

Sufism, 'Irfān and Hikma

Sufism

In Sunni Islam, Sufism has, through the Sufi Shaykhs, a major hold on the religious devotion of the masses. But in Shi'ism it has become largely a side-issue, a minority interest. It is the orthodox ulama who hold the religious leadership of the Shi'i community and few of them will have anything to do with Sufism. It is not possible in a work of this nature to undertake a systematic treatment of the mystical and metaphysical ideas of Sufism. And so in this chapter only Sufism in its relationship to Shi'ism and the history of the Shi'i Sufi orders will be considered.

Although most histories of Sufism go back to individual ascetics such as Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Rābi'a al-'Adawiyya who lived in the centuries immediately after the Prophet, Sufism as it is known today, with its organised orders and their hierarchies and rituals, dates from the 12th and 13th centuries AD.

The roots of this organised Sufism have a complex inter-relationship with the Shi'ism of the 12th to 14th centuries AD. Shi'ism achieved political power over almost all of the Islamic world in the 10th and 11th centuries. Then in the middle of the 11th century the Seljuqs came to power and severely repressed Shi'ism. It has been suggested that Sufism, in its organised form, arose at about this time to fill the vacuum left by the suppression of Shi'ism.¹ Certainly there is a great deal of similarity between Shi'ism and many aspects of Sufism which would tend to support this thesis.

One of the most important doctrines of Sufism is the concept of the Perfect Man (*al-Insān al-Kāmil*). This doctrine states that there always must exist upon the earth a man who is the perfect channel of grace from God to man. This man who is called the *Qutb* (Pole or Axis, of the Universe) is considered to be in a state of *wilāya* (sanctity, being under the protection of God). It can already be seen that there are great similarities between the concept of the *Qutb* in Sufism and the Shi'i Imam. Indeed, many of the Traditions referring to the Imam (see

Chapter 7) are also to be found among Sufis in relation to the *Quṭb*: there can only be one *Quṭb* on the earth at any one time; anyone who dies without recognising the *Quṭb* of his time has died the death of the *Jāhiliyya*; only recognition of the *Quṭb* confers true belief, etc.²

The authority to teach the Sufi path has been handed down from master (*Quṭb*, *Shaykh*, *Murshid* or *Pīr*) to pupil (*Murīd*, *Ṭālib*, *Sālik*) through the generations. Most of these 'chains' of authority (*silsila*) traditionally go back through various intermediaries to 'Ali who among Sufis is considered to have received initiation into mystical truth from Muhammad. Thus among certain Sufi orders there has been a tendency to glorify 'Ali. This tendency (as has been noted in Chapters 5 and 6) may well have helped to prepare the people of Iran during the 14th and 15th centuries for accepting Shi'ism under the Safavids.

However, it is precisely this closeness in certain areas between Shi'ism and Sufism that has led to antagonism among Shi'i ulama towards Sufism. The concept of the *Quṭb* (who for most Sufi orders is the head of the order) as the purveyor of spiritual guidance and of God's grace to mankind is in direct conflict with the concept of the Imam who in Shi'ism fulfils this role. The vow of obedience to the *Shaykh* or *Quṭb* which is taken by Sufis is considered incompatible with devotion to the Imam. Indeed, for Shi'is, the Twelfth Imam, who is alive and only in occultation, is the living *Quṭb* and there can only ever be one *Quṭb* upon the earth at any one time.

There are several other reasons for the antagonism of the ulama towards Sufism: the doctrine of *waḥdat al-wujūd* (existential monism) is considered to be blasphemous; the chains of authority of even the Shi'i Sufi orders do not include all twelve of the Shi'i Imams, rather they progress through the first eight Imams, but after 'Alī ar-Riḍā they diverge through Ma'rūf al-Karkhī to other individuals; the *zakāt* is paid by members of the order to the head of the order and not to the ulama.

The Shi'i Sufi orders have sought to bring their ideas more closely into line with orthodox Shi'i opinion. Thus, for example, the head of the order is often referred to as the *Nā'ib-i Imām* (deputy of the Hidden Imam). But even this modification is not acceptable to the orthodox who regard themselves as the *Nā'ib-i 'Āmm* (general deputy) of the Twelfth Imam while no *Nā'ib-i Khāṣṣ* is permissible during the Greater Occultation (see p. 165).

Historically (as has been shown in Chapter 5) several Sufi orders became increasingly oriented towards Shi'ism during the 15th century but it was not until the Safavid order became Shi'i and conquered Iran that several orders such as the Nūrbakhshī, Dhahabī and Ni'matu'llāhī became openly Shi'i.

The Nūrbakhshī and Dhahabī orders have a common origin. Khwāja

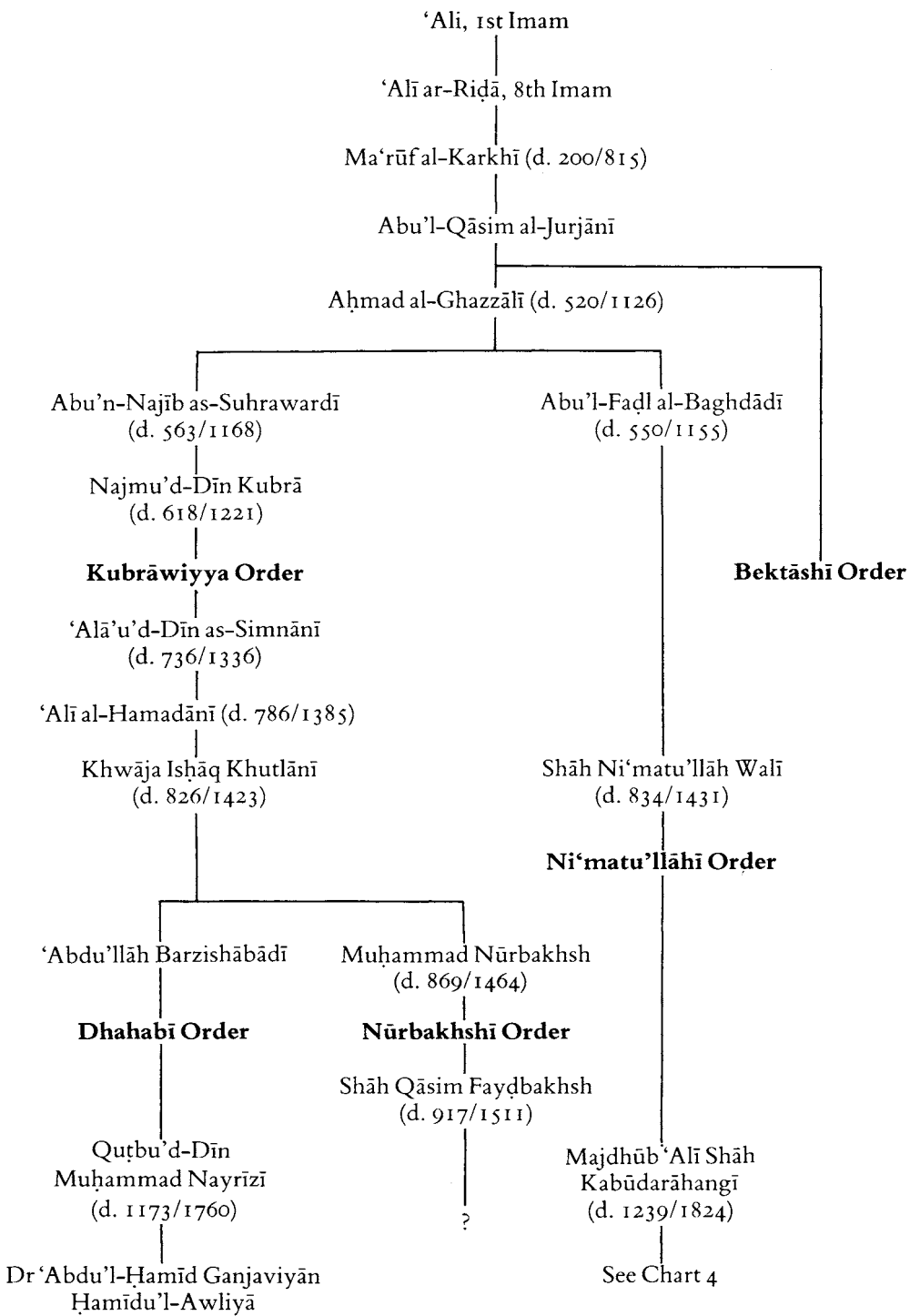


Chart 3, demonstrating relationships of the various Shi'i Sūfī Orders

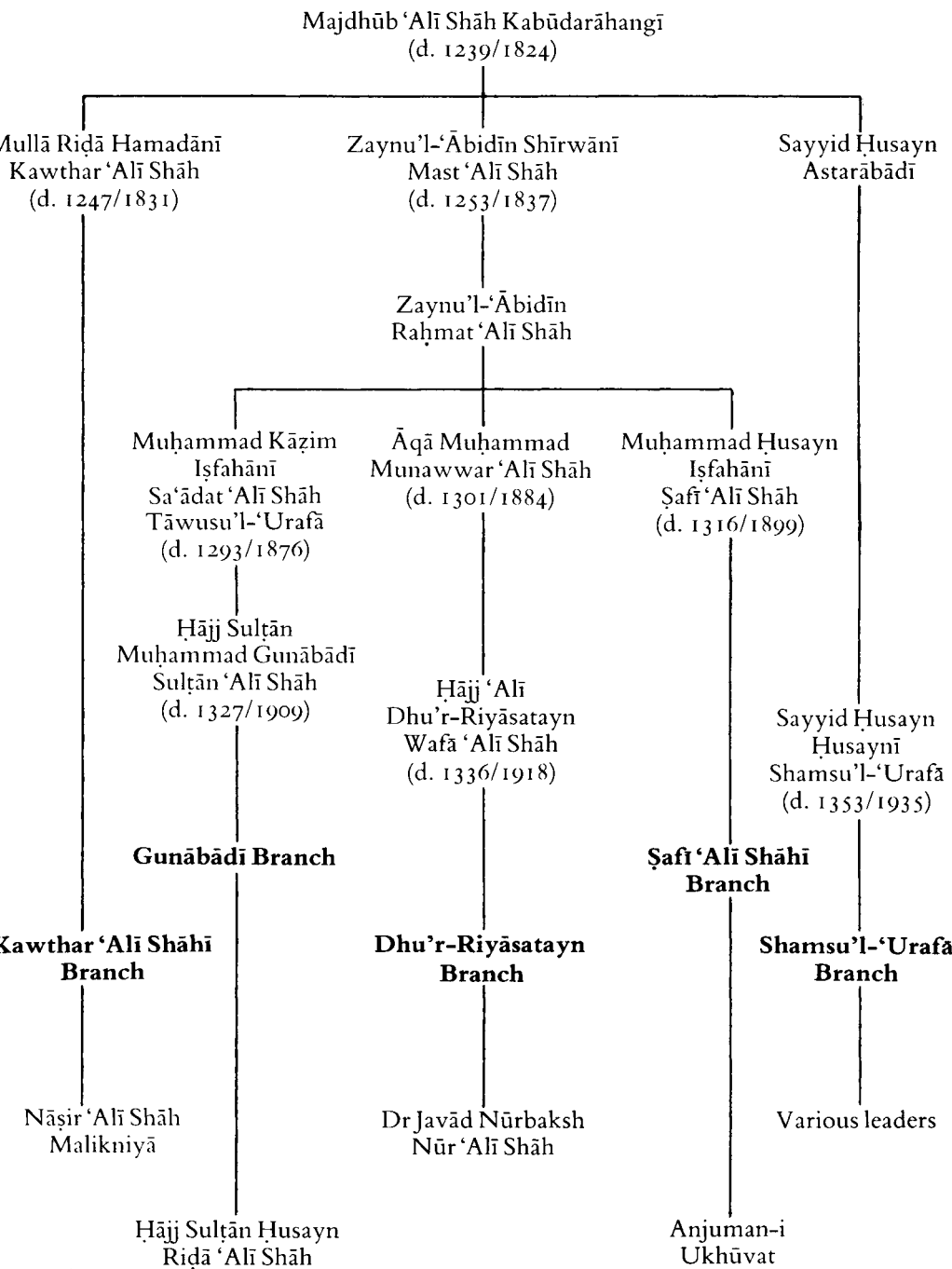


Chart 4, the Ni'matu'llahī Order

Ishāq Khutlānī (d. 826/1423) was a Shaykh of the Sunni Kubrāwiyya order which had marked Shi'ī sympathies. A hostile report claims that when he appointed Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh, the founder of the Nūrbakhshī order, as his successor, one of his prominent disciples, Mīr Shihābu'd-Dīn 'Abdu'llāh Barzishābādī Mashhadī, got up and left. Khwāja Ishāq said: 'Dhahaba 'Abdu'llāh ('Abdu'llāh has gone)' and 'Abdu'llāh's followers became known as Dhahabīs. The Dhahabīs themselves, however, derive their name from *dhahab*, gold, and speak of their affiliation as *silsilat adh-dhahab*, the golden chain. The Dhahabiyya are also sometimes known as the Ightishāshiyya.

The Dhahabiyya order became Shi'ī at the beginning of the Safavid period and, under the eighth successor of 'Abdu'llāh Barzishābādī (the twenty-ninth head of the order counting from Ma'rūf al-Karkhī), Shaykh Muḥammad 'Alī Mu'adhdhin Khurāsānī, the order achieved some prominence during the reign of Shāh 'Abbās. But then, after encountering antagonism from both the state and the ulama, the order declined again.

The revival of the Dhahabī order in Shīrāz is due to Quṭbu'd-Dīn Sayyid Muḥammad Nayrizī Shīrāzī (d. 1173/1760), the thirty-second head of the order. Following on from him, the order continued its prominence under successive leaders:

- 33rd Head, Āqā Muḥammad Hāshim Shīrāzī (d. 1199/1785)
- 34th Head, Mīrzā 'Abdu'n-Nabī Sharīfī Shīrāzī (d. 1231/1815)
- 35th Head, Mīrzā 'Abu'l-Qāsim Sharīfī Shīrāzī (d. 1286/1869), known as Mīrzā Bābā or Rāz-i Shīrāzī, custodian of the Shāh Chirāgh Shrine
- 36th Head, Jalālu'd-Dīn Muḥammad Sharīfī Majdu'l-Ashraf Shīrāzī (d. 1331/1913), custodian of the Shāh Chirāgh Shrine
- 37th Head, Mīrzā Aḥmad Tabrizī, Nāyibu'l-Wilāya, Waḥīdu'l-Awliyā (d. 1375/1955)
- 38th Head, Ḥājji Muḥammad 'Alī Ardibīlī, Ḥubb Ḥaydar (d. 1382/1962)
- 39th Head, Dr Ḥājji 'Abdu'l-Ḥamīd Ganjaviyān, Ḥamīdu'l-Awliyā

After Jalālu'd-Dīn Sharīfī, his brother, Sayyid Muḥammad Ridā Sharīfī, claimed the leadership of the order and a separate branch of the order called the Sharīfī branch was formed, the leadership of which has remained hereditary in this family. Custodianship of the important Shrine of Shāh Chirāgh in Shīrāz remains with this line.

The headquarters of the order are in Shīrāz and they possess there a *khānagāh* (meeting-place and hospice) which includes shrines of the recent heads of the order. There are also *khānagāhs* in Tehran and Tabriz. The followers of this order are distinguished by conical hats which are, however, usually only worn at meetings of the order. Their numbers in Iran are estimated at 3,000.³

The Nūrbakhshī order originated with 'Alā'u'd-Dīn Sayyid Muḥammad Nūrbakhsh (d. 869/1464) who was a Sunni with strong Shi'i proclivities. His son and successor, Shāh Sayyid Qāsim Fayḍbakhsh (d. 917/1511), was still alive when the Safavids came to power. At this time the order became Shi'i and achieved considerable prominence. Many of the eminent Shi'i ulama of the early and middle Safavid period were affiliated to this order: Shaykh Bahā'ī, Mullā Muḥsin-i Fayḍ and Qāḍī Nūru'llāh Shustarī. Certainly the Nūrbakhshī order was a significant influence upon the evolution of the *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī* of the School of Isfahan (see later in this chapter). It was also important in the spread of Shi'ism in India and Kashmir.

As with all other Sufi orders, it was suppressed in Iran towards the end of the Safavid period although it retained a presence in India where it was instrumental in bringing Shi'ism to Kashmir. It has never re-established itself in Iran as an organised order, although individual prominent Sufis such as Mīrzā 'Abdu'l-Wahhāb Nā'inī (d. 1212/1797) and Mīrzā Abu'l-Qāsim Sukūt-i Shīrāzī (d. 1239/1823) have been said to be of this order.⁴

The Ni'matu'llāhī is the largest and most influential of the Sufi orders in Iran. The relationship of the Ni'matu'llāhī order to the other Shi'i orders in terms of the chains of authority is shown in the diagram (Chart 3).

The founder of the order, Shāh Ni'matu'llāh Walī (d. 834/1431) was Sunni but sympathetic to Shi'ism. He died in Mahān near Kirmān where his grave is still an important centre for this order. His successors moved to Hyderabad in the Deccan, India, where they were enthusiastically received by the Bahmānī rulers. But the order maintained a presence in Iran and there was a network of local Shaykhs. When the Safavids came to power, the order closely identified itself with them and became Shi'i. One of the local Shaykhs of the order, Mīr Nizāmu'd-Dīn 'Abdu'l-Baqī, was appointed by Shāh Ismā'il to the position of *Ṣadr* in 917/1511. From about the time of Shāh 'Abbās, however, the influence of the order in Iran declined under attack from both state and ulama.

The revival of the Ni'matu'llāhīs in Iran dates from 1190/1776 when Ridā 'Alī Shāh Dakanī, (d. 1214/1799), the thirteenth successor of Shāh Ni'matu'llāh, sent his disciple and successor, Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh Dakanī, from India to Iran. The latter was very successful and large crowds gathered everywhere that he went. For example, he is said to have had 30,000 disciples in Shīrāz where Karīm Khān Zand held court. This aroused the wrath of the ulama, and Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh was eventually killed in Kirmānshāh at the instigation of Mullā Muḥammad 'Alī Bihbahānī in 1212/1797.⁵ The next Shaykh of the order was an Iranian, Mīrzā Muḥammad 'Alī Ṭabasī Isfahānī, Nūr 'Alī Shāh (d. 1212/1797) and from this time onwards the Shaykhs of the order have been Iranians

and the centre of the order in Iran.

Majdhūb 'Alī Shāh Kabūdārāhangī (d. 1239/1823), the seventeenth successor of Shāh Ni'matu'llāh, did not clearly appoint a successor and so there was a dispute over the succession after him. Mullā Muḥammad Shāh Hamadānī, Kawthar 'Alī Shāh (d. 1247/1831), split off from the main body of the order and formed a branch known as Kawthar 'Alī Shāhī which has survived to the present day under a succession of leaders and is centred in Hamadān, Marāgha and Tehran. Its present leader is Nāṣir 'Alī Shāh Malikniyā who resides at the order's *khānagāh* in Tehran.

A second branch which split off at the death of Majdhūb 'Alī Shāh was founded by Sayyid Ḥusayn Astarābādī. Its most famous Shaykh was Sayyid Ḥusayn Ḥusaynī Ṭīhrānī, Shamsu'l-'Urafā (d. 1353/1935), and so this line is called the Shamsu'l-'Urafā or Shamsiyya line. Shamsu'l-'Urafā's successors included Ḥajj Mīr Sayyid 'Alī Burqu'ī, a well-known mujtahid who was responsible for the religious training of Muḥammad Riḍā Shāh Pahlavī. This group have a *khānagāh* in Tehran.

The main line of the Ni'matu'llāhīs continued after Majdhūb 'Alī Shāh under Zaynu'l-'Ābidīn Shīrvānī, Mast 'Alī Shāh (d. 1253/1837). He was succeeded by Raḥmat 'Alī Shāh (d. 1278/1861) who was known as Nāyibu's-Ṣadr, but after this there was a further split in the order. This split was a much more serious affair and the order has remained divided into three groups ever since.

The uncle of Raḥmat 'Alī Shāh, Āqā Muḥammad, Munavvar 'Alī Shāh (d. 1301/1884), was one claimant to the succession. His son, Ḥajj 'Alī Dhu'r-Riyāsatayn, Wafā 'Alī Shāh (d. 1336/1918), succeeded him and the line is usually known as the Dhu'r-Riyāsatayn branch (or occasionally as the Mu'nīs 'Alī Shāhī branch after a later leader). Wafā 'Alī Shāh was succeeded by Sayyid Ismā'il Ujāq, Ṣādiq 'Alī Shāh (d. 1340/1922) and then by Ḥajj 'Abdu'l-Ḥusayn Dhu'r-Riyāsatayn, Mu'nīs 'Alī Shāh (d. 1373/1953). After the last-named, there was some dispute over the succession with several of the local Shaykhs of the order claiming successorship. However, one of these, Dr Javād Nūrbakhsh Kirmānī, Nūr 'Alī Shāh, who had been Shaykh in Tehran, succeeded in consolidating his authority over most of this branch of the order. Under Dr Nūrbakhsh, this branch of the order has undergone a vigorous expansion with several new *khānagāhs* built in Iran and, taking advantage of the interest in Sufism in the West, an expansion of the order to England and the USA.

Another claimant to Raḥmat 'Alī Shāh's successorship was Ḥajj Muḥammad Ḥasan Iṣfahānī, Ṣafī 'Alī Shāh (d. 1316/1899). After various travels, Ṣafī 'Alī Shāh settled in Tehran and succeeded in attracting several notables of the Qājār court as disciples. The next Shaykh of this line was Mīrzā 'Alī Khān, Ṣāḥibū'd-Dawla, Ṣafā 'Alī Shāh, a Qājār

prince (d. 1342/1923). Ṣafī 'Alī Shāh had formed his followers into a society called the Anjuman-i Ukhūvat (Society of Brotherhood) and after the death of Zāhiru'd-Dawla most of the members of the order came under the leadership of the eleven-man council of this society. This branch of the Ni'matu'llāhī order is called the Ṣafī 'Alī Shāhī branch and is spread through most of Iran with some ten or more *khānagāhs*.

The third branch of the order to arise after Raḥmat 'Alī Shāh was founded by Ḥājj Muḥammad Kāzim Iṣfahānī, Sa'ādat 'Alī Shāh (d. 1293/1876), known as Tāwusu'l-'Urafā. He was succeeded by Ḥājj Sulṭān Muḥammad Gunābādī, Sulṭān 'Alī Shāh (murdered 1327/1909), who used to teach a circle of disciples in the village of Bīdukht in the Gunābād area near Mashhad in Khurāsān. Thus this important branch became known as Gunābādī. After him, the leadership of this branch passed to his son Ḥājj Mullā 'Alī, Nūr 'Alī Shāh (murdered 1337/1918), and grandson, Ḥājj Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥasan, Ṣālih 'Alī Shāh (d. 1386/1966). The present leader of this branch is the son of Ṣālih 'Alī Shāh, Ḥājj Sulṭān Ḥusayn, Riḍā 'Alī Shāh Tābanda. In Bīdukht, Gunābād, there is an extensive array of buildings which are the headquarters of the order.

The Sufi orders in Iran have very little following among the lower classes. The branches of the Ni'matullāhī order have, however, had a considerable following among government officials and the nobility during the last 150 years. Perhaps because of this and the way that Sufis attempt to help their fellow-Sufis, the order has had attractions for young men entering government service. A recent estimate put the number of Ni'matu'llāhīs in Iran at between 50,000 and 350,000 with Gunābādīs 30–50%, Dhu'r-Riyāsatayn 20–45%, Ṣafī 'Alī Shāhī 15–30% and other splinter groups at less than 5%.⁶

The third major Sufi order extant in Iran, apart from the Dhahabī and Ni'matullāhī, is the Khāksār order. The originator of this order is said to be one Jalālu'd-Dīn or Quṭbu'd-Dīn Ḥaydar in the 8th/13th century. The exact identity of this figure remains unclear pending further research. It has been suggested that he is identical with the Suhrawardī Shaykh, Jalālu'd-Dīn Bukhārī (d. 690/1291). It is said that his tomb is at Turbat-i Ḥaydarī in Khurāsān and it is his name that was given to the faction in each major Iranian town which, during Safavid and Qājār times, was opposed by the Ni'matī faction (said to be named after Shāh Ni'matu'llāh Walī) leading to frequent faction-fighting and rioting especially on public holidays such as Naw-Rūz.

There appear to be historical links between this order and the Safavid order before its conquest of Iran. There is also a complex inter-relationship with the Ahl-i Ḥaqq ('Aliyu'llāhīs). Indeed, many regard the Ahl-i Ḥaqq as a Sufi order linked to the Khāksār rather than a Shi'i sect.

There appears to be little organisation in the Khāksār order, with many individuals claiming to be Shaykhs. The wandering dervishes or Qalandars are often said to be of this order. Several different branches of the order exist, such as the Jalālī Ghulām 'Alī Shāhī and the Dawda Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāhī. The order has *khānaqāhs* in several cities and possibly has as many as 3,000 members. There are also some adherents of this order in Iraq.⁷

Philosophy, Hikma and 'Irfān

The goal of philosophy is considered to be the achievement of wisdom (*ḥikma*). Philosophers (*ḥukamā*) have traditionally been divided into two groups: the Mashā'iyūn (peripatetic philosophers) who consider that wisdom is to be achieved by intellectual effort and rational processes; and the Ishrāqiyūn (illuminationist philosophers) who consider that true wisdom is best gained through spiritual discipline, the cleansing of the soul from all defilement and the acquisition of virtues.

Also closely associated with *ḥikma* is '*irfān* (gnosis or mystical knowledge). Although the Shi'ī ulama have been opposed to Sufism for the reasons stated above, '*irfān* is much more acceptable. It includes many of the ideas and much of the technical vocabulary of Sufism but divests itself of the features which the ulama find most objectionable: the formal structure of the orders, initiation, the *murshid-murīd* (i.e. spiritual master to pupil) relationship, *dhikr* (repetitive recitations), concepts such as *wahdat al-wujūd* (existential monism), etc.

Typical works in the field of '*irfān* deal with bringing out the inner, esoteric meaning of the Qur'an based on the process of *ta'wīl* (bringing out of the spiritual meaning) rather than *tafsīr* (technical commentary) of the verses. It is thus a very intellectual activity and can perhaps be better described as esotericism in contrast to the ecstatic mysticism of the Sufis.

In this form mysticism has managed to retain a foothold within the curriculum of teaching in the Shi'ī religious colleges but very much on the periphery. Interestingly, Āyatu'llāh Khumaynī taught '*irfān* in Qumm prior to his expulsion in 1963.

A movement that has had a great deal of influence on Shi'ī thought is what is called *Hikmat-i Ilāhī*. It can be thought of as the philosophical analysis and description of the mystical path. The name itself, *Hikmat-i Ilāhī*, can be translated as Divine Wisdom, Divine Philosophy or Theosophy. It has also gone under the name of *Hikmat-i Muta'āliyya* which can be translated as Transcendent Theosophy.

The school of philosophy called *Hikmat-i Ilāhī* represents the culmination of the endeavour to bring together and harmonise the three major sources of spiritual knowledge in the Islamic experience: the

revealed and transmitted sources which revolve around the Qu'ran and Traditions; the conclusions drawn from the rational analysis of religion; and intuitive and ecstatic spiritual illumination. The roots of this movement go back to the earliest period of Islam and extend beyond Shi'ism itself. Its culmination and flowering was in the School of Isfahan (see pp. 112-13).

Foremost among the influences on this movement was, of course, the Qur'an itself and in particular the *ta'wīl* (esoteric interpretation or spiritual hermeneutics) of the Qur'an that is to be found in the corpus of the Traditions ascribed to the Shi'i Imams. Indeed, some of the most important works of the philosophers of this school consist of commentaries upon the Traditions of the Imams.

The field of speculative theology (*kalām*) had, in previous centuries, been a major area of intellectual activity and the writers of the School of Isfahan were influenced not only by Shi'i *kalām* which had found its fullest expression in the works of Khwāja Naṣīru'd-Dīn Ṭūsī but also by the Mu'tazilī *kalām* upon which earlier Shi'i theology had been based, as well as the Ash'arī *kalām* of Sunnism which had reached its culmination in the works of such figures as al-Ghazālī, Fakhru'd-Dīn Rāzī and Sa'du'd-Dīn Taftazānī.

One of the most important influences on the *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī* movement was Shaykhu'l-Ishrāq Shihābu'd-Dīn Suhrawardī (executed in Aleppo in 587/1191). His work in turn drew upon several inter-related strands: the revival of Zoroastrian angelology, Neo-Platonic cosmology, and in particular the metaphysical works of Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna). From these sources and from direct spiritual experiences, Suhrawardī created the Ishrāqī philosophy or the philosophy of oriental (in its metaphysical sense) illumination, a description of ecstatic and mystical experience in the context of philosophical concepts.

A similarly important source of influence upon the School of Isfahan was the gnostic mysticism of Muḥiyu'd-Dīn, Ibn al-'Arabī, Shaykh al-Akbar (560/1165-638/1240). His metaphysical doctrines, which were to evolve within his school into such concepts as the Perfect Man (*al-Insān al-Kāmil*) and existential monism (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), exercised a great influence on all aspects of Islamic mysticism.

Sufism itself was one of the most important sources of inspiration for *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī*. Not only were several individual philosophers of this school themselves members of Sufi orders (and in particular the Nūrbakhshī order), but there is frequent quotation in the writings of these philosophers from the great Iranian Sufi poets such as Jalālu'd-Dīn Rūmī and 'Abdu'r-Raḥmān Jāmī.

The *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī* philosophers were, of course, familiar with the philosophy of both the Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic traditions found

in the writings of the Greek philosophers as well as the early Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) and al-Fārābī.

The full flowering of *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī* in the School of Isfahan in the 17th century was preceded by a number of similar preliminary works. Mention has been made elsewhere in this book of the work of Sayyid Ḥaydar Āmulī in bringing together Shi'ism and Sufism. There is also the important work of Ibn Abī Jumhūr who attempted an integration of philosophy, *kalām* and Sufi concepts into Shi'ism thereby laying an important foundation for the School of Isfahan. As a further example there is the work of Ṣā'inu'd-Dīn, Ibn Turka Isfahānī (d. 835/1431 or 836/1432) who integrated many of the themes of Suhrawardī and Ibn al-'Arabī into his writings.

The names of the key figures in the School of Isfahan are given elsewhere (see p. 113). After being vigorously attacked by the orthodox ulama during the course of the 18th century, it began to re-emerge in the course of the 19th century. The Shaykhī School may be considered as derived from this movement (although Shaykh Aḥmad himself strongly disagreed with Mullā Ṣadrā and Mullā Muḥsin-i Fayḍ on some issues) and the outlines of the Shaykhī teachings (given on pp. 226–8) can also serve to give an idea of some of the main themes of the School of Isfahan. Also during the 19th century, Mullā Hādī Sabzivārī (d. 1878) revived the teaching of philosophy and himself wrote commentaries on works of Mullā Ṣadrā.

In the years after the Second World War, 'Allāma Muḥammad Ḥusayn Ṭabāṭabā'ī succeeded in having the subject introduced into the syllabus of studies at Qumm. Since then, he, Sayyid Jalālu'd-Dīn Āshtiyānī and Sayyid Ḥusayn Naṣr, ably assisted by the French orientalist Henri Corbin, have written extensively on the subject so that its themes and ideas have become almost as well-known in the West as in the East.

It is not possible to give an adequate descriptive survey of the breadth of *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī* in an introductory work such as this. Briefly, however, some of the characteristic concepts of the school, and of the writings of Mullā Ṣadrā in particular, are:

- a. The integration of the Fourteen Pure Souls (Muhammad, Fāṭima, and the Twelve Imams) into Avicennan cosmology where they, in effect, replace the Active Intelligences as the ontological causes of existence.
- b. The belief in the reality of an independent world of images (the *'ālam al-mithāl*) between the intelligible world and the sensible world.
- c. The replacement of the principle of the fundamentality of quiddity as the basis of metaphysics by the fundamentality of being (*aṣālat al-wujūd*). In this respect, Mullā Ṣadrā disagreed with his teacher Mīr Dāmād and

with Suhrawardī.

d. The doctrine of the substantial motion (*al-ḥaraka al-jawhariyya*) of being. This doctrine asserts that the being of anything that exists is susceptible to change, intensification and perfection.

e. The essence of individuality is the soul. It is this that is eternal and which experiences the resurrection.

As an example of the metaphysical system of this school and to demonstrate its links with other avenues of Islamic thought, the following is a brief analysis of the four journeys described by Mullā Ṣadrā in *Al-Ḥikmat al-muta'aliyya fi'l-asfār al-'aqliyya al-arba'a* (The Transcendental Theosophy concerning the Four Journeys of the Rational Soul). This work concerns the four journeys: from the creatures to the True One; from the True One to the True One; from the True One to the creatures; and from the creatures to the creatures.

The first journey is described as being the path whereby man detaches himself from the physical world and his carnal self (*nafs*) and rending the veils that intervene between him and the Divine Beauty reaches the station of Annihilation in the Divine. In this 'journey' Mullā Ṣadrā gives an exposition of metaphysics and ontology dealing with several philosophical issues.

The second journey is described as being the path along which the traveller contemplates and comes to know and understand the Divine Names and Attributes. This is the station of sainthood in which the traveller comes to hear with His hearing, sees with His sight and is thus totally annihilated in the Divine Essence, Actions and Attributes. In this 'journey', Mullā Ṣadrā discusses a number of philosophical questions such as creation *ex nihilo*, substance, quantity, quality and the receptivity of things to the Divine Grace.

The third journey involves the termination of Annihilation (*fanā*) and the start of Subsistence (*baqā*) in God. This is the state of the prophets (but not those prophets that bring laws). In this state, the traveller is able to travel through all the worlds of creation and to see all these worlds in their essence and exigencies. In this 'journey', our author deals with God in His Essence, His Names and Attributes, discussing such subjects as divine will, fate, evil and God's knowledge.

The fourth journey is among the creatures but now the traveller, who is in the station of a prophet who brings laws, sees all beings in their essence and knows of the manner of their return to God and so is able to give them guidance. In describing this 'journey', Mullā Ṣadrā deals with the soul and its development and with the question of the resurrection and other eschatological matters.⁸

I I. SUFISM, 'IRFĀN AND ḤIKMA

Sources

Arabic and Persian: Sources for the history of the Shi'i Sufi orders include Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh, *Ṭarā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq*; Humāyūnī, *Tārīkh-i Silsila-hā-yi Tarīqa-yi Ni'matu'llāhī*. For the history of the early connections between Sufism and Shi'ism see ash-Shaybī, *Fikr ash-Shi'a*. The writings of the philosophers of the School of Isfahan are very difficult for those not used to the vocabulary.

European languages: On the Sufi orders see Gramlich, *Die Schiitischen Derwischorden*. The Ni'matu'llāhī order has brought out a large number of tracts by their present Shaykh, Dr Javād Nūrbakhsh, in English. On *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhī*, the most important sources of information are the writings of Henri Corbin, see *En Islam iranien*, Vol. 4, and *La Philosophie iranienne islamique*. See also Fazlur Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā*, and Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī and his Transcendent Theosophy*. One of Mullā Ṣadrā's works, *al-Mashā'ir*, has been translated into French by Corbin and his *al-Ḥikma al-'Arshiyya* into English by Morris (*The Wisdom of the Throne*). See also Dehbashi, Ph.D., 'Mullā Ṣadrā's Theory of Transubstantial Motion'.

- 1 See also comments on p. 90.
- 2 See, for example, Nūrbakhsh, *Murād wa Murīd*, and Miller, 'Shi'ah Mysticism'.
- 3 Gramlich, *Schiitischen Derwischorden*, Vol. 1, p. 90.
- 4 Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh, *Ṭarā'iq al-Ḥaqā'iq*, Vol. 3, p. 215.
- 5 Sir John Malcolm (*History of Persia*, Vol. 2, pp. 382-426) gives a description of the revival of Sufism brought about by Ma'sūm 'Alī Shāh and also gives an account of Sufi doctrines and of the opposition of the ulama.
- 6 Gramlich, *Schiitischen Derwischorden*, Vol. 1, pp. 90-91.
- 7 *ibid.* p. 91.
- 8 This summary is condensed from Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn*, pp. 58-61.

I 2. SCHOOLS WITHIN TWELVER SHI'ISM

Sources

Persian and Arabic: Original Akhbārī works are difficult to obtain. On Shaykhīs the best source is Ibrāhīmī, *Fihrist*; see also al-Aḥsā'ī, *Ḥayāt an-Nafs*; and Rashtī, *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyirīn*. No substantial work of the Bāb has been published in its original language. Many individual works and compilations of the writings of Bahā'u'llāh and 'Abdu'l-Bahā are available; for example, Bahā'u'llāh, *Kitāb-i Īqān* and *Muntakhabātī az āthār*.

European languages: Little work has been done on the Akhbārīs; see Scarcia, 'Interno alle controversie'. On Shaykhīs see Corbin, *L'Ecole Shaykhie* and *En Islam iranien*, Vol. 4; Nicolas, *Essai sur le Chéikisme*; Bayat, *Mysticism and Dissent*; and the following Ph. D. theses: Rafati, 'Development of Shaykhī Thought'; MacEoin, 'From Shaykhism'; and Jalali, 'Shaikhīyya'. On the Bābīs and Bahā'īs see Balyuzi, *The Bāb*, and Bahā'u'llāh; Smith, *Bābī and Bahā'ī Religions*; and also the following Ph.D. theses: Amanat, 'Babi Movement'; Smith, 'Sociological Study of the Babi and Bahai Religions'. For Bābī and Bahā'ī doctrine see

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Moojan Momen

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