both these schools in the risālah.

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342 Summarized by Anawati in *Etudes de philosophie musulmane*, pp. 23-43.

Within his extremely personal development, being completely estranged from human contact, Hayy 'discovers' his own system of thought which adheres a great deal to the classical Hellenistic traditions. It appears that Ibn Tufayl's intention is to advocate the view that philosophy is perennial - belonging to no particular time, bound to no particular school. Ibn Tufayl is aware of the limitations inherent in mere assimilation of the views of his predecessors. While he acknowledges them as his masters, he is nevertheless aware of the lacunae in their views.[343] Hence, he sets up his own worldview whose requisite is 'experience'. Within the corpus of the book, which is considered a vehicle of "extreme Muslim neo-Platonism",[344] Ibn Tufayl also uses the methodology and matter of an Aristotle.[345]

Another philosophical theme which is central to Ibn Tufayl's risālah is the notion of "essences". This has a precedent in the Hellenistic tradition and may be considered similar to Plato's Ideas and Ibn Bājjah's "spiritual forms." With reference to this issue of Universals and Ideas, we find that Ibn Tufayl presents an alternative to both Plato and Aristotle. Ibn Tufayl transforms the idea of "spiritual forms" as referred to by Ibn Bājjah to the more mystical "essences" that Hayy encounters in his experience through the spheres; Hayy also envisages himself as one of these "essences."

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343 See Chapter three for a discussion of the Prologue. For a discussion of the differences between Ibn Tufayl and his predecessors, see chapter five of the thesis.

344 Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science*, II, 354.

345 See R. C. Zaehner, "Our father Aristotle," in *Mémorial Jean de Menasce*, ed. Ph. Gignono and A. Tafazzoli (Louvain: Imprimerie Orientaliste, 1974) p. 92. Zaehner examines Aristotle's method of distinguishing the object in a manner which is very similar to Hayy's empirical research in what might be termed as Hayy's 'Aristotelian' phase of growth.

Ibn Tufayl removes Hayy from being categorized by virtue of any comparison since his very birth and development occur in peculiar circumstances whereby there is no ground for comparison at the same level.[346] Hence, Hayy's development towards and culmination in the ideal is unique *(wāḥid)*. This also suggests the notion that at a given time, there can exist only one *Insān al-Kāmil* which closely corresponds with the shī'ī notion of the Imām; but this notion of singularity also exists with reference to the philosopher-king/Imām in al-Fārābī, as a part of the Platonic aspect of his thought. One might have expected Ibn Tufayl to have been influenced to some extent by these notions since

1. The very establishment of the Almohads was based on the notion of the *Mahdi* as savior of the Berbers, albeit in a *sunnī/ṣūfī* context which however takes a radical turn with the official establishment of the dynasty.
2. The former proximity of the Fātimids in the neighbouring Maghrib.

Yet, Ibn Tufayl does not advocate the notion of the Imām as a political leader, or even a spiritual one, which is made evident by Hayy's failure as a Messiah, in spite of his "charismatic" appeal. What is Ibn Tufayl trying to establish? The seemingly obvious answer is a critique against a society which is unable and unwilling to understand Hayy, but there are subtle nuances to Ibn Tufayl's thought which need to be taken into consideration if one wishes to discover what were the different alternatives that he might have had in mind. Ibn Tufayl's older contemporary, Ibn Bajjah addresses this issue of the role of the philosopher in a society which apparently has no use of him. In these "unnatural" circumstances, the philosopher has to live as a "stranger" in society.[347] Even within the shī'ī context, Hayy could not be considered at par with the

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346 See also Ibn-Bājjah, "The Governance of the Solitary," p. 129. Ibn Bājjah speaks of the universal spiritual form of the *Mutawahhid* is his capacity to perceive intelligible ideas. This capacity is only possible in the *Mutawahhid*.

347 Ibn Bājjah, pp. 127-128.

Imām, since the Imām himself gains his credibility on the doctrine of *nass* through his descent from the lineage of the Prophet Múhammad himself. Furthermore, there is no evidence that Hayy and Absāl, after their withdrawal, become the foci of a new esoteric *community* like the Shī'ah; *they remain "solitaries"*. However, Ibn Tufayl, by placing Hayy in a "solitary" state from the beginning does not burden his soul with the "unnatural" experiences in a corrupt State (which metaphorically is the state of the soul!). So, the "unnatural" state in the populated State allows him to return to the "natural" state of isolation without any conflicts or misgivings.

Since one can have no doubt that Hayy is representative of some superhuman state, where does one place him?

1. He may be the Ideal Philosopher, but he is not the Ideal Philosopher-King.
2. He may be the *Insān al-Kāmil*, but he is not the Imām.

The manner in which Ibn Tufayl wishes to give his hero credibility is neither as a political leader nor as a spiritual force but as a *walī*. The failure of Hayy within society leaves readers in a quandry as to what Ibn Tufayl wished to convey by the sudden descent of his hero. By such an approach, Ibn Tufayl further emphasizes the concept of *Walāyah*.[348] From the beginning, Ibn Tufayl divides the two approaches to the knowledge of the divine as the *ahl al-nazarīyah* (by reason) and the *ahl al-walāyah* (by intuition) and distinguishes the second approach as being 'clearer'.[349] Later, he goes on to describe the various stages of Hayy's development where there is an emphasis on the empirical methods that Hayy uses in his various observations. One must keep in

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348 See H. Landolt, "Walāyah," *ER*, 1986, Vol XV, pp. 319-321. This article studies the notion of *walāyah* in its varied context, from its etymological sense, to its early usage and more technical usage in Islamic Law, shīsm and sūfism. Our point of reference is to its mystical meaning in *sūfī* vocabulary.. which had been alluded to several times in the risālah.

349 See GM:98; LGAR:9.

mind that Ibn Tufayl has already classified the rational approach as one of the stages that precede mystical apprehension. In any case, Hayy passes through the various stages: the scientific, the rational, the metaphysical and is now ready for the mystical experience, which he cultivates through the practice of contemplation. Having achieved this experience, Ibn Tufayl describes it metaphorically, since, as he clarifies in the Prologue this experience is such that it cannot be easily described in words.

Through his encounter with Absāl, Hayy learns about a third method by which one might gain knowledge of God - the revelatory message. Hence, Hayy is now familiar with three approaches to Knowledge of God:

1. The Rational, which is basically Aristotelian. This approach is considered as a stage to the mystical. It would not be suitable for the masses. It had been explicated by Ibn Bājjah that even if the philosopher were to live within society, he could not advocate the rational message.
2. The Contemplative/Mystical. This method requires utmost concentration and the annihilation of the Self. It cannot be maintained (if at all achieved) within the pattern of society - hence even Absāl needs to emigrate.
3. The Revelatory. This approach is most suitable for the masses. It may lead them to the Divine, *if* they follow the prescriptions of the Law.

4.8 Ibn Tufayl's educational philosophy

The risālah also has the making of a strong educational philosophy. Here again, the literary and the philosophical intersect. This is yet another reason why Ibn Tufayl uses the tale. *Mythos* had been used by Plato as a part of his philosophical writings to convey his views on educational philosophy since the story has always been considered to be an effective mode, especially if one wished to address the different strata of

society or if one was presenting a particularly sensitive issue. Yet Ibn Tufayl's does not attempt to advocate the views of any particular school: He is neither a staunch peripatetic nor a typical *sūfī*. His purpose is rather to educate people according to the degree they are willing/able to learn. Hence, his different characters *(the dramatis personae)* show a diversity of approaches.

Ibn Tufayl wishes to present through Hayy, the overall development of character. This development includes a physical, mental and psychological growth. Hayy's religion (and he certainly has a religion) is a *weltreligion.* Ibn Tufayl may show anti establishment leanings, but he is not anti-religious. What he is advocating is a balanced approach - he is not a denunciator of the revealed message, but he wishes to emphasize the spirit, rather than the letter of the law. Hayy's "three emulations" clearly indicate Ibn Tufayl's educational philosophy. The inborn capacity of the soul (i.e.*fitrah*) and the process of self-education helps Hayy to live in harmony, not only with nature and the world around him but also with the whole cosmos. Hence, Hayy indicates that being virtuous is not limited to merely following the *sharī'ah;* but in emulating all the goodness that composes the heavens and by living an ecological balanced life.

Although Hayy may live the life of an ascetic, there is no radical denouncment of the world as evil. Even his asceticism is well planned and practical. Hayy would have liked to have given up food altogether but he realises that this would not serve him well. It could result only in physical death through starvation and besides, even hunger would deter his 'quest' for the 'vision'. The body and soul were related and both of them had to be taken care of. Hence, Hayy's three emulations cater to his bodily needs as well as his spiritual goals.

Ibn Tufayl advocates vegetarianism as an important principle but even this is adopted only after Hayy goes through the process of discovering the various kinds of food, of being a meateater before he "grows" in his awareness that killing God's creatures is unnecessary, when other vegetables and herbs were profusely available.[350]

4.9 The Mystical Quest

A question that the study of the risālah raises is whether the purpose of the book is mystical. According to Ibn Tufayl, the book is addressed to the intelligent neophyte who is interested in the mystical quest. Despite the author's emphasis in the Prologue to the book[351] regarding the highest level that man can reach outside the rational,[352] the reader may question whether mystical experience is the 'purpose' of the book. What we need to explore in Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* is not merely the facile issue whether the purpose of the work is the mystical comprehension of Hayy and Absal and the contrasted approach of Salāmān. This purpose is also indicated through Hayy's mystical experiences, which supersede his rational, speculative discoveries. The crucial issue seems to be centred on the understanding on what Ibn Tufayl means when he speaks of mysticism. With Ibn Tufayl, the rational appears to be an *a priori* stage to the mystical. But do Hayy's rational discoveries, which occupy the greater part of the

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350 The advocation of vegetarianism is rather rare in Islam. However, it has some early precedents. One of the advocates of vegetarianism is the famous blind Arab poet of the late 'Abbāsid period, al-Ma'arrī (d.449/1058). In his *al-Luzumīyat* the poet advocates an ascetic way of life and rejects the eating of fish, meat, eggs, and declaring that he possessed some esoteric knowledge in this context which could not be revealed. See al-Ma'arrī, *Luzūm mā lā yalzam: al-Luzūmīyāt*, ed. by Ibrahim al-'Arabī (Beirut: Maktabah sādir, 1952), I, 306-308. *Cf.* D. S. Margoliouth, "Abu 'l-'Alā al-Ma'arrī's correspondence on vegetarianism," *JRAS*, 1902, V, 927-935. *Cf.* P. Smoor, "al-Ma'arī," *EI*,[2] V, pp. 927-935.

351 GM:102-103; LGAR: 18-19.

352 GM:96; LGAR:5-6.

book, indicate that Ibn Ṭufayl meant to emphasize the rational approach? This rational approach might be slightly derided in the Prologue, but its role in the tale cannot be underestimated. Further, if we really wish to discover the manner in which Ibn Ṭufayl's mind worked, we need to use the main body of the text as our measuring scale, rather than the prologue whose intentions appear to be dubious. According to Plato and Aristotle, it is the Intellect which is the tool of perfect comprehension. Ibn Bājjah, who used the intellect as his main basis also called his "solitary" a ṣūfī! One needs to take these issues into consideration when we examine Ibn Ṭufayl's notion of 'mysticism'.

'Mysticism' is admittedly a term that is viewed differently by various people. This is one of main reasons why *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* has been interpreted in so many ways. Ibn Ṭufayl's understanding of mysticism does not have the elements of cultic associations or the quality of vague otherworldliness, which is the manner in which mysticism is sometimes understood. With Ibn Ṭufayl, it is a rationalized process - a growth, development and culmination of the human capacity for the Divine. We note that according to Ibn Ṭufayl, 'mystical' and 'discursive' thought are like two parallel lines of the same length. Such an explanation of the mystical experience gives rise to questions on the 'nature' of the mystical experience, its distinction from the 'intellectual' experience, and several others. It also requires us to confront Ibn Ṭufayl's mysticism, as it is elaborated in his characters. We also confront the issue of 'rational mysticism' and its relation to the purely 'ecstatic' experience which does not use 'discursive' thinking as an *a priori* model. Like Ibn Ṭufayl, al-Suhrawardī also advocates a certain combination of the 'rational' and 'mystical.'[353] Likewise, neither Ibn Ṭufayl nor al-Suhrawardī propagate a *particular ṣūfī shaykh* or a *particular ṣūfī ṭarīqah.*

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353 Cf. al-Suhrawardī's "Introduction to *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq.* pp. 9-13.

Some of the issues regarding the mystical experience as dealt with by Ibn Tufayl are: The nature of the 'ecstasy'; Ibn Tufayl states that it is an experience that cannot be expressed in words. Hence, we might say that Hayy's ignorance of speech is not really a deterrent in his contemplation since he is able to envisage the "essences" and the "Vision" without using the symbols and images of language. We also note that according to Ibn Tufayl, the experience itself is ineffable. Yet, "Hayy", who knew no language, "understood His words and 'heard' the summons they made. Not knowing how to speak did not prevent him from understanding. Drowned in ecstasy, he witnessed 'what no eye has seen or ear heard, nor has it entered the heart of man to conceive."[354] Like the unlettered prophet, Hayy also received the affirmation of the Divine in his heart.

Further, this description raises another interesting issue in the risalah, which is the notion of "prayer". It is indicated that Hayy followed certain rituals which might correspond to some of the rituals of prayer. For example, he performed the ablutions by keeping his body clean and washing himself frequently; he also scented himself with plant fragrances and pleasant smelling oils.[355] Yet, Hayy found Absal's supplications to be alien to his understanding. Even though Ibn Tufayl indicates the various human activities that Hayy 'discovers' in his solitude, he does not indicate any particular mode of prayer, excepting the method of contemplation that Hayy adopts by sitting in his cave and concentrating on the Divine.[356]

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354 GM:149; LGAR:121.

355 GM:146; LGAR:115-116.

356 H. Corbin, *Creative Imagination in the Sūfism of Ibn 'Arabī*, tr. R. Manheim (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), pp. 105-107. Quoting Proclus, Corbin speaks of the *prayer* of the heliotrope: "What other reason can we give for the fact that the heliotrope follows in its movement the movement of the sun and the selentrope the movement of the moon.... For, in truth, each thing prays according to the rank it occupies in nature, and sings the praise of the leader. ". In this sense, Hayy's contemplation of nature, of the movement of the sun, moon and stars are his

Ibn Tufayl's notion of prayer can possibly be explained by Najm al-dīn Kubrā's definition that "prayer according to the *sharī'a* is service, according to the *tarīqa*, proximity, and according to the *haqīqa*, union with God"[357] or by Ibn 'Arabī's interpretation of the true prayer, being a gift from God to the man who does not ask for anything; hence the prayer being a boon from God rather than a request from man to God.[358] Ibn Tufayl's teachings suggest that between the method and the truth lies the way which has to be trodden; hence Absāl's role is important to an understanding of the risālah. Among the postulates in the risālah is solitude, which is a prerequisite to the mystical experience. The other prerequisites seem to include living an ecologically balanced life. Climate helps to maintain the 'spirit' which cannot exist as easily when exposed to the vices of society Ibn Tufayl also advocates vegetarianism.[359] The chances of achieving the mystical vision within society are very slight. The mystical experience is not in itself intellectual but an intellectual frame of mind helps its recepient to articulate it to some extent. The loss of consciousness and any sense of self also categorize the experience of ecstasy.

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prayer.

357 Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, *Risālah fī fadīlat al-salāt* (Istanbul: Universitesi Kütüphanesi, Arab.4530), 2 b cited by A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions*, pp. 152-153.

358 Ibn 'Arabī, *Fusūs al-Hikām*, ed. A. A. Afifi (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb al-'Arabī), II, pp. 58-57. *Cf.* Izutsu, *Sufism & Taoism* (Tokyo: Keio Institute, 1986), pp. 180-187. Corbin, *Creative Imagination*, pp. 263-270.

359 See above in section 4.8 on Ibn Tufayl's 'Educational Philosophy'.

4.10 Social criticism

> But the social order is a sacred right which serves as a foundation for all others. This right, however, does not come from nature. It is therefore based on convention - The question is to know what these conventions are.[360]

Ibn Ṭufayl and his theory of society raises a number of questions: Does Ibn Ṭufayl strive to achieve harmony between philosophy and religion? Can a critical exposition be so complacent? To what extent is it a work of social criticism? Further, how conventional was Ibn Ṭufayl? Was he anti-convention? did he wish to affirm *Natural Law* over *sharī'ah?*

The religion of Salāmān is called 'a certain true religion'.[361] At the very beginning of Ibn Ṭufayl's narration of the other island, we have the implication that the religions of society are many and more than one could be 'true', to a greater or lesser extent whereas Hayy's religion transcends these limits. The religion prevalent in Salaman's and Absāl's island "represented all realities in symbols providing concrete images of things and impressing their outlines on the people's souls" Ibn Ṭufayl uses the analogy of an orator who addresses a multitude in the same way, Religion conditions its address to the masses as a public speaker would.[362]

In contrasting Salāmān and Absāl, who had been brought up together from within society, Ibn Ṭufayl emphasizes that both of them were strong adherents of the revealed religion: hence the critique is not addressed against the 'revealed' religion; both Salāmān and Absāl had taken instructions in this religion and had accepted it enthusiastically; both had found themselves duty-bound to abide by its laws and

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360 Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1948), p. 100.

361 GM: 156; LGAR: 136.

362 *Ibid.*

precepts for living. Neither is the *sharī'ah* denied:

> Of the two, Asal delved deeper into the esoteric meaning; he was more apt to find spiritual notions, and was a more ambitious interpreter. As for Salaman, he was more apt to keep to the apparent meaning, to avoid interpretation, and to abstain from examination and reflection. However, both assidiously performed the external practises [of the religious Law], disciplined themselves, and controlled their passions.[363]

Hence, we find three methods of adhering to religion within society:

1. The literal: which Ibn Tufayl seems to abhor, although he does not deny it.
2. The esoteric: which is how the text may be understood more clearly as having an inner meaning and which may lead, as in the case of Absāl, through contemplation to
3. the spiritual: which could be obtained to some extent within society, in highly extenuating circumstances - Absāl has, within him (i.e. within his 'nature') this potential, even when he is a part of society, but this potential cannot be actualized since he has no 'guide' to show him the path.[364]

It is highly improbable that Absāl could reach the heights of spiritual experience without the help of Hayy within or outside society. Hayy himself is endowed with the best of circumstance: his spontaneous birth, being the receptacle of light and the "spirit", the balance of elements and so forth and yet he takes 50 years -- a lifetime -- to attain spiritual perfection. Absāl needs to go outside since there did not seem many people like him in the society ruled by the literalist, Salāmān. One notes that almost every time Ibn Tufayl speaks of Salāmān, he alludes to his uncompromising literal attitude, whereas with Hayy and with Absāl, we follow their development through various stages - especially with Hayy, we encounter the defenceless child, the rationalist, the scientist, the philosopher and the mystic. Even with Absāl, we perceive a change of attitudes - from the learned elite, who considers himself apart from the society around him, to a

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363 G. N. Atiyeh, "Hayy," p. 154.

364 In the prologue, the author addresses his friend to whom he is willing to indicate the direction of the path.

realization of his humility when he encounters Hayy. However, there remains space for interpretation (*ta'wīl*) and reciprocity. This is why the work cannot be considered defeatist and ultimately, offering no solution. In the same manner, Hayy enters society in order to discover himself as a member of the species called 'man'; otherwise his knowledge would have remained incomplete. The very fact that Absāl exists also denies a clear-cut division between the rational/spiritual vs. the literalists/masses.

The issues of the latter section of the risālah are all the more interesting in their elusive character. At one stage, it would seem that the focus is on the harmony of the revealed religion and spiritual relgion. Other subtle indications would weigh the scales more heavily on the side of the spiritual. It is evident that Ibn Tufayl is saying different things to different readers or he may be testing the ground, as to how far he could reach out to a literalist society even while he is, at the same time offering them the alternative that they are not wrong in following religion to the letter. Hence, he refrains from corrupting their faith whilst all the time he is widening their understanding through the tale.

The emulations are necessary in the 'primitive' as well as the 'civilized' society. "Still each of them [Salām¯an and Absāl] executed the express commands of the text, kept watch over his soul, and fought his passions."[365] Man's own nature inclines him towards choosing from the two alternatives that the law ordains: "Absāl devoted himself to the quest for solitude, preferring the words of the law in its favour because he was naturally a thoughtful man...but Salāmān preferred being among people."[366]

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[365] GM:156; LGAR:137.

[366] GM:156; LGAR:136-137.

Hence, the 'revealed' religion incorporates the need for solitude as well as the necessity of a social life - it appears that the revealed religion is able to make its appeal to different strata of society. Ibn Tufayl does not appear to hold a grudge against the revealed religion. He had earlier confirmed its harmony with Hayy's natural religion. His attack is aimed on the society which he refers to in disparaging terms, as incapable of achieving salvation due to their material greed. The nature of the contemporary society is such that the masses would be inclined to choose the latter alternative, although most of them are even more debased and do not even follow the law, being so involved in the material world. Ibn Tufayl is not critical of religion but is very critical of society - after the beautiful climax of Hayy's mystical experiences, we move away from this Utopian paradise to the tensions of daily life in a 'civilized' society'.

"His mind caught fire. Reason and tradition were at one within him." The reconciliation of reason and tradition takes place only in Absāl; although Hayy can immediately understand the truths of the revealed religion, since he had already experienced these truths. "Hayy understood all this and found none of it in contradiction with what he had seen for himself from his supernal vantage point."[367] Absāl also has hopes "that through Hayy, God might give guidance to a body of aspiring acquaintances of his, who were somewhat closer to salvation than the rest."[368] but the small elite in Salāmān's island were unable to understanding Hayy's expositions on the true 'essence' of the One. Anything that rose above the literal was considered repugnant since "the inborn infirmity simply would not allow them to seek Him in His own terms, they wanted to know Him some human way."[369]

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[367] GM:160.

[368] GM:162; LGAR:148.

[369] GM:163; LGAR:150-151.

Another interesting question that may be posed is why Absāl goes back to the island once he has gained some knowledge of the spiritual. One possible reason is that he is still a neophyte and needs a guide. The other question is whether solitude *is* a prerequisite for the mystical experience or even for the higher degree of intellectual perfection, as is the case with Ibn Bājjah's *Mutawahhid*. If Absāl were to live within society, his case would not be very different from Ibn Bājjah's "weeds". With Ibn Tufayl, these issues remain open, possibly rhetorical, questions. They are further explicated by Ibn Rushd.

Within Ibn Tufayl's worldview, merges the democratic ideal of choices, prevalent in the very use of the mirror-metaphor: In order to reflect the image-likeness perfectly, man is given the choice of polishing the mirror, or allowing a distorted image to be reflected. Absāl attempts to polish the mirror by dissociating from the society which preferred to view a distorted 'veiled' image. Man's role to opt for the good or the bad, for the spiritual or the merely material was an essential part of his dignity as man and even as 'saint'. Also, there exists an important difference between the image and the likeness. The image, or the *eikon*, is the state or condition of primitive creational integrity, with which Hayy is endowed by virtue of his 'spontaneous generation' and his development in the uninhabited island. The similitude or *homoisis* was given to man only potentially as a disposition still to be fulfilled, which is attempted by Absāl. Hence, man's reassimilation of the "image" in which he had been created, i.e. of God, has often been compared to the polishing of the mirror, an analogy which is also used by Ibn Tufayl and later thinkers such as Ibn 'Arabī.

Hayy's island is obviously presented as a foil to the inhabited island, whose ultimate rejection by Hayy and Absāl raises the issue whether Ibn Tufayl meant to

advocate an ideal. There are however a number of indications that Ibn Tufayl does not repudiate the 'social way of life'. He does note the necessity of rules and regulations, of a *sharī'ah.* On the other hand, the existence of Hayy's island suggests the alternative available to a few enlightened minds. Hence, Hayy's island also represents the ideal stage which is accessible to people who work at attaining the Vision through contemplation as is the case of Absāl. It is not limited only to people like Hayy who are born under ideal circumstances but it is the *tarīqah* that is alluded to in the risālah.

Hayy's island is the symbol of the intermediary world between the material world and the world of pure intelligibles. This is seen by the number of allusions to certain symbolic metaphors by Ibn Tufayl which could not be merely descriptive. For example, the allusion to the island on which Hayy was born through spontaneous generation being "centrally" situated, just below the equator evokes the intermediary world. It had been alluded to earlier in a treatise on alchemy attributed to Apollonios, whose Arabic version was conserved by Jaldakī (d. ca.750/ 1349-1359 and 762/1360-1361), entitled *The Book of the Seven Idols* which is a part of the voluminous *The Book of Proof concerning the secrets of the Science of the Balance.*[370] The very title and subtitle of the above work evoke similar references in Ibn Tufayl's risālah. The book, according to Corbin, is a initiation into alchemy by "Seven idols which are made of seven metals and figure as priests before the autels of the Seven planets ": A scheme which had been reproduced by the Sabians of Harrān and which also recalls the schema of the Persian romance composed by Nizāmī entitled *Haft Paykar* (The Seven Beauties or The Seven Idols)[371] as well as the scheme that is used by Ibn Tufayl in his division of Hayy's life into seven phases of seven years. Further, the beginning of the tale attributed to

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370 *Cf.* H. Corbin, *L'alchimie comme art hiératique,* ed. and presented by P. Lorry (Paris: Editions de L'Herne, 1986), pp. 66-144.*Idem., Histoire,* pp.453-54.

371 See Nizāmī, *The Haft Paikar,* tr. by C. E. Wilson (London: Probsthian & Co., 1924).

Apollonius recalls the beginning of Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah.

> ...I found myself in the city which was in the middle of the harmonious Land. Then I hurried towards the Temple of the Sun which spread its rays and light... Around the temple there were flowing rivers and ...flowers. I saw that this harmonious landscape was the most beautiful of landscapes.[372]

The direct analogies in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* are to Ḥayy's island which is centrally situated and "of all places on earth, has the most tempered climate. And because a supernal light streams down on it, it is most perfectly adapted..."[373] Further, "the secrets of the Science of the Balance" also recalls a. the allusion by Ibn Ṭufayl to the island being under the direct rays of the sun when it is in the sign of the Balance and

b. the balance that is achieved in Ḥayy's creation, the balanced climate in the island and the balance that is required of Ḥayy in his emulations which aid his quest for the vision. The above points illustrate the extent to which Ḥayy's island might be seen as an ideal in contrast to society. Further, it is something that has to be experienced by each individual through his own strivings. It cannot be taught, hence Ḥayy is unsuccessful with the masses who do not have the aptitude to learn; it is a secret which can be alluded to, a path which can be indicated but which has to be trod by each individual for himself. Even when Ḥayy and Absāl return to the uninhabited island, each of them would probably live parallel, concurrent but separate lives.

Ibn Ṭufayl does not deny the necessity of the material world while being, at the same time highly critical of it. By making Ḥayy and Absāl return to the deserted island, Ibn Ṭufayl sets down his standards. These may not be the right standards for the people in general but they nevertheless remain the only standards by which the true

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372 The references to the Apollonius and Nizāmī are cited by Corbin. However, we have noted the similarities that these texts share with the risālah. These similarities further indicate the links that the risālah has with al-Suhrawardī, in the context in which Corbin refers to them. See H Corbin, "Le récit d'initiation," pp. 132-133.

373 GM:103.

mystic could survive uncorrupted.

Chapter V

- CONCLUSION.

From the preceding discussion, one notes that the risālah may be perceived at different levels. These layers are evident not only in the formal structure of the risālah but also in its subject matter. The reasons for this approach by Ibn Tufayl which has been examined in the thesis, may be summarized as:

1. In order to address the different strata of society and present a critique of contemporary society.
2. In order to examine the literary as well as the philosophical mode.
3. In order to explore the tensions inherent in the relations between *walāyah* and *nubūwah;* reason and revelation; philosophy and mysticism and *Natural Law* and *sharī'ah*.
4. In order to critically examine the views of his predecessors.

One may encounter other bipolar relations in the course of the risālah. It appears to have been a part of Ibn Tufayl's methodology to present both the sides of the coin, and it is the role of the critic to evaluate as to which aspect Ibn Tufayl is advocating and which he is disclaiming. One of the ways through which this may be done is to locate internal evidence such as Fradkin does with reference to the two versions of Hayy's birth.[374] The other method is by comparing contradictory elements in different sections and evaluating which point Ibn Tufayl may have supported as per the structure[375] and content[376] of the work, or details that may be perceived with

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374 See Fradkin, "Ibn Tufayl," pp. 111-112 Fradkin considers the later reference in the text of the risālah that the gazelle would sometimes return Hayy to the place where she had found him and keep him snuggled among the feathers which had lined the box, to be an indication that Ibn Tufayl himself believed in the second version of Hayy's birth i.e. his abandonment by his royal mother.

375 Such an approach is taken by Gauthier who considers the risālah to be divided into four parts, three of which had been examined by earlier critics. The last part i.e. the encounter of Hayy and Absāl was left unnoticed and Gauthier draws our attention to this section as the most important See L. Gauthier, *Ibn Thofail*, p. 65.

376 see G. F. Hourani, "The Principal Subject," pp. 40-46 Hourani generally concurs with Gauthier's division but criticizes his assumption that the last part is

reference to the historical and the political milieu.[377] These issues have already been studied with reference to the text of the risālah. We wish, in conclusion to sum up the arguments.

1. Ibn Tufayl speaks in different voices through the characters of Hayy, Absāl, Salāmān, the elite group surrounding Salāmān and Absāl and the masses. We have examined these issues under the sections "Social Criticism", "Character Types" and in other parts of the thesis. In spite of a quasi-defeatist attitude, Ibn Tufayl is highly critical of the general masses who remain "corrupt" despite the presence of the "revealed message". The question as to whether Ibn Tufayl's criticism is directed against the contemporary society, does not have a simple answer since the author does not make any direct allusions to the contemporary situation, except for the casual references in the beginning and the end of the text, where he notes that his work is also meant to refute the "self-styled" philosophers of the time However, there are no other direct allusions to the political milieu of the time.[378] Historical accounts, such as those of al-Marrākushī reveal the considerable pressure under which philosophical study could be pursued. However, we also know that Ibn Tufayl's patron, Abu Ya'qub Yusuf was extremely interested in philosophy and related sciences. Ibn Tufayl's criticism indicates the very exceptional circumstances -- as existed under Abu Ya'qub Yusuf and as is the case with Hayy -- under which one might attain the elevated status of a Hayy.

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necessarily the most important. Hourani asserts that one has to see what the main subject of the risālah is. Basing his criticism on the "explicit" statements of its author, Hourani feels that the primary subject of *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* is "mystical experience". Hence, while Hourani also examines the construction of the risālah, he does not use this as the base for what might be considered its main theme.

377 See above in chapter IV: The Sociopolitical Approach.

378 In the Prologue, the present state of philosophy in Andalūsia is lamented. The emphasis of these statements however, is on the fact that there were more mathematicians and jurists in the country than physicians

2. We have studied in detail as to how Ibn Tufayl employs the literary and philosophical modes. We have also examined the critical feedback of those writers who have studied Ibn Tufayl's risālah. The comparison of Ibn Tufayl's risālah with the recitals of Ibn Sīna and al-Suhrawardī and *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām* has also shown how Ibn Tufayl used the genre in such a manner so as to function both as a 'myth' and a 'treatise'. Hence, any one definition of Ibn Tufayl's risālah as myth, romance, allegory or treatise *per se* would be misnomers. We have also indicated the extent to which the risālah may be considered a *récit d'initiation* in which the above elements are combined, by comparing it with the works of Ibn Sīnā, al-Suhrawardī and *al-'Alim w'al-Ghulām.* One of the difficult reasons for considering the risālah solely as a 'myth, a 'scientific treatise' and so forth is not because *Hayy ibn Yaqzān* does not share the characteristics that are prevalent in these forms. They *are* present and their presence lends weight to the theses of various critics in the justification of a particular definition. However, each of these forms is considered exclusive of the others. Our examination of the risālah and of the critical corpus available brings us to the conclusion that Ibn Tufayl is not merely narrating a story or elucidating its philosophical themes, but, he himself is playing the role of the critic and is examining the validity and relevance of some of the issues raised, which he uses as a premise for his study.

Hence, one might suggest that Ibn Tufayl uses the risālah for the study of religion and related issues, in the manner of a *religionwissenschaftist* and examines it from the various angles that a scientific study of religion entails.[379] This probably explains certain similarities in his thought when compared to modern thinkers. However, one

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379 Similarly, the arabic *hikmah* which is associated with the knowledge of the mystical science also means wisdom , science or philosophy. The Greek 'wisdom' was also used for a philosophical and scientific study of nature and there was no clear distinction between science and philosophy at this time. See *EI*^{2}, "Hikma" by A M Goichon. To examine the shift from such a comprehensive definition to the distinction between science, philosophy and religion, see S. H. Nasr, *Ideals and Realities*, p. 135.

must avoid the danger of superimposing modern methodology in the study and approach of a work which was obviously not written with any such framework in mind. Perceiving Ibn Tufayl as the critic resolves various problems concerning the crux of the work; whether it is the mystical understanding of Hayy as Hourani interjects, or the amazing reconciliation between the revealed religion and rationalized truth. These no longer have a finality when we see that Ibn Tufayl was himself doing what various critics do when examining a problem, by seeing it from the various angles in which it can be studied. Ibn Tufayl is using the premises, whether they be "scientific" or "mythical" to put forward a study of the issues. Hence, Ibn Tufayl, in his risālah, is himself conducting a creative, artistic and scientific research into the study and nature of religion.

3. We have examined how Ibn Tufayl emphasizes on the notion of *walāya'* and contrasts it with the use of reason *(nazar).* However, Ibn Tufayl does not contrast it with prophecy, rather he perceives it in the *sūfī* sense, where the *walī* is one who is close to God. *Walāyah* and *Nubūwah* are closely related, although Ibn Tufayl stresses that they are not analogical by the fact that Hayy is unable to "convert" the people to a 'religion'. This is the function of the Prophet. Yet the "Sage" and *Walī* can 'initiate' the 'aspirant' to the 'esoteric' teaching of the religion. Prophethood is never derided. The prophet is likened to a mirror reflecting on itself. He is also the image of God. However, Ibn Tufayl is critical of the legal teachings of the prophet which cater to the material aspects of life, a literal adherence of which might result in excesses. It appears that Ibn Tufayl distinguished between "supernatural" revelation i.e. conveyed specifically by the prophets, and "natural" revelation given as "grace" to those whose *fiṭrah* is balanced and who are "prepared" to be the receptacle of the spirit. Whereas supernatural revelation advocates a realization of man's accountability, natural revelation reacts against human irresponsibility and man's dependence on mechanical law. This means

that the latter results in the case of man's harmony with the cosmos/nature, whereas supernatural revelation is required for those who lack this inner harmony and preparedness and hence need a guide to explain to them the intricacies of the message. With the people of Salāmān's island, supernatural laws become a condition. Absāl is unable to discover the *bāṭin* of the Law within the structure of society and needs to emigrate. By considering these laws as a limitation in the attainment of the Truth, Ibn Tufayl provides a substitute in the form of natural revelation, which restores the lost harmony.

Other bipolar relations such as that of reason and revelation are also examined. We have noted that the harmony between reason and revelation is not a facile issue. Ibn Tufayl declares that "Absal perceived how the two are in harmony". Ibn Tufayl however, is not contradicting himself when he contrasts the lack of understanding of Absāl's friends with Absāl's own acceptance of Hayy's experiences. What he means to show is that if one truly wants to experience the highest reality, one necessarily has to be open to its universality. Further, one needs to understand it in its exoteric *and* esoteric sense. Hayy's experiences were of the esoteric reality. Even though he was not exposed to the revealed message, he had been exposed to the 'exoteric forms' of the reality, such as plants, animals and the heavenly bodies.[380] These forms or philosophizing on their existence alone could not have led Hayy to the experience of the Divine since Hayy is always aware that there is "something" (*al-shay'*) else which vitalizes them. Their exoteric aspect leads to the discovery of the esoteric essence and which leads further to the unveiling of the hidden. It is in this sense that reason and revelation, philosophy and mysticism are in harmony with each other. Since Absāl is open to both the esoteric meaning of revealed message and through Hayy's account, to

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380 Ibn Tufayl is very 'greek' in his idea of the heavens as a sort of 'divine' entity. *Cf.* Corbin, *Creative Imagination*, pp. 105-107.

its metaphysical reality, he can see the harmony between religion and philosophy. Hence, Ibn Tufayl also examines philosophy as an *a priori* stage to 'mystical experience' *if* one wishes to harmonize the two. The advantage of this combination is that it may be verbalized to some extent. Hence, it is distinct from the purely mystical approach by al-Bastāmi and al-Hallāj which is equally commendable but which lays itself open to misinterpretation.

Further, we have alluded to Ibn Tufayl's criticism of the *sharī'ah*. Ibn Tufayl is not critical of the message of revelation but is calling for an interpretation and understanding of moral issues. He sees that the danger of amassing wealth and other material activities which were allowed under the law could only help in increasing corruption.[381] However, Ibn Tufayl offers no solution for these problems. He notes that the masses who spend their time in such activities are doomed to eternal suffering.[382] He still sees some hope for those people who adhere to the law and conduct their religious duties in its accordance but who do not strive towards the experience of the Reality, since they are not aware of its Presence.

In contrast to the discordant picture that society presents, we note the arcadian simplicity of Hayy's life, which is ruled by Natural law. Is Ibn Tufayl asserting the rule of *Qānūn* over *sharī'ah?* It does not appear to be so but nonetheless, one is exposed to the serene quality of the simple life, which is governed by the lack of excess, by a certain balance in diet, a simplicity and directness of approach, an exhuberance and enthusiasm in Hayy's message. Such a call to return to nature and the simple life is a recurrent theme which is found in the Ancient Greeks, the Cynics and the Stoics,

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381 GM:161; LGAR:146.

382 See below for the differences between Ibn Tufayl's and Ibn Bājjah's views. See also M. Mahdi, "Islamic Philosophy," *EB*, 1985, XXII, p 27.

especially in relation to the condemnation of conventional values and artifical virtues.[383] It also occurs with the Romantic Poets such as William Wordworth of 19th century England.

4. We have earlier examined the Prologue to the risālah in which the views of Ibn Tufayl's predecessors are briefly summed up. The author succinctly points to issues where their thought deviated from his viewpoint, to be presented in the main body of the risālah. While one cannot deny the value of the Prologue, since such a work reveals the actual understanding of the philosophers in their own time, we find its view of philosophy to be critical, straightfoward but quasi-orthodox in comparison with the main body. It seems that the author -- whether he is Ibn Tufayl or not -- is providing some sort of an armour for himself against those views of his predecessors in which some elements are present, which do not adhere to the 'acceptable' norms in the muslim nonphilosophical milieu of the time. We have discussed how these contradictions as well the lack of any historical mention of the Prologue tend to suggest that it was a later interpolation by a scribe, or possibly some other contemporary who had access to the risālah.

Although the Prologue presents an evaluation of the state of philosophy during the time and confirms a familiarity with the thoughts of various Islamic and Greek philosophers, it is in the main body of the risālah -- which is in the 'story' form unlike the Prologue which resembles a letter/short treatise -- that Ibn Tufayl moulds within the elements of the 'story', the philosophy of his predecessors and hence transforms it into a living tradition - a *philosophia perrenis* which is brought to life by his protagonist, Hayy. While Ibn Tufayl assimilates the teachings of his predecessors, he also examines the validity of their theories in the life of Hayy, which in some sense could be

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383 *Cf.* D. Sturm, "Naturalism," *ER*, 1986, X.

considered to be an account of his own spiritual growth. While the Prologue is a historical presentation of the state of philosophy, the story traces its growth and development in the protagonist, Hayy who moves from being Aristotelian, Farabian, Neoplatonic, and Ghazalian. One is astounded by the range and flexibility of Ibn Tufayl's mind which results in the presentation through the story, a critique of the views of his predecessors. Such an understanding of the text reveals the subtle nuances of Ibn Tufayl's thought. This is evident in the criticism of certain theories of his predecessors in the Prologue, which are acceptable in the main body. In the Introduction, the author criticizes and analyses the views of preceding philosophers from Aristotle to Ibn Bājjah; by so doing, he indirectly supports certain approaches which are disclaimed within the context of the prologue and are adhered to in the main body of the text.

We illustrate below some of these points of divergence and hope to show how Ibn Tufayl actually ranked these philosophers in spite of the statements made in the Prologue. Such a reading also calls for an examination of the political and social climate of the time. One of the hurdles in such a comparison is the contradictory views of the particular philosopher, which might indicate a point of divergence on the one hand and a point of convergence on the other.[384]

Ibn Tufayl's views with regard to the philosopher versus society begin where Ibn Bājjah and al-Fārābī had left them. Both Ibn Bājjah and Ibn Tufayl divert themselves from the Platonic norm. Both Ibn Tufayl and al-Fārābī are reluctant to make direct reference to the religion discussed as Islam and to the prophet Muhammad. In al-Fārābī, this is in keeping with his presentation of a theoretical ideal which

384 *Cf.* Marmura, "The Philosopher and Society," in the section of the thesis entitled, 'The Sociopolitical Approach'. Marmura examines some of the apparently contradictory views in al-Fārābī's thought.

nevertheless presents the ideal of Islam. With Ibn Tufayl, the encounter between the philosopher and a society which is under the revealed religion is quite realistic. If anything, it is the philosopher Hayy, who is the ideal; the religious adherence of the masses reflects not only the message of the religion but its acceptance and mis/understanding by the people.

"The theory of prophethood and revelation is best understood within the framework of al-Fārābī's emanative cosmology."[385] Ibn Ṭufayl is critical of al-Fārābī's theory of Prophecy in the Prologue yet he adheres to al-Fārābī's emanative cosmology in the main body of the risālah. We note that the Prologue is critical of al-Fārābī's 'theory of souls' which are annihilated if they do not achieve perfection. This view does not adhere exactly with al-Fārābī's own views. al-Fārābī does agree with Plato on the immortality of the souls. Ibn Ṭufayl himself considers the issue of rewards and punishments as being symbolic, when these also suggest individual immortality. Other parts of the risālah such as his mystical 'ascension' through the spheres also suggest that Ibn Ṭufayl himself did not believe in individual immortality.

Ibn Ṭufayl is critical of Ibn Bājjah in his Introduction but one sees how closely attuned they are to each other through Ibn Ṭufayl's presentation in the main body of the risālah. Although he is in agreement with Ibn Bājjah regarding the conjunction of the intellect with the divine,[386] Ibn Ṭufayl also alludes to a further stage beyond the use of reason, which Ibn Bājjah had criticized as being a figment of the imagination, for which

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385 M. E. Marmura, "The Islamic Philosophers' Conception of Islam," p. 95.

386 Ibn Tufayl quotes Ibn Bājjah: "Once this concept is grasped the mind can see itself as cut off from all that went before, with new convictions that cannot have arisen from the world of matter, too splendid to have sprung from the material since they are cleansed of all the compositeness characteristic of the physical world. Surely it would be more appropriate to call them divine ecstasies granted by God to those He will " (GM 96, LGAR:5)

he had been rebuked by Ibn Tufayl since he was being critical of something which he had not experienced.[387] The difference between Ibn Bājjah and Ibn Tufayl, in this context, is quite superficial. Both of them discuss the union of the human intelligence with the immaterial /divine intelligibles, granting certain differences. Ibn Tufayl's reaction to Ibn Bājjah was probably provoked because of the manner in which Ibn Bājjah lived, of which Ibn Tufayl was critical and also because Ibn Tufayl felt that Ibn Bājjah was not truly dedicated to his study and allowed himself to commit a number of mistakes due to carelessness. Otherwise, Ibn Tufayl's description of Hayy's mystical experience closely adheres to Ibn Bājjah's description, even though he excludes the 'imaginative' element.

Further, the two writers share common ground with reference to the relation of the philosopher and society. Both the philosophers concentrate upon the spiritual progress of the individual rather than that of the society or the community itself.[388] Ibn Bājjah's problem is how the philosopher in the imperfect state should relate to society but Ibn Tufayl exposes his philospher to a society converted to the "revealed" religion.[389] Ibn Bājjah bases the perception of the Reality by the philosopher solely on his rational faculty. Ibn Tufayl, on the other hand, apparently perceived that logical reasoning -- without revelation -- could only result in antimonies which would remain unsolvable - we see a suggestion of this idea in his examination of the createdness and/or eternity of the heavens.

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387 See Merlan, p. 36. Merlan cites the ps. Alexandrian text, which emphasizes the mystical aspect of the unification with a much greater clarity than Alexander: "only he who has experience it knows what it means."

388 *Cf.* Oliver Leaman, "Ibn Bājja on society and philosophy," *Isl.*, LVII (1980), p. 109

389 A possible allusion by Ibn Tufayl to the conversion of the Berbers Hence, there is also the suggestion that the converted masses were a fanatical group who literally adhered to the Qur'ān and Sunnah and were also subject to accepting the anthropomorphic description literally, for which Ibn Tufayl criticizes the masses.

One other difference between Ibn Bājjah and Ibn Tufayl is that although both perceive the role of the philosopher in society to be somewhat similar; Ibn Bājjah is quite unconcerned with any sort of reform of the masses whereas Ibn Tufayl's Hayy at least attempts to teach them the higher truths.

Such a discussion of the role of the philosopher in society which was initiated by Ibn Bājjah, established by Ibn Tufayl and whose solution was attempted by Ibn Rushd, could not merely be a coincidental occurence and thus reflects on the serious problems that a philospher had to face in society.

We have discussed in the thesis the common ground that exists between Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Sīnā with reference to 'mystical' thought and the use of the genre. Ibn Tufayl also utilizes the psychology of Ibn Sīnā and possibly, its Aristotelian source. Like Ibn Sīnā,[390] Ibn Tufayl also believed that the rational/individual soul is not pre-eternal but is generated at the same time as the individual body which can receive it, is formed. This is evident in his account of the spontaneous generation of Hayy, a subject which had also been briefly discussed by Ibn Sīnā. Finally, Ibn Tufayl reluctantly establishes, through the experiences of Hayy in society, the Farabian principle which is also echoed by Ibn Sīnā, that religion presents philosphical/mystical truth in the language of symbols. But with Ibn Tufayl, this is not an *a priori* precept. In fact, it is the particular situation of the masses which entails such an approach. Hayy is able to reveal to Absāl these realities with the minimal use of symbols (i.e. language itself being a symbolic mode of communication) and Absāl is very much a man brought up within the norms of society and religion although he belongs to the small class of intelligent and enlightened beings. Hence, there are also difference between the perceptions of Ibn

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390 M. S. Mahdi, "Islamic Philosophy," *EB*, 1985, XXII, p. 26.

Tufayl and his predecessors, which Ibn Tufayl himself establishes very subtly.

Unlike al-Ghazālī, Ibn Tufayl does not subject the mind to an established religious authority. There is a certain flexibility in his approach. Further, he is not interested in justifying the relation between religion and philosophy to the extent that Ibn Rushd attempted. Both al-Ghazālī and Ibn Rushd -- who were otherwise in direct contrast with each other -- permit the theologian/philosopher to present their teachings at different levels to suit the understanding of the audience but Ibn Tufayl, although he finally accepts such an approach, does suggest that one would be eluding the existing problem. Such a method is suggested only under the extreme circumstances where there is an unwillingness and fear to understand the 'truth'.

5.1 The Aftermath of the risālah

We have also seen that the risālah, even if it may not be considered as one belonging to a cycle of similar works, such as we have in the cyclical *mysteries* or the recitals of Ibn Sīnā,[391] does have strong links with its predecessors. The question remains whether the risālah has had any effect on later works. One notes that the famous poet Jāmi wrote a poem entitled *Salāmān wa Absāl*.[392] This poem, however, seems to have used either Ibn Sīnā or the earlier Arabic version. We do know of another work written in the 13th century by Ibn al-Nafīs, entitled *Kitāb Fādil ibn Nātiq*.[393] One of the earliest

391 Corbin, *Avicenna, op. cit.*

392 See A. J. Arberry, *Fitzgerald's 'Salāmān and Absāl'* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1956) and A H. Habibi, *Nigāh bih Salāmān ō Absāl-i Jāmi wa Sawabiq-i an* (Kabul, Anjumān-i Jāmī, 1964)

393 Also known under the title, *al-Risālah al-Kāmiliyah fi-al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyah.* This work has been edited and partially translated by M. Meyerhof and J Schacht, eds *The 'Theologus Autodidactus' of Ibn al-Nafis* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1968). The title chosen by the editors indicate the link with Ibn Tufayl's, *Philosophus Autodidactus.*

biographers of Ibn al-Nafīs, i.e. Safadī (d.764/1363), speaks of

> ...a small book of his which he opposed to the *Treatise of Hayy ibn Yakzān* of Ibn Sīnā (i.e. Ibn Tufayl) and which he called the *Book of Fāḍil ibn Nātik.* In it he defends the systems of Islam and the Muslims' doctrines on the missions of Prophets, the religious laws, the resurrection of the body, and the transitoriness of the world.[394]

What is common to the two precedents to Ibn Nafīs' story is the figure of a narrator named Hayy ibn Yaqzān, who appears under the name of Fāḍil Ibn Nāṭiq in the *Theologus*, but whereas Hayy has an important role in the risālahs by Ibn Sīna and Ibn Tufayl, in Ibn Nafīs, the narrator plays "the part of a quite superfluous transmitter of the tale of the hero, who is called Kāmil." An examination of the *Theologus* reveals that its comparison with Ibn Sīnā's risālah is erroneous, indicating probably the beginning of the confusion between the risālahs of Ibn Sīnā and Ibn Tufayl. One can see that the risālahs of Ibn Tufayl and Ibn Nafīs have more in common. In fact, there can be no doubt that Ibn Nafīs deliberately departed from Ibn Tufayl's risālah, in order to establish some of his own viewpoints Schacht and Meyerhoff note "The main idea of both the treatises is the same; a human being originated by spontaneous generation on an uninhabited island comes to know by his own reasoning the natural, philosophical and theological truths."[395] There are many parallels between the two works such as

1. Spontaneous generation.
2. The description of the working of the sense organs
3. The physical limitations of man as opposed to the rest of the animal world.
4. Knowledge of anatomy through the dissection of animals.
5. The use of primitive tools.
6. The advancing discoveries through reason regarding plants, animals, meteorological bodies, celestial bodies and finally rising to a knowledge of God and His attributes.

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394 Cited in the "Introduction" to *Theologus Autodidactus*, p. 14.

395 "Introduction" to the *Theologus Autodidactus*, p. 29.

7. The linking of certain ages of the hero with the achievement of certain stages of reasoning.
8. The arrival of a stranger (or strangers) to the island from whom the hero accepts food and learns language.
9. His visit to an inhabited country.
10. The reason why the Divine Law, in addressing common people makes use of allegories.

These analogies might suggest that the two works are almost identical, but this is not the case. One may assume through these analogies that Ibn Nafīs utilized Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah just as one knows that Ibn Ṭufayl was familiar with Ibn Sīnā's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān*. However, Ibn Nafīs' present a strong theological reaction to Ibn Ṭufayl's risālah

The alternative choice that Ibn Ṭufayl keeps offering his readers, such as in the case of Hayy's birth does not recur in Ibn al-Nafīs, where the hero is generated as a youth of 10-12 years. One wonders why Ibn al-Nafīs takes such a drastic turn - however, as a result of this the role of the gazelle is also dispensed with.[396] Another point of differentiation is that Ibn al-Nafīs' hero is not really self-taught. Born outside the 'theological' circle, he nevertheless, asserts the necessity of theology. The hero in Ibn al-Nafīs makes hardly any self discoveries - his knowledge is derived from the other beings who visit the island - such is the case with the discovery of fire, the use of clothes and other practical inventions. Then, why is the case of isolation presented? Simply to prove that "life becomes civilized only in human society."[397] Hence, one might say that in many ways Ibn al-Nafīs' risālah is an anti-thesis of Ibn Ṭufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān*. Even the parallel incidents in the two risālahs are used to refute all the

396 The gazelle in Ibn Ṭufayl represents 'Nature' who sustains life. Perhaps Ibn al-Nafīs wishes to assert that man cannot be nurtured from nature alone.

397 "Introduction" to *Theologus*, p. 31.

notions suggested by Ibn Tufayl. For example, in Ibn al-Nafis, it is the visitor, who is the base and source of information, whereas with Ibn Tufayl, it is the reverse or rather, there is some reciprocity between Hayy and Absāl. Also, while Absāl informs Hayy of the exoterics of religion, in Ibn al-Nafis, the hero discovers these through the result of speculation on what might be the doctrines likely to be taught by the prophets. Further,

> ...the arrival of visitors from the outside world has a different function in each story; it serves in Ibn Tufayl to confirm and complete the results of the hero's independent reasoning, but in Ibn al-Nafis only to acquaint him with the existence of a human society outside his island, from which he goes on to draw conclusions by solitary thinking, their confirmation by comparison with the existing religion being left to the reader.[398]

The hero of Ibn al-Nafis discovers the duties of man in worship and social relations; the periodical development of prophecy, the life-history of the last Prophet; the subsequent fate of the community of this Prophet and the end of this world with the signs preceding it. These points are entirely Ibn Nafis' creation and are a reaction and presentation of his own worldview against the view presented by Ibn Tufayl in his risālah. Ibn Nafis' theories on the circulation of blood, whose discovery is attributed in the West to William Harvey, are very briefly alluded to by Ibn Tufayl also.[399] Ibn Nafis' *Theologus* is a polemical reaction to Ibn Tufayl's *Philosophus*. Its author wishes to protect the rank of the prophet, which may have been endangered by Ibn Tufayl's risālah.

We have tried to examine the risālah in its various facets which bring to light the preciousness of the diamond. However, we also recall the analogy used by Ibn Tufayl regarding the clay and its dimensions. The dimensions to which the clay is moulded render shape to the clay but the actual clay -- which cannot exist without its

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398 "Introduction" to the *Theologus*, p. 31.

399 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

dimensions -- is in some ways independent of them. It is the same case with the risālah. We can only hope that an examination of the various facets and the study of different approaches to the risālah have shed light to what the risālah is actually about, and it is this elusive quality of the risālah which renders the written word to flesh and which places it high in the ranks of universal literature.

Appendix A

LIST OF THE MAJOR EDITIONS OF THE RISALAH:

1. *Philosophus autodidactus sive Epistola Abi Jaafar, ebn Tophaïl de Hai ebn Yokdhan. In qua ostenditur quomodo ex inferiorum contemplatione ad superiorum notitiam ratio humana ascendere possit.* Edited and translated into Latin by Edward Pococke. Oxford: Excudebat H. Hall Academiae typographus, 1671. 2nd. edn. Oxford: o theatro Sheldoniano, execubat J. Owens, 1700.
2. *Hayy Ben Yaqdhan, roman philosophique d'Ibn Thofail.* Edited and translated into French by L. Gauthier. Alger: Imprimerie Orientale, 1900. 2nd revised edition - Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1936. Rprt. Paris: J. Vrin, 1984.
3. *Hayy ibn Yaqzān li Ibn Tufayl al-Andalūsī.* Edited with commentary by Jamil Salībā and Kāmil 'Ayād. Damascus: Maktabah al-Nashar al-'Arabī, 1935. 2nd. edition, 1939.
4. Cairo: Matba'ah al-watan, 1299 A. H.
5. Cairo: Matba'ah Wadī al-Nīl, 1299 A. H.
6. Two editions published in 1299 A.H. in Constantinople according to Sarton(II: 355).
7. Alexandria: Matba'ah al-Misriyah, 1898.
8. Cairo: Matba'ah al-Misr, 1322 A.H.
9. *Kitāb Asrār al-Hikmah al-Mashriqiyah aw risālah Hayy ibn Yaqzān istakhlasahā min durar jawāhir alfāz al-Ra'īs Abī 'Alī ibn Sīnā al-Faylasūf Abū Ja'far ibn al-Tufayl al-Andalusī rahimahumā Allāh Ta'lā.* Cairo: Matba'ah al-Sa'ādah, 1328;1909.

10. *Hayy Ibn Yaqẓān li Ibn Sīnā, Ibn Ṭufayl wa al-Suhrawardī.* Edited by Aḥmad Amīn. Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif li'l-Ṭibā'ah wa-al-Nashr, 1959.

11. *Hayy Ibn Yaqẓān* Text edited and introduced by F. S'ad. Beirut: Dar al-Afāq al-Jadīdah, 1978.

12. *al-Fikr al-Tarbawī 'inda Ibn Ṭufayl.* Edited by 'Abd al-Amīr Shams al-Din. Beirut: Dār Iqrā, 1984.

13. *Hayy ibn Yaqẓān.* Edition by Albīr Nasrī Nādir. Beirut: Dar al-Mashriq, 1986.

Appendix B

A LIST OF THE MAJOR TRANSLATIONS OF THE RISALAH:

1. A Hebrew translation, rendered in the early 14th century and attributed to Moses of Narboni (see above p.6, no. 9).

2. A Latin translation, written in the 15th century by Giovanni Pico of Mirandola (see above p.6, no.10).

3. *Philosophus autodidactus sive Epistola Abi Jaafar, ebn Tophail de Hai ebn Yokdhan. In qua ostenditur quomodo ex inferiorum contemplatione ad superiorum notitiam ratio humana ascendere possit.* Edited and translated into Latin by Edward Pococke. Oxford: Excudebat H. Hall Academiae typographus, 1671. 2nd. edn. Oxford: o theatro Sheldoniano, executbat J. Owens, 1700.

4. *Het leeven van Hai ebn Yokdhan, in het arabisch beschreeven door Abu Jaaphar ebn Tophail, en uit de latynsche overzettinge van Eduard Pocock ... In het nederduitsch vertaald.* A translation into Dutch by J. Bouweemster from Pococke's Latin translation. Amsterdam: J. Rieuwertsz, 1672. 2nd. edition published in Amsterdam, 1701. A revised edition, collated with the Arabic and furnished with notes was also published in Rotterdam, 1701 by H. Reland with the title *De natuurlijke Wijsgeer.*

5. *An Account of the Oriental Philosophy shewing the Wisdom of Some Renowned Men of the East; and particularly, the Profound Wisdom of Hai Ebn Yokdhan.* Translated from the Latin by George Keith. London: 1674.

6. *The History of Hai Eb'n Yockdan, an Indian prince: or, The self-taught pilosopher. Written originally in the Arabick tongue, by Abi Jaafar Eb'n Tophail, a philosopher by profession, and a Mahometan by religion. Wherein is demonstrated, by what steps and degrees, humane reason, improved by diligent observation and experience, may arrive to the knowledge of natural things, and from thence to the discovery of supernaturals; more especially of God and the concernments of the other world.* Set forth not long ago in the original Arabick, with the Latin version, by Edw. Pococke... And now translated into English (by George Ashwell). London, Chiswell, 1686.

7. *The improvement of human reason, exhibited in the life of Hai ebn Yokdhan: written in Arabick above 500 years ago,' by Abu Jaafar Ebn Tophail...newly translated from the original Arabick, by Simon Ockley ... With an appendix, in which the possibility of man's attaining the true knowledg of God and things necessary to salvation, without instruction is briefly consider'd.* London: Printed and sold by E. Powell, 1708. reprint 1711, 1731. Reprinted, with slight changes, by Edward A van Dyck, for the use of his pupils at Cairo. Cairo: El-Maaref printing office, 1905. Reprinted Zurich: George Olms Verlag, 1983.

8. *Der von sich selbst gelehrte Weltweise.* By George Pritius. Translation into German from Pococke's Latin edition. Frankfurt, 1726.

9. *Der naturmensch; oder, Geschichte des Hai ebn Joktan; ein morganlandischer Roman des Aby Dschafar ebn Tofail.* Translated from the Arabic by Johann Gottfried Eichhorn. Berlin: F. Nicolai, 1783.

10. *Hayy Ben Yaqdhan, roman philosophique d'Ibn Thofail.* Edited and translated into French by L. Gauthier. Alger: Imprimerie Orientale, 1900. 2nd revised edition - Beirut: Imprimerie catholique, 1936. Rprt. Paris; J Vrin, 1984.

11. *El filòsofo autodidacto, de Abentofail, novela psicolólogica.* Translated from the Arabic by Franscisco Pons Boigues, with a prologue by Menéndez y Pelayo. Zaragoza: Tip. de Comas hermanos, 1900. 2nd. ed. Buenos Aires: Espasa Calpe, 1954.

12. *The Awakening of the Soul: A Philosophical Romance.* Rendered from the Arabic with Introduction by Dr. Paul Brönnle. The Wisdom of the East series. London: The Orient Press, 1904. 2nd. ed. 1905. 3rd. ed. 1907. 4th Impression 1910.

13. Another translation into German from Bronnle's English translated by A. M. Heinck: Ibn Tufayl, *Dsa Erwachen der Seele.* (Die Weisheit des Ostens, II. Bd.). Rostock, 1907.

14. A Russian translation by J. Kuzmin, Leningrad, 1920.

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