

CHAPTER 11

The School of Isfahan Revisited

PRELUDE

Several decades have passed since Henry Corbin and I began to use the term *School of Isfahan*, to which I have already referred in this work. But being a book dedicated to the relations between philosophy and the reality of prophecy, especially in its Islamic form, it is necessary to revisit this school both because of its own significance and because of its role in the training of Mullā Ṣadrā, who is a key figure in the full flowering of prophetic philosophy in Islam. In a sense the School of Isfahan follows upon the wake of the School of Shiraz, and Mullā Ṣadrā is himself the most direct link between the two. But the School of Isfahan also had precedents outside of Shiraz, and there were a number of philosophers not associated directly with the School of Shiraz who had an important role in preparing the intellectual background for the School of Isfahan and who especially sought that unity among different schools of Islamic philosophy, theology, and gnosis for which Mullā Ṣadrā, the supreme figure of the School of Isfahan, is so well known. Here, we shall confine ourselves to three significant and fascinating figures: Ibn Turkah Iṣfahānī, Qāḍī Maybudī (also pronounced Mībudī), and Ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsāʾī, all contemporaries of the later luminaries of the School of Shiraz.

Ṣāʾin al-Dīn Turkah Iṣfahānī (d. 835/1432 or 836/1433) was a member of a famous family of scholars of Isfahan but of Turkeman origin. He began his studies with his older brother, then traveled to the Hejaz, Syria, and Egypt, where he continued to study. He returned to Persia but was exiled for some time by Tamerlane to Samarqand and could return to Isfahan only after the latter's death. He filled important public functions and suffered political persecution, but his life was given mainly to Sufism and philosophy, although he was also an authority on Islamic Law and theology.¹ Ibn Turkah was also a member of the Ḥurūfī school, which considered the highest knowledge to be contained in the symbolism of the letters of the Arabic alphabet, the alphabet of the sacred language of the Islamic revelation.

Established by a mysterious figure named al-Mughīrah in the early Islamic period, the Ḥurūfī school was based on the Islamic science of the esoteric meaning of letters corresponding to the science of the symbolism of letters found in the Jewish Kabbalah. This science in its Islamic form had a deep influence upon certain forms of Sufism, early Ismāʿīlism, and Ithnā ʿasharī Shiʿism and is said to have been first taught by ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. It is remarkable to note how Ibn Turkah combined theology, philosophy, and Sufism with his Ḥurūfī views.

The writings of Ibn Turkah include several on the esoteric significance of the science of letters known in Arabic as *al-jafṛ*; commentaries on works of celebrated Sufi figures such as Ibn ʿArabī, Ibn al-Fāriḍ, Fakhr al-Dīn ʿIrāqī, and Maḥmūd Shabistarī; works on Islamic theology and philosophy; and Quranic commentaries. His commentary on the verse of the cleaving of the moon reveals his acquaintance with nearly all the different schools of Islamic thought. In this work he discusses the interpretation of this verse by literalists, theologians, Peripatetics, Illuminationists, Sufis of the school of Ibn ʿArabī, the Ḥurūfis, and Shiʿite esoterists.² This discussion and his other works reveal the integrating nature of Ibn Turkah's thought and his attempt to synthesize various intellectual perspectives into a unified vision to accord with the inner meaning of prophecy and revelation.

In discussing Ibn Turkah, a separate word must be said about his most popular work, the *Tamhīd al-qawāʿid* (The Disposition of Principles), which is among the most widely studied texts on *ʿirfān* to this day as seen by the fact that one of the most eminent contemporary philosophers of Persia has recently written an extensive commentary upon it.³ During the past few centuries those who have been students of the school of Mullā Ṣadrā in Persia have usually been also familiar with the *Tamhīd al-qawāʿid*, and many have studied it with a master in order to become fully familiar with the *ʿirfān* of the school of Ibn ʿArabī, which constitutes such an important component of the "transcendent theosophy" of Mullā Ṣadrā and a major stage for reaching the synthesis that one observes in Mullā Ṣadrā's teachings.

Ibn Turkah was a Shiʿite thinker, but figures preceding the School of Isfahan who sought to synthesize theology, philosophy, and Sufism were not all Shiʿite. A figure of note, who was a Sunni student of Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī and who was in fact put to death after Shah Ismāʿīl conquered Persia, because he was a Sunni and opposed Shiʿism, was Qāḍī Amīr Ḥusayn ibn Muʿīn al-Dīn Maybudī (d. 910/1503–1504), from a town near Yazd. Maybudī was essentially a Peripatetic philosopher but was also deeply immersed in both theology and Sufism. He is best known for his well-known commentaries on the *Ḥidāyat al-*

ḥikmah of Athīr al-Dīn Abharī and *Ḥikmat al-ʿayn* of Najm al-Dīn Dabīrān-i Kātibī, which have remained popular to this day. But he also wrote *kalāmī* works and poetry, which reflects more clearly his Sufi leanings, including a commentary on the *dīwān* of poetry attributed to ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib. Moreover, he was an accomplished scientist and the author of several mathematical and astronomical works. His attempt to synthesize philosophy, cosmology, and ʿirfān is to be seen most fully in his Persian work *Jām-i gītī-namā* (The Cup Reflecting the Cosmos). Not much research has been carried out concerning Maybudī, but the fact that there was such a figure who wrote such popular works attests to the fact that the continuation of the life of Islamic philosophy in later centuries was not limited to Shiʿite circles but also extended to Sunni ones as seen in the vast influence of the School of Shiraz in Muslim India among both Sunnis and Shiʿites.

The third major figure outside the School of Shiraz worthy of mention here as preparing the ground for the School of Isfahan is Ibn Abī Jumhūr Aḥsāʾī, who died sometime around 906/1501.⁴ A Shiʿite Arab who was born in Aḥsāʾ, where he carried out his earliest studies, Ibn Abī Jumhūr also studied in Jabal ʿĀmil and then traveled to Persia, where he settled in Khurasan. Known as a jurisprudent, theologian, and a philosopher, he was also an accomplished scholar of *Ḥadīth* cited by Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī and other later Shiʿite authorities, some of whom, however, criticized his work in this field. In a way he was like ʿAllāmah Ḥillī, a major Shiʿite scholar of the transmitted sciences, who was also a philosopher. But Ibn Abī Jumhūr was more immersed in *ishrāqī* philosophy and ʿirfān than his illustrious predecessor. The earlier works of Aḥsāʾī, such as *Kitāb maslak al-afḥām fī ʿilm al-kalām* (The Book of the Way of Understandings of the Science of Theology) dealt mostly with *kalām*, but his most important work, for which he remains famous, *Kitāb al-mujlī mirʾāt al-munjī* (The Book of the Illuminated, Mirror of the Savior) is primarily an *ishrāqī* work and in fact a major text in that tradition. In the *Kitāb al-mujlī* he deals with themes common to philosophy and theology, such as the nature of God and the question of knowledge; but he foregoes purely theological issues to concentrate on doctrines of the school of Illumination and to some extent ʿirfān. In this essentially *ishrāqī* work there are numerous quotations from Shahrazūrī's major *ishrāqī* text, *al-Shajarat al-ilāhiyyah* (The Divine Tree). Ibn Abī Jumhūr also shows interest in Ibn ʿArabī, and some elements of Ibn ʿArabian gnosis are present in his work.

In any case these three figures, and some others such as Rajab ʿAlī Bursī, a Shiʿite philosopher and theologian from Iraq, helped along

with the great masters of the School of Shiraz to prepare the ground for the appearance of the School of Isfahan. All of these philosophers were deeply interested in one way or another in the philosophical significance of the reality of prophecy and its consequences, and it was on the basis of their effects that “prophetic philosophy” in its Islamic form reached its peak in the School of Isfahan and especially its most significant representative Mullā Sadrā.

MĪR DĀMĀD: THE FOUNDER OF THE SCHOOL OF ISFAHAN

The philosophical school founded in the tenth/sixteenth century in Isfahan by Mīr Dāmād is of exceptional importance in being both a synthesis of nearly a millennium of Islamic thought and the last major school of traditional philosophy in Islamic civilization, one that has cast its influence on Persia, Iraq, and the Muslim parts of the Indian Subcontinent for the past four centuries. This school was established after the Safavids unified Persia under the banner of Shi‘ism and made their capital Isfahan, which soon became not only a major center of Islamic art but also of learning. Scholars have differed as to the social and political conditions of the day in relation to philosophical and scientific activity. Some have taken the view that this period marked a major renaissance of all the Islamic sciences, and others consider it to be a period when religious dogmatism suffocated philosophy, which barely survived under heavy persecution.

We believe that extreme views are to be avoided in this matter. It is true that the Safavid period was not witness to a major flowering of the Islamic natural and mathematical sciences as it was in the arts from architecture to miniature painting. At the same time there *was* a major philosophical renaissance that, despite opposition from certain jurists, flowered and flourished not in spite of the social and political conditions of the day but because conditions made such a flowering possible in contrast to, let us say, Mamlūk Egypt at that time. Especially during the early Safavid period, both philosophy and Sufism had supporters among the politically powerful, and a situation was created in which within the world of Shi‘ite piety, philosophy and *‘irfān* became cultivated despite the opposition of certain powerful jurists.⁵

In any case the School of Isfahan begins with Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir Dāmād.⁶ He came from a distinguished religious family, his father, Mīr Shams al-Dīn, having been the son-in-law of one of the most important and influential Shi‘ite religious scholars of the day, Muḥaqqiq-i Karakī, hence the title *Dāmād*, which means “son-in-law”

in Persian. This relationship provided him not only with the opportunity to have the best religious education, but also to have social and political protection as he turned his attention ever more to philosophical studies. Mīr Dāmād studied in Mashhad and spent some time in Qazwin and Kashan before settling in the capital, Isfahan, during the reign of the greatest Safavid king, Shāh ‘Abbās, who held him in great respect. Mīr Dāmād spent most of the latter part of his life in Isfahan, where he wrote extensively and trained many students, but he died in 1041/1631 in Najaf in Iraq, where his tomb is visited by pilgrims to this day.

Mīr Dāmād was a scholar of the religious sciences as well as a major philosopher who was given the title of “Third Teacher” (*al-mu‘allim al-thālith*), following Aristotle and al-Fārābī, whom, as already mentioned, Muslims considered as the “First and Second Teachers,” respectively. This combining of philosophy with jurisprudence and other religious sciences is an interesting phenomenon that is different from what one sees in earlier Islamic history. The famous earlier philosophers such as al-Kindī, al-Fārābī, al-‘Āmirī, and Ibn Sīnā all knew something about jurisprudence and other religious sciences, but none except Ibn Rushd was considered an authority on the subject. Rather, they were usually scientists, and many made their living practicing medicine, for example Rāzī and Ibn Sīnā.⁷ From Ṭūsī onward we begin to see philosophers who were also theologians, jurists, or both as we have seen earlier in this book. But until we come to the School of Isfahan, many of these philosophers continued to be scientists, such as Ṭūsī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, Shams al-Dīn Khafrī, and Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī. Mīr Dāmād is the beginning of the new trend in which philosophers are much better versed in the juridical and theological disciplines than in the natural and mathematical sciences. Although what we mention here is not meant to imply that the parting of ways between philosophy and the sciences became absolute, there is definitely a change in the interest of many philosophers in the natural sciences. The later history of Islamic science is yet to be written, and we are the last to believe that activity in the sciences ceased to exist after the eighth/fourteenth century as so many claim. In fact the “discovery” of figures such as Shams al-Dīn Khafrī and Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī proves so readily the falsehood of such assertions.⁸ There have appeared, moreover, figures like them in Persia, the Ottoman world, and India up to modern times, figures whose scientific works need to be examined. Nevertheless, there is little doubt that there is a shift of interest among many of the leading philosophers of the School of Isfahan and going back to Mīr Dāmād himself from the sciences dealing with mathematical concepts and the

natural world toward the religious sciences and the direct fruits of prophecy. This fact has without doubt had an effect on the later history of Islamic science. Also, needless to say, this movement was exactly in the opposite direction of what was taking place in the West at that time. Hence, the radical differences between Cartesianism and the transcendent theosophy or philosophy of Mullā Sadrā, although both were heirs to Greek and medieval philosophy and the Abrahamic world of prophecy.

Some 134 works of Mīr Dāmād have been identified.⁹ Some of these deal with Quranic commentary, theology, and Islamic Law, but most are concerned with philosophy and a few with mysticism. Mīr Dāmād also had some knowledge of mathematics and wrote a couple works on the subject, but his knowledge of this field did not at all match that of his friend and contemporary Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī, who was a major figure in the School of Isfahan but given more to jurisprudence and Sufism, on the one hand, and to mathematics, architecture, and various other pure and applied sciences and the arts, on the other, but who did not write to any appreciable extent on philosophy.¹⁰ The most famous philosophical works of Mīr Dāmād include *Al-Ufuq al-mubīn* (The Manifest Horizon), on aeviternity or metatime (*al-dahr*) corresponding to the Latin *aevum*, time and existence; *Taqwīm al-īmān* (The Straightening of Faith) on the Creator and creation; *Al-Jadhawāt* (Burning Firewood), containing a cycle of his thought and beginning with the symbolism of letters;¹¹ *al-ṣirāṭ al-mustaqīm* (The Straight Path), dealing with the question of eternity and origination of the world; and his most famous work and masterpiece, *al-Qabasāt* (Firebrands), whose main theme is the relation between time, aeviternity or metatime and eternity. Mīr Dāmād also wrote many commentaries and glosses on works of earlier philosophers such as al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ṭūsī. He is also well known for treatises on mystical experience, such as *Khalṣat al-malakūt* (Heavenly Mystical States)¹² and *al-Khalʿiyyah* (Disassociation). Finally, it needs to be mentioned that Mīr Dāmād was an accomplished poet who used the pen name *Ishrāq*. His *dīwān* of poetry has in fact been published in Persia.¹³

Mīr Dāmād was essentially an Avicennan philosopher with an *ishrāqī* interpretation of some Peripatetic theses. But he did not remain satisfied with only reinterpreting earlier philosophical ideas. There are several domains in which he formulated distinct ideas, associated with his name. These include new interpretations of the problem of determinism and free will, the structure and meaning of the imaginal world, and the problem of what appears to be change in the Divine Will as reflected in the revealed text (*badāʾ*). Mīr Dāmād is also credited with

formulating in a categorial fashion the discussion of the relation of existence and quiddity in terms of the principiality (*aṣālah*) of *wujūd* or *māhiyyah*, a very important formulation that has influenced nearly all later Islamic philosophers, starting with his own foremost student, Mullā Ṣadrā.

The central philosophical concern of Mīr Dāmād was, however, the meaning of time in relation to eternity and the related question of the originated or eternal nature of the world (*ḥudūth wa qidam*). This problem is itself directly related to the reality of prophecy in its Abrahamic form. The Greek philosophers philosophized within a worldview that saw all of existence as a “block without fissure,” to quote a formulation of Toshihiko Izutsu. They did not conceive of a temporal origin for the world and a hiatus between God as creator and Pure Being and His creation. Already the Christian philosopher John Philoponus had written against the Greek idea of the eternity of the world in the fourth century.¹⁴ From the beginning of the history of Islamic philosophy, Muslim philosophers, like their Jewish and Christian counterparts, were concerned with the same issue that forms one of the main points of contention among Ibn Sīnā, Ghazzālī, and Ibn Rushd. The debate concerning *ḥudūth* and *qidam* continued long after them and in fact remains to this day.¹⁵

It is a sign of Mīr Dāmād’s full awareness of the philosophical significance of teachings issuing from prophecy that he devoted much of his philosophical writings to the issue of time and its relation to what lies beyond temporality. His main thesis is that we do not only have time and eternity but, eternity (*sarmad*), aeternity or metatime (*dahr*), and time (*zamān*). They represent both relationality and states of being. *Sarmad* refers to a state of being in which there is relation only between the changeless and the changeless. *Dahr* refers to a state in which there is relation between the changeless and the changing. Finally, *zamān* refers to the relation between the changing and the changing. Everything in the dimension of *zamān* is preceded not by nothingness or ‘*adam*, but by what exists in *dahr*. The world is therefore not eternal (*sarmadī*) or originated in time (*ḥudūth-i zamānī*). Rather, it is originated in *dahr*, hence the well-known Dāmādean theory of *ḥudūth-i dahrī*, that is, aeternal or metatemporal origination.¹⁶

This famous theory was discussed avidly later on and criticized and rejected by a number of major philosophers, including Mullā Ṣadrā, while being defended by others. What is important for us to consider there is the significance of this whole question for the relation between philosophy and prophecy. Neither the ancient Greek philosophers nor modern Western philosophers who deny the reality of prophecy that

posits the thesis of *creatio ex-nihilo* have been concerned with this issue. In contrast philosophers in the Abrahamic world, be they Jewish, Christian, or Muslim, have had of necessity to deal with it in one way or another. Moreover, it is interesting to note that in a world with different religious doctrines concerning the nature of the world of time, philosophers have philosophized accordingly. This is true not only of ancient Greece but also of India, where the cyclic nature of cosmic time consisting of *kalpas*, *manvantaras*, and *yugas*, as revealed in the Hindu scriptures, has been the subject of philosophical interpretations and speculation over the ages.

MĪR FINDIRISKĪ

One of the most remarkable figures of the School of Isfahan, who along with Mīr Dāmād and Shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn 'Āmilī may be said to be a member of the founding triumvirate of that school is Mīr Abū'l-Qāsim Findiriskī. Little is known about the life of this enigmatic figure save that he taught for a long time in Isfahan, mostly the works of Ibn Sīnā, and trained many famous students, such as Rajab 'Alī Tabrizī; that he also traveled to India where he became acquainted with Hindu philosophy and may have even participated in the movement of translation of Sanskrit texts into Persian; and that he returned to Isfahan, where he died in 1050/1640–41 and where he is buried. Mīr Findiriskī was an exceptional figure in every way. Although known primarily as an Avicennan philosopher, he was also a fine poet and an alchemist, as well as being a pioneer in what today is known as comparative philosophy.¹⁷ Mīr Findiriskī wrote a small number of works of which few have been edited and published until now. His works include a treatise on motion, a response to a question on ontology posed by a philosopher by the name of Āqā Muẓaffar Ḥusayn Kāshānī, the *Risāla-yi šinā'īyyah* (Treatise on the Arts), a major work in Persian dealing with the structure and classes of traditional human society; a famous philosophical poem¹⁸ that has been the subject of a number of commentaries; a treatise on alchemy; glosses in Arabic on the *Yoga-Vaiśiṣṭha*, translated by Niẓām al-Dīn Panīpātī;¹⁹ and a Persian anthology and commentary on the text by the name of *Muntakhab-i jūk* (Anthology of Yoga).²⁰ It is unfortunate that the fruits of this pioneering effort in carrying out comparative studies between Islamic and Hindu philosophy have not been properly edited and studied. It is also very significant to note that the writing of commentary on a Hindu philosophical text by an Islamic philosopher preceded by a few cen-

turies Islamic philosophical commentaries on a Western philosophical text, be it medieval, Renaissance, or modern.

The book on alchemy of Mīr Findiriskī also remains in manuscript form. An examination of it reveals the interest of Mīr Findiriskī in spiritual alchemy and the relation of this arcane art to metaphysics. Corbin quite rightly compares it to the *Atalanta fugiens* of Mīr Findiriskī's famous contemporary alchemist in the West, Michael Maier.²¹ What is interesting to note from the point of view of the diversity and richness of the philosophical life of the School of Isfahan is that here we have in Mīr Findiriskī a supposed Peripatetic philosopher who is also an alchemist, a fine poet, and a person attracted to the philosophy of Yoga. He complements his contemporary Mīr Dāmād, who was also known as a Peripatetic philosopher but who also wrote on *'irfān* and described his own mystical experiences, which Corbin has called "ecstatic confessions."²²

Of central importance to our concerns in this book is Mīr Findiriskī's *Risāla-yi šinā'īyyah*, where he discusses the relation between philosophy and prophecy.²³ This treatise deals with the hierarchic classification of the arts and the activities of human beings, culminating in a chapter that discusses the relation between philosophers and prophets, which Corbin designates as "prophetic philosophy." The treatise ends with a discussion of the states of being. In the section on philosophers, he asserts their importance and eminence in human society standing below the rank of prophets, and he places philosophical research on a par with *ijtihād* (giving fresh opinion on religious matters on the part of leading religious authorities). For him philosophy in fact replaces theology as the supreme science. Yet he also points out the basic difference between the philosopher and the prophet. The former can err, but the latter does not do so. The former reaches knowledge through the intermediary of thought and the latter through revelation and direct inspiration without need of mental activity. Philosophers know through the light of the intellect, whereas in the case of the prophets intellectual power is boundless, and there is no veil between them and the angelic world.

Having made all these distinctions, Mīr Findiriskī asserts the following statement: "[W]hen philosophers reach the end of their path, this end is the beginning of prophecy. And this station is that of prophets who were not messengers such as Luqmān, the Wise. And it is said of Aristotle that 'Amr ibn 'Āṣṣ insulted Aristotle before the Prophet. The Prophet became angry and said, 'Go easy, O 'Amr. Aristotle was a prophet who was ignored by his people.'"²⁴ Mīr Findiriskī then adds that the Prophet was using "prophet" metaphorically in the case

of Aristotle (meaning most likely Plotinus as is seen often in Islamic texts because of the attribution of the Arabic translation of the *Enneads* to Aristotle), whereas the real differences between the philosopher and the prophet remain.

This important text of Mīr Findiriskī also points to the significance of the Logos or more specifically the Muḥammadan Reality (*al-ḥaqīqat al-muḥammadiyyah*) associated with the Intellect on its highest level for a gnostic and metaphysical understanding of prophecy and the role of the prophetic function vis-à-vis the philosophical one in a human collectivity dominated by the reality of prophecy. The treatise of Mīr Findiriskī is almost unique in the annals of Islamic thought in intertwining the metaphysical and societal aspects of the relationship between prophecy and a philosophy, which in the School of Isfahan is to be identified even more than before as “prophetic philosophy.”²⁵

THE STUDENTS OF THE FIRST GENERATION

The three earliest masters and founders of the School of Isfahan, Mīr Dāmād, Shaykh-i Bahāʾī, and Mīr Findiriskī trained a galaxy of students, many of whom became celebrated philosophers in their own right. Some studied with one of these masters and some with two but rarely with all three. It has been said by some concerning the most famous of the students of these first generation founders, that is, Mullā Ṣadrā, that he studied with all three, but his rapport with Mīr Findiriskī has not been substantiated, and he does not speak of him in his voluminous works. In any case because he marks the peak of what we can call “prophetic philosophy,” we shall deal with Mullā Ṣadrā in the next chapter and turn here to some of the other figures who are of significance from the point of view of this book.

A major figure belonging to the second generation and a contemporary of Mullā Ṣadrā, Mullā Rajab ʿAlī Tabrizī (d. 1080/1669–70) was a student of Mīr Findiriskī and a follower of Ibn Sīnā’s metaphysical views. He rejected the idea of the transcendent unity and principiality of being (*waḥdat al-wujūd* and *aṣālat al-wujūd*) and stood totally opposed to Ṣadrian metaphysics.²⁶ As far as knowledge of God is concerned, he followed the *via negative* and believed that knowledge of the Absolute remains forever beyond the grasp of the human intellect, a view similar to that of the mainstream of Ismāʿīlī philosophy. Mullā Rajab ʿAlī’s works, like those of many later figures, have not been fully studied, and few have even been printed. Besides shorter treatises that reflect his views on particular philosophical issues,²⁷ there is

an important work of his edited by his student Rafī' Pīrẓādah and entitled *al-Ma'ārif al-ilāhiyyah* (The Divine Sciences).

Mullā Rajab 'Alī was not unique in following a philosophical path totally different from that of Mullā Ṣadrā and his school. A student of Mīr Dāmād, Mullā Shamsā Gīlānī (d. before 1064/1655), who corresponded with Mullā Ṣadrā and even wrote a treatise entitled *al-Ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah* (The Transcendent Theosophy) similar in title to Mullā Ṣadrā's major work, was nevertheless primarily an Avicennan with an *ishrāqī* bent, like his teacher Mīr Dāmād, whose doctrine of aeternal origination he defended despite some criticism of it. But in any case he followed a very different philosophical path from that of Mullā Ṣadrā.²⁸ Furthermore, Mullā Rajab 'Alī himself had a number of eminent students, such as Mīr Qawām al-Dīn Rāzī, Mullā 'Abbās Mawlawī, and Mullā Muḥammad Tunikābunī, who represent a whole strand of Avicennan philosophical thought that develops in the School of Isfahan in a different manner from the philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā. As mentioned earlier in this book, it is important to remember that although Mullā Ṣadrā's *al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah* is the most influential and significant result of the flowering of the School of Isfahan, it is not the only result. Another important and long-enduring strand began with Mullā Rajab 'Alī and has continued to our day. Strangely enough, although those two strands of philosophical thought opposed each other on many issues, there were some who, one might say, had a foot in each camp. The best example is Qāḍī Sa'īd Qummī (d. 1103/1691), one of the major Islamic thinkers of the past few centuries who was a student of Mullā Rajab 'Alī but also of Mullā Ṣadrā's foremost student, Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ.²⁹

There are many important members of the School of Isfahan, including Mullā Ṣadrā's own students Mullā Muḥsin Fayḍ Kāshānī and 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī, whom we shall not study in this chapter, having dealt with both figures earlier in this book,³⁰ except to say that each represents a special possibility of the flowering of Islamic philosophy at this juncture in which philosophy becomes wed to the esoteric dimension of prophecy and absorbs and gradually replaces theology. There are two other students of Mīr Dāmād, however, whom we need to mention in light of the relation between philosophy and prophecy before we bring this chapter to a close. They are Quṭb al-Dīn Ashkiwarī and Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī.

Quṭb al-Dīn Ashkiwarī (d. after 1075/1665) is known especially for a voluminous work on a kind of spiritual history of philosophy from Adam to his own teacher, Mīr Dāmād. Entitled *Maḥbūb al-qulūb* (Beloved of Hearts), it is divided into three parts: the ancient philosophers

and sages, the Sunni sages and philosophers, and the Shi'ite Imams and philosophers.³¹ The whole history reflects the perspective that philosophy is a tree rooted in the ground of revelation and watered over the ages by the messages of various prophets and their spiritual representatives. Concerning this important *historial* treatment of philosophy, Corbin writes: "Special mention must be made of Quṭb al-Dīn Ashkiwarī who composed a sort of immense rhapsody in Arabic and Persian including in three parts the traditions, citations and commentaries concerning the ancient sages, the philosophers and spiritual figures of Sunni Islam and finally the Imams and the great spiritual figures of Shi'ism. It is a sort of *speculum historiale* and 'divine philosophy,' the *Divinalia* beginning with Adam and concluding with Mīr Dāmād, the master of the author."³²

As for Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī (d. between 1054/1644 and 1060/1650), like Ashkiwarī, he was a close disciple of Mīr Dāmād and his son-in-law and nephew. His philosophical perspective was also like that of his teacher Mīr Dāmād, an Avicennism colored by the doctrines of Suhrawardī. Sayyid Aḥmad in fact wrote a commentary upon the *Qubasāt* and remained one of the most faithful followers of his master. Sayyid Aḥmad also wrote one of the most notable commentaries upon the *Shifā'*, which makes him one of the most important of later Avicennian philosophers.³³ He also wrote works on jurisprudence and what would be called today "comparative religious studies." This latter category is of special interest for the relation between philosophy and prophecy. Today in the West it is mostly scholars of religion or theologians who write about different religions in a comparative mode and not ordinary philosophers, except of course those who are followers of the perennial philosophy, there being a few other exceptions. In the School of Isfahan, as philosophy came to absorb theology, this task seems to have been left primarily to the *falāsifah* rather than the *mutakallimūn* when it came to the intellectual and spiritual dimensions of the subject. A major example of this philosophical undertaking is to be found in the works of Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī.

The Safavid period was witness to the appearance of a number of attacks against Islam written by Christian missionaries in India and Persia. The works of Sayyid Aḥmad are for the most part responses to this challenge. He wrote three books on Christian doctrines, including *Lawāmi'-i rabbānī* (Lordly Flashes), *Miṣqal-i ṣafā* (Polishing Instrument of Purity), and *Lama'āt-i malakūtiyyah* (Celestial Flashes).³⁴ The *Lawāmi'* is written in refutation of Pietro della Valle's attack against Islam written in 1621. The second part of the work deals with the question of the possibility of changes in the text of the Gospels and reveals the famil-

ilarity of Sayyid Aḥmad with the Gospels.³⁵ *Miṣqal-i ṣafā* was written in refutation of the famous book *Ā'ina-yi ḥaqq-nāma* (Mirror Reflecting the Truth) written in India by a Catholic missionary. A summary of this work reached Persia, and Sayyid Aḥmad set out to refute its main thesis concerning the truth of Trinitarian doctrine. His response itself elicited further replies by other Christian missionaries.³⁶

The *Lama'āt*, which is shorter than the other two works, deals with the inner meaning of the "Word" (*kalimah*) and the three hypostases, that is, Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost, in such a way as to accord with the teachings of the Quran. This work is in reality an *ishrāqī* commentary upon the Gospels and a serious attempt at creating a philosophical and theological harmony between some of the most basic tenets of Islam and Christianity and is of great value for deeper theological discussions between the two religions today.³⁷ Of special interest in this work is Sayyid Aḥmad's treatment of the theme of the Paraclete in light of Islamic and particularly Shi'ite gnosis.

It is quite remarkable that the author of one of the most extensive commentaries upon the bible of Islamic Peripatetic philosophy, the *Shifā'* of Ibn Sīnā, should write such works on comparative philosophy of religion and theology. Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī reveals once again the remarkable diversity of philosophical activity in Safavid Persia and also the different possibilities for philosophical activity in light of the reality of prophecy, including crossing borders from a world dominated by one religion to the verities of prophecy belonging to another religious universe.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The works of the few figures of the School of Isfahan mentioned in this chapter reveal the themes and problems with which those philosophizing at this time within the context of prophetic realities in both their outward and inward dimension were concerned. We have also seen philosophers with diverse interests and varying strands of thought, all of which are of philosophical interest. But without doubt the most significant figure of this period, who is not only the most important philosopher of the School of Isfahan but in a sense the representative of the full flowering of "prophetic philosophy" and the synthesis of nearly a millennium of Islamic thought, is Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī or Mullā Ṣadrā, to whom we now turn.

CHAPTER 12

Mullā Ṣadrā and the Full Flowering of Prophetic Philosophy

Since Henry Corbin and I began to write about Mullā Ṣadrā over forty years ago, a great deal of attention has been paid to this major figure in both the Islamic world and the West and even in lands as far away as Japan. There are now even international and local conferences held on a regular basis on his philosophy. Here our task is not to deal with every aspect of his thought but only certain theses that relate to our concerns in this work. Let it also be repeated, lest one forget, that Mullā Ṣadrā and his followers do not represent the only philosophical current in the School of Isfahan but the major current that was to have the greatest influence in later centuries in Persia and India.¹

MULLĀ ṢADRĀ

Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī, known also as Mullā Ṣadrā and Ṣadr al-mutaʿallihīn (foremost among the theosophers or literally those imbued with God-like qualities) is without doubt the greatest of the later Islamic philosophers and perhaps the most outstanding among all Islamic philosophers in the field of metaphysics.² Born in Shiraz in 979–80/1571–72, he received his early education in the city of his birth, then set out for Isfahan, where he soon became the most notable student of Mīr Dāmād.³ After having mastered both the intellectual and the transmitted sciences, his foremost teacher in the latter category having been Bahāʾ al-Dīn al-ʿĀmilī, Mullā Ṣadrā retired to the village of Kahak near Qom away from the crowd. There he spent years in spiritual training and contemplation. Finally he returned to Shiraz where the Khan School was built for him and where he wrote and taught until his death in 1050/1640 in Basra (or possibly Najaf) upon returning from the pilgrimage to Mecca for the seventh time. He also visited Qom during the last period of his life.

During a remarkably productive life marked by periods of both formal intellectual training and inner purification and spiritual wayfaring

and characterized by great faith and piety, Mullā Ṣadrā composed nearly fifty works devoted to both the intellectual and the transmitted sciences ranging from books on logic and Peripatetic philosophy to Quranic commentaries.⁴ The most important of these works is *al-Ḥikmat al-mutaʿāliyah fiʾl-asfār al-ʿaqliyyat al-arbaʿah* (Transcendent Theosophy concerning the Four Intellectual Journeys) usually known simply as *Asfar*,⁵ which has been commented upon by many later *ḥakīms* as we shall see in the following chapter.⁶ In this and many other works, Mullā Ṣadrā presents his vast synthesis of the older schools of Islamic philosophy, theology, and Sufism into the teachings of a new philosophical school, which he calls "*al-ḥikmat al-mutaʿāliyah*," a term that can be translated as "transcendent theosophy" if this term is used in its original sense or "transcendent philosophy" if philosophy is also understood to include what Pythagoreans and Parmenides understood by it and not simply as mental machinations and one form or another of rationalism and more recently irrationalism.⁷ Mullā Ṣadrā sought to unify the knowledge received through *burhān* or demonstration, *ʿirfān* or contemplation, intellectual intuition and gnosis and Quṣṣrān or the Sacred Text made accessible through revelation, thereby giving full expression to philosophy cultivated in the land of prophecy.

We do not wish to dwell extensively here on the principles of Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy such as the principiality, unity, and gradation of *wujūd*, the union of the intellect and the intelligible, mental existence, the ontological reality of the imaginal world, trans-substantial motion, and many other ideas that together constitute the foundations of his philosophic perspective.⁸ What concerns us here is the philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā in as much as it marks the full flowering of prophetic philosophy in Islam as this term was defined earlier in this book, for as Corbin has written, "Ultimately, Ṣadrā Shīrāzī's philosophy culminates not so much in a philosophy of the creative Spirit, as in a metaphysics of the Holy Spirit."⁹

THE FULL FLOWERING OF PROPHETIC PHILOSOPHY IN THE TEACHINGS OF MULLĀ ṢADRĀ

There is a famous saying among Islamic philosophers that *al-ḥukamāʾ warathat al-anbiyāʾ*, that is, the *ḥakīms* or philosophers are the inheritors of the prophets. Mullā Ṣadrā accepted fully this assertion and lived with awareness of the spiritual universe in which God's beneficent manifestation or *jūd* was evident, in which prophecy had made possible attainment of knowledge not available to unaided human reason,

and in which prophecy actualized the inner intellect. In fact he considered inner intellection as distinct from ratiocination to be "partial prophecy" actualized by universal and objective revelation through the prophets. More specifically, as far as the Shi'ite climate in which he philosophized was concerned, he was fully aware of the circle of initiatic and spiritual power (*dā'irat al-walāyah/wilāyah*) that followed the closing of the prophetic cycle (*dā'irat al-nubuwwah*) upon the death of the Prophet.¹⁰ Mullā Ṣadrā was keenly aware of the esoteric nature of knowledge associated with *walāyah/wilāyah* and the relation of this knowledge to spiritual hermeneutics (*ta'wīl*) of the Sacred Text. He drank from the fountainhead of this knowledge and gained a vision of the various levels of universal existence and of the Divine Reality Itself.

Mullā Ṣadrā also benefited fully from a thousand years of Islamic intellectual activity, from the writings of nearly all the outstanding philosophers, theologians, and mystics before him, who had contemplated in one way or another a world dominated by the reality of prophecy. In fact, perhaps no major Islamic philosopher was as aware of and as knowledgeable about the history of Islamic philosophy as Mullā Ṣadrā.¹¹ On the basis of knowledge of this long intellectual heritage, the study afresh of the sources of the Islamic revelation along with the sayings of the Shi'ite Imams and his own experience and intellectual vision of reality made possible by both the outward and inward dimensions of the revelation and the actualization of the intellect within, Mullā Ṣadrā created a major new philosophical school, *al-ḥikmat al-muta'aliyah*. His philosophical synthesis was both rigorously logical and rational and open to the melodies of the rhapsodic intellect and was in fact its fruit. His philosophy combined the logical rigor of the works of Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā, and Ṭūsī; the illuminative knowledge of Suhrawardī's school of *ishrāq*; the mystical theology of Ghazzālī; the concern with spiritual hermeneutics of the Ismā'īlī philosophers such as Nāṣir-i Khusraw and the Sufis; the visionary gnosis of Ibn 'Arabī; and the philosophical efforts by some of the members of the School of Shiraz and other figures mentioned in the last chapters to bring about a rapprochement between these schools. Mullā Ṣadrā's "transcendent theosophy" makes use of extensive logical analysis and demonstration, as well as intellectual vision or what he sometimes calls "what has entered the heart" (*al-wāridāt al-qalbiyyah*) or knowledge received from the Divine Throne (*taḥqīq 'arshī*) and what has been revealed through the Quran and made known to human beings through the sayings of the Prophet and the Imams. But without doubt Mullā Ṣadrā's *ḥikmat* is philosophy in its time-honored sense and not theology or gnosis, which remain distinct from it, although he drew

from both of them. Moreover, Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy represents perhaps the fullest and grandest expression of prophetic philosophy in Islam, one that not only benefits from a millennium of Islamic thought before it but also formulates and crystallizes in an unprecedented manner the various latent modes and dimensions of what can be called "prophetic philosophy" in the Islamic universe.

There are many aspects of Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy that are especially significant from the point of view of what has been characterized throughout this book as prophetic philosophy. Here we shall mention only seven doctrines of major importance for our present discussion, although there are also others to be considered if one undertakes the task of studying the whole of Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy from the point of view of prophetic philosophy.

Philosophy of Being

The Quranic revelation speaks not only of God as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe, but also of His Beneficence that concerns all beings and His Mercy that encompasses all things. Understood metaphysically, this means that God is the source and the only source of the being of all things and that like the rays of the sun, which shine upon all things, being flows from its Divine Origin to existentiate all things. This is what Mullā Ṣadrā calls "*sarayān al-wujūd*" (the flow of being). Earlier Islamic philosophers had been deeply concerned with ontology, and as we have seen it was Ibn Sīnā who first formulated the concept of 'Necessary Being,' which he identified with God. But although later philosophers such as Mīr Dāmād and before him Suhrawardī had asserted the absolute reality of the One as the source of all, they had accepted the quiddities (*māhiyyāt*) of things to be what bestowed reality upon them. Mullā Ṣadrā had first accepted this view, but as a result of a vision, he came to realize that it is *wujūd*, a term that, as already mentioned, can be translated into English as "Being," "being," "Existence," and "existence," that is, principial and primary rather than *māhiyyah*. He thereby made the cornerstone of his philosophical edifice the doctrine of the oneness, gradation, and principiality of *wujūd*, which not only accords with the inner meaning of the revealed Text, but is the result of the knowledge that the esoteric meaning of that Text makes possible.

Furthermore, in this universe objects are not simply essences that are existent having been created once by God. Rather, their very essence is inseparable from the act of existence. God's creation did not just take place once upon a time but is taking place anew at every

moment. As mentioned earlier in this book, Mullā Ṣadrā was able to make use of both Arabic, where the verb *to be* is not used as a copula, and Persian, which does use 'to be' as copula like other Indo-Iranian-European languages, to create a special vocabulary to speak about *wujūd* not as a thing but as an act, not as *ens* or even *esse* but as *esto*.¹² Being is also presence (*ḥuḍūr*), and ultimately the very being of things marks the presence of the One who ultimately alone *is*. As the Quran says, "Whithersoever ye turn, there is the Face of God." (2: 115)

In this metaphysical perspective being and knowing are not separate from each other. We are what we know, and we know to the degree that we are. In Arabic the Greek term *ousia*, equivalent to the Latin word *essentia*, was not translated as "quiddity" but as "*ḥaqīqah*" or "reality" and "truth." Truth is none other than the real and the real none other than the truth. The Arabic term *al-ḥaqīqah* means both. Moreover, the *ḥaqīqah* of everything is related to its archetypal reality, to God's knowledge of that thing and ultimately to God Himself, one of whose Names is *al-Ḥaqq* or Truth/Reality. And it is this revealed truth that is perceived by the intellect and constitutes the foundation of Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy.

The Sacred Book

In the Islamic perspective the Sacred Book is inseparable from the reality of prophecy. The Sacred Book, in the case of Islam, the Quran, is not only the source of Divine Law and ethics and the repository of sacred history. It is also the source of knowledge and in fact, in principle, all knowledge. Esoterically it is related to the Muḥammadan Reality (*al-ḥaqīqah al-muḥammadiyyah*) and contains the archetypal reality of the universe. Through it God communicates with man, and knowledge of prophecy, eschatology, and in the case of Shi'ism, knowledge of the Imam, are inseparable from it. The Sacred Text is revealed through a descent (*tanzīl*) and ascends back to its Origin through hermeneutic interpretation (*ta'wīl*). It is the Word of God as well as the source of the spiritual energies that carry man back to his celestial home. The Holy Spirit itself is none other than the overflowing of this Word, and it is through union of the intellect within man with the Active Intellect, which is none other than the Holy Spirit, that man gains ultimate wisdom.

It is not accidental that Islamic philosophers from the beginning were concerned with the philosophical meaning of the Quran, and even the master of Islamic Peripatetics, Ibn Sīnā, wrote a number of Quranic commentaries. Classical Ismā'īlī philosophers such as Abū

Ya'qūb Sijistānī, Ḥamīd al-Dīn Kirmānī, and Nāṣir-i Khusraw made *ta'wīl* the basis of their philosophical method and considered their philosophy to be totally embedded in prophecy with the Sacred Text as its central reality.¹³ Later Suhrawardī incorporated many verses of the Quran into his philosophical works, and some later philosophers wrote a few commentaries on various Quranic verses or *ḥadīths*. But there is no philosopher in the annals of Islamic philosophy who has written such a vast commentary on the Quran as Mullā Ṣadrā,¹⁴ not to speak of his masterly work, *Mafātīḥ al-ghayb* (Keys to the Invisible), which concerns the relations among metaphysics, cosmology, traditional anthropology, and Quranic exegesis. In this realm as in many others it seems that Mullā Ṣadrā brought the flowering of prophetic philosophy in its Islamic form to its peak.

Prophecy and Illumination

In a spiritual universe in which prophecy is a reality, there is an open passage between Heaven and earth, and the individual intellect has the open possibility to be illuminated by the angelic agency that brought the revelation to the Prophet. Although the term *waḥy* or "revelation" in its technical Islamic sense is reserved for the prophets (*anbiyā'*) in the Quranic sense, the possibility of illumination from above is open to all who fulfill the necessary conditions provided by the revealed religion itself. The Quran itself speaks of *fath*, which means "victory" as well as "illumination" and "opening to the spiritual world," and the bible of Islamic esoteric knowledge by Ibn 'Arabī is entitled *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyyah* ("Mekkan Illuminations," "Openings," or "Revelations," if this term is not confused with *waḥy*). Prophecy lies at the peak of gnosis and knowledge of the sacred order and at the same time provides the means for illuminative knowledge.

Of course before Mullā Ṣadrā, both Suhrawardī and Ibn 'Arabī, not to speak of their many followers, had spoken of the central role of illumination and unveiling each in his own language and manner of expression. Mullā Ṣadrā was deeply influenced by both these masters. His *Glosses* upon the *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* of Suhrawardī are among the great masterpieces of the *ishrāqī* school, and his discussions of the science of the soul in his *Asfār*, based largely on Ibn 'Arabī, reveal him as an outstanding commentator of the Murcian master. Mullā Ṣadrā was, therefore, not by any means the first Islamic philosopher to emphasize illumination as the source of knowledge and its relation to prophecy. But here again he integrated the teachings of Suhrawardī and Ibn 'Arabī, along with those of the Shi'ite Imams into his *al-ḥikmat*

al-muta'aliyah in such a way that the organic link between objective revelation in the form of prophecy and inner illumination as “partial prophecy” became central to a hierarchical epistemology that characterizes his total synthesis between prophetic and philosophic truth or religion and philosophy.

Angelology

There is ultimately no prophecy without angelology. In the ancient Greek world where Pythagoras and Parmenides philosophized, these angelic realities were identified as gods of the Greek pantheon, and in Hinduism they are identified with various Hindu deities. In the Abrahamic world, however, these intelligible and luminous substances are identified as angels, and the traditional philosophies of all the three monotheistic religions have dealt with them on some level as we see for example in nearly all the writings in the West influenced by the Dionysian corpus.¹⁵ In Islamic philosophy again it was Ibn Sīnā who was the first to seek to create a systematic correlation between the intelligences of the philosophers and the angelic realm as mentioned in religious sources. Suhrawardī expanded greatly the philosophical study of angels, making correlations between the vertical and horizontal orders of light in the *ishrāqī* universe and not only Islamic but also Mazdean orders of angels.¹⁶ In relating angelology to both cosmology and epistemology, Ibn Sīnā and especially Suhrawardī had already paved the way for Mullā Ṣadrā, but again this important dimension of prophetic philosophy finds its full expression in the grand synthesis of the latter.

Eschatology and Sacred Psychology

Left to their own devices, the ordinary human mind and imagination have no means of gaining knowledge of eschatological realities, and ordinary human knowledge of the psyche remains limited to the most outward aspects of the soul. The current philosophical scene exemplifies fully the truth of this assertion. Since the rise of rationalism, mainstream Western philosophers have shown practically no interest in eschatology, and the rare few who have, such as the Swedish visionary Emmanuel Swedenborg, have been philosophically speaking totally marginalized. As for psychology, the modern discipline using that name, does not know what to do with transpersonal psychology, not to speak of traditional psychologies of the Oriental traditions based on intellection and spiritual methods that enable one to penetrate into the depths of the psyche, to transform it and ultimately to transcend it.

In the world of prophecy, the philosopher must deal with the reality of eschatology as asserted by the revelation, as well as with the reality of not only the outer layers of the psyche but also the whole of the immortal soul in itself and in its wedding to the Spirit. Again in this realm earlier Islamic philosophers wrote works of importance such as Ibn Sīnā's *al-Risālat al-adḥawiyyah* (Treatise on the Day of Resurrection) on eschatology, and he, Fārābī, and others composed a number of well-known works on psychology. In the latter field, however, most of the earlier works were based on Aristotle's *De Anima* and his Alexandrian commentators. Before Mullā Ṣadrā the more inward studies of psychology were carried out not by philosophers but by Sufis. Mullā Ṣadrā benefited from both types of exposition, and his work marks the peak of the philosophical study of both eschatology and sacred psychology in the framework of prophetic philosophy. In both realms he made contributions that are unsurpassed in their philosophical depth, while at the same time revealing some of the deepest meaning of prophetic teachings on these matters.

The Imaginal World

Revelation not only transforms a human collectivity but in a sense transforms a whole cosmic sector, including the imaginal world, the intermediate world residing ontologically between the physical and the purely intellectual. The forms and images of this world have both a subjective and an objective dimension, both deeply affected by prophecy and the whole universe of symbols and images, which it either reveals or resuscitates with new life. Early Islamic philosophers such as Ibn Sīnā in fact sought to relate the function of the prophet to the imaginal faculty.¹⁷ But it was again Mullā Ṣadrā and before him Suhrawardī and Ibn 'Arabī who brought out for the first time in Islamic metaphysical discourse the central importance of the imaginal world.¹⁸ Mullā Ṣadrā followed those masters in expounding the metaphysics of this world and in bringing out its epistemological, eschatological, and cosmological significance in a masterly way. Moreover, he integrated his exposition of the ontology of the imaginal world into his general ontology based on the unity, principiality, and gradation of *wujūd*. In reading his description of the imaginal world, one senses, on the one hand, the existence and characteristics of this intermediate world and, on the other hand, its familiarity for those living within the context of the Islamic revelation as the locus of events associated with realities revealed by prophecy that concern the life of each believer in both this world and the next.

Trans-substantial Motion

In a cosmos dominated by prophecy and revelation, the human collectivity and the world of nature in a sense participate in the revealed reality. The Ganges is not only a river issuing from the Himalayas, but for those who belong to the Hindu universe, it also has a sacred significance. Likewise, according to Islamic teachings the cosmos is itself the first revelation of God. In such a sacralized cosmos phenomena are at once veils of spiritual realities and symbols that reveal those realities. In the Abrahamic world the world of nature is itself a book to be deciphered but only by virtue of access to prophecy as the Abrahamic religions understand it. More specifically, in Islam the emphasis on the Divine Oneness has as its concomitant consciousness of the interrelatedness of all multiplicity and the harmony that pervades all things, harmony being nothing other than the consequence of the manifestation of the One in the many.

In the universe sacralized by the Quranic revelation through a return to the view of the primordial nature of creation, many philosophies of nature were developed by Peripatetic and Ismā'īlī philosophers, later scholars of *kalām*, *ishrāqīs*, Sufis, and others.¹⁹ All of these philosophies were related directly or indirectly to the reality of prophecy and revelation, and Mullā Ṣadrā was far from being the first Islamic thinker to have developed a natural philosophy relevant to a cosmos dominated by prophetic reality. Nevertheless, Mullā Ṣadrā did develop the doctrine of trans-substantial motion (*al-ḥarakat al-jawhariyyah*), which is both the basis of a profound natural philosophy and also the means to create an ineluctable link between natural philosophy, on the one hand, and metaphysics, cosmology, and eschatology, on the other.

Instead of positing existents with permanent substances in which only accidents could undergo motion in the classical philosophical sense, or asserting the existence of immutable atoms as in classical atomism, Mullā Ṣadrā saw the whole world of nature as partaking in a transformation that affects the very substance of things. He saw the world of corporeal existence—and of course not the immutable intelligible world—as being like a long caravan moving from the lowly state of material existence to the Empyrean without this movement, which Corbin called poetically "*l'inquiétude de l'être*," implying any form of Darwinian evolution or transformism.²⁰ In divorcing traditional cosmology from its reliance upon Ptolemaic astronomy, in integrating the dimensions of time and space, in providing a means to understand natural transformations without falling into the error of

evolutionary reductionism, and in many other ways, Mullā Ṣadrā created on the basis of the doctrine of trans-substantial motion a natural philosophy that can function and be viable even in a contemporary setting with all the challenges of modern science and yet still remain faithful to the realities of prophecy.

While in the West from the seventh/thirteenth century onward, philosophy and theology began to drift apart, and with Descartes the two became totally separate and in many cases antagonistic, in the prophetic philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā, in that synthesis that he called "*al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah*," all tension and antagonism between philosophy and theology was overcome, and in fact this *ḥikmat* functioned as both, and, as mentioned in chapter 3, it practically devoured Shi'ite *kalām* so that during later centuries in Shi'ism, *kalām* became much less relevant than before. The fully flowered prophetic philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā not only became the main philosophical current but also played the role that not only philosophy but also theology and especially mystical theology have played in Christianity. In referring to this pact between theology and philosophy in Mullā Ṣadrā, Corbin writes, "From the pact thus concluded, equally from the beginning between prophetic revelation and philosophical meditation, there results a particular situation for philosophy which, promoted to the rank of 'prophetic philosophy,' will henceforth be inseparable from spiritual effort and personal spiritual realization."²¹

The tree of prophetic philosophy can flower many times, and not only once. Mullā Ṣadrā marks the full flowering of prophetic philosophy in the context of Safavid Persia and Ithna 'asharī Shi'ism and is also the fullest flowering of that philosophy, even if one views the whole of Islamic civilization.²² But even after Mullā Ṣadrā there were other major flowerings of prophetic philosophy in the Islamic world not only in Persia but also in Islamic India, expressions that also represent important expressions of prophetic philosophy, but this time as far as India is concerned, mostly in a predominantly Sunni ambience. One need only recall two of the towering figures of later Islamic thought in India, Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi and Mawlānā 'Alī Ashraf Thanwī, both of whom were influenced by Mullā Ṣadrā. In their somewhat different syntheses of Islamic philosophy, in which elements of philosophy, theology, principles of jurisprudence, the religious sciences, and Sufism are integrated into an imposing unified structure, the main features of prophetic philosophy to be seen in early Islamic philosophers and in their full flowering in Mullā Ṣadrā are again to be ob-

served. Nor do these flowerings during the past few centuries detract in any way from the possibility of the reflowering of the tree of prophetic philosophy in our own day and age.

The influence of Mullā Ṣadrā in India was substantial,²³ but in contrast the Ottoman world remained indifferent to his teachings, and it is only in the past two decades that the attention of younger Turkish scholars has turned toward him.²⁴ But it was especially in his home country that after a short period of eclipse, his teachings came to constitute the predominant school of philosophy in Qajar Persia, producing such masters as Ḥajjī Mullā Hādī Sabziwārī²⁵ and being the main inspiration for the School of Tehran, to which we shall now turn.

CHAPTER 11. THE SCHOOL OF ISFAHAN REVISITED

1. On Ibn Turkah, see Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 3, pp. 233–74. This essay, which analyzes a treatise of Ibn Turkah on the meaning of the Quranic verse on the cleaving of the moon (*shaqq al-qamar*), remains after several decades still the most notable work on Ibn Turkah in European languages. For the text of the works of Ibn Turkah, see Sayyid ‘Alī Mūsawī Bihbahānī and Sayyid Ibrāhīm Dībājī (eds.), *Collected Works of Šā’ in al-Dīn ibn Turkah Iṣfahānī*, part 1, (Tehran: Taqī Riḍā’ī, 1351 [A.H. solar]), in which fourteen of the fifty-seven known treatises of Ibn Turkah are published. See also his *Tamhīd al-qawā’id*, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī (ed.) (Tehran: The Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy, 1976); refer to my English and Persian introductions for the content and significance of this work. For the life and list of works of Ibn Turkah, see S. A. M. Bihbahānī, “Aḥwāl wa athār-i Šā’ in al-Dīn Turka-yi Iṣfahānī,” in Mehdi Mohaghegh and Herman Landolt (eds.), *Collected Papers on Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism* (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1971), pp. 97–145.

2. See Corbin, op. cit., pp. 237ff.

3. See ‘Abd Allāh Jawādī Āmulī, *Tahrīr tamhīd al-qawā’id* (Qom: Intishārāt al-Zahrā’, 1372 [A.H. solar]). This famous book is actually a commentary by Šā’ in al-Dīn on a treatise on *tawhīd* by his ancestor Šadr al-Dīn Abū Hāmid Muḥammad Turkah. The complete title of the text of Šā’ in al-Dīn, which has become known as *Tamhīd al-qawā’id* is in fact *al-Tamhīd fi sharḥi qawā’id al-tawhīd* (The Disposition in the Commentary of the Principles of Unity). Ibn Turkah is one of the most neglected in the West among the major figures of Islamic thought and deserves to be studied much more thoroughly as a “philosopher of being,” a Shi’ite interpreter of Ibn ‘Arabī, and a synthesizer of the various intellectual perspectives in Islam.

4. Fortunately in contrast to Qāḍī Maybudī, Ibn Turkah and many other major intellectual figures of this period, there is a fine scholarly monograph in a European language on Ibn Abī Jumhūr, including a list of his works, nearly all of which remain in manuscript form. See Sabine Schmidtke, *Theologie, Philosophie und Mystik im zwölfterschiitischen Islam des 9./15. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden: Brill, 2000). See also her “Recent Studies on the Philosophy of Illumination and Perspectives for Further Research,” *Dāneshnāmeḥ: The Bilingual Quarterly of the Shahīd Beheshtī University*, vol. 1, no. 2, Spring and Summer 2003, pp. 101–19. Corbin also refers to him often in his *En Islam iranien*, especially vols. 1 and 4. Corbin has written some important passages on Ibn Abī Jumhūr’s study of the Shi’ite Imams and his identification of the Paraclete with the Twelfth Imam.

5. See Hamid Dabashi, “Mīr Dāmād,” in Nasr and Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 598ff., where, under the title “Philosophy under the Safavids,” this issue is discussed. See p. 601, where Dabashi quotes a poem by Mullā Muḥammad Ṭāhir Qummī, one of the most severe opponents of the Sufis and philosophers, against philosophy.

6. On the School of Isfahan, see Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 4, livre 5, pp. 7ff.; and Nasr, "The School of Isfahan," in *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, pp. 239–70. On Mīr Dāmād, in addition to the above chapters, see Dabashi, op. cit.; Izutsu, "Introduction: Mīr Dāmād and His Metaphysics," in Mīr Dāmād, *al-Qabasāt*, ed. Mehdi Mohaghegh et al. (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1977), pp. 1–15. See also Sayyid 'Alī Mūsawī Mudarris Bihbahānī, *Ḥakīm-i Astarābād Mīr Dāmād* (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1377 [A.H. solar]); and Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne islamique*, pp. 26–31.

7. That is why in my *Three Muslim Sages* I refer to Ibn Sīnā and figures like him as philosopher-scientists.

8. As far as the Safavid period is concerned, there was important scientific activity in medicine, mathematics, and as recent discoveries have shown cartography. See David King, *The World about the Ka'ba: The Sacred Geography of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming). See also his earlier work, *World Maps for Finding the Direction and Distance to Mecca: Innovation and Tradition in Islamic Science* (Leiden: Brill; London: al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, 1999), pp. 128ff. There is still so much as yet unstudied scientific material in various Islamic libraries that every few years we are presented with major new discoveries that force scholars to revise their whole view of the history of science of a particular period as the work of David King, Rushdi Rashid, and George Saliba over the past three decades has amply demonstrated.

9. For a listing of his works see Mūsawī Mudarris Bihbahānī, op. cit., pp. 107ff.

10. That is why we are not dealing with this fascinating religious scholar, poet, mystic, and scientist in this book. We have discussed briefly his life and works in "School of Isfahan," op. cit., pp. 243ff.

11. For a brief analysis of this major work, see Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, pp. 250ff.

12. Corbin has given a very poetic analysis of the "ecstatic confessions" of Mīr Dāmād in his *En Islam iranien*, vol. 3, pp. 30ff.

13. Many of Mīr Dāmād's works remain, however, in manuscript form. During the last few years more attention is being paid to his writings, and a number of them are beginning to see the light of day. See for example, *Jazāvat va Mavāqīt*, 'Alī Owvjabī (Awjabī) (ed.) (Tehran: Daftar-i Nashr-i Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 2001); *al-Širāṭ al-mustaqīm*, 'Alī Owvjabī (ed.) (Tehran: Daftar-i Nashr-i Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 2002); Sayyid Aḥmad al-'Alawī al-'Āmilī, *Sharḥ al-qabasāt*, Ḥāmid Nāji Iṣfahānī (ed.) (Tehran, Mu'assasa-yi Muṭālī'āt-i Islāmī, 1376 [A.H. solar]); and *Taqwīm al-īmān* 'Alī Owvjabī (ed.) (Tehran: Daftar-i Nashr-i Mīrāth-i Maktūb, 2003). This work contains also the text of Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī's *Kashf al-ḥaqā'iq*, which is a commentary upon *Taqwīm al-īmān*, along with an extensive discussion of the works and philosophy of Mīr Dāmād (pp. 22–131 of the introduction) and an account of the life, works, and thought of his student Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī (pp. 138–53 of the introduction).

14. See John Philoponus, *On the Eternity of the Cosmos against Proclus* (Leibzig: Teubner's, 1899); and his *On the Creation of the World* (Leibzig: Teubner's, 1897).

15. One of our great teachers of Islamic philosophy, Sayyid Abū'l-Ḥasan Rafī'ī Qazwīnī, used to say that this is the one problem that has never been satisfactorily solved philosophically in the annals of Islamic philosophy, not even by Mīr Dāmād or Mullā Ṣadrā, who provided a solution very different from that of his master.

16. See Izutsu, op. cit., pp. 8–10. See also Dabashi, op. cit., pp. 609ff.

17. On Mīr Findiriskī, see Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne islamique*, pp. 37ff; and Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, pp. 254–58.

18. For the translation of this Persian *qaṣīdah*, see our *Islamic Intellectual Tradition*, pp. 255–56.

19. See Fathullah Mojtabai, *Hindu Muslim Cultural Relations* (Delhi: National Book Bureau, 1978), pp. 41ff. He also mentions that Mīr Findiriskī assembled a glossary of Sanskrit technical philosophical terms in Arabic and Persian (p. 102).

20. See Corbin, op. cit., p. 37.

21. Ibid., p. 48.

22. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 4, pp. 9ff.

23. For the original text of this work, see Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī and Corbin (eds.), *Anthologie des philosophes iraniens depuis le XVII^e siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. 1 (Tehran and Paris: Department d'Iranologie de l'Institut Franco-iranien de Recherche and Andrien-Maisonneuve, 1972), pp. 63ff. The *Risāla-yi ṣīnā'īyyah* was also edited and published by 'Alī Akbar Shihābī (Tehran: Sa'ādāt, 1317 [A.H. solar]). For an analysis of this text see Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne islamique*, pp. 37ff.

24. *Anthologie*, p. 73 of the Arabic and Persian texts.

25. Mīr Findiriskī concludes this section of his book with a most interesting passage about the relation between true philosophy and prophecy. He first asserts that some have accepted only the inward (*bāṭin*) of religion and rejected the outward (*ẓāhir*), and some the other way around. Both have deviated from the straight path. Then he adds concerning the true philosophers: "And a group have preserved the just mean and marched between the *ẓāhir* and the *bāṭin*, this being the straight path (*ṣīrāṭ-i mustaqīm*). They made the word of the prophets concerning intellectual matters to conform to the intellect and brought out the truth of what the prophets had intended. And in transmitted and practical matters they made their intellects to obey the intellect of the prophets. God—praised and exalted is He—was referring to this

group in the *Fātiḥah* of His Book [the Quran] in His Word, 'Lead us unto the straight path.'" *Anthologie*, p. 77. One hardly need comment upon the significance of this text for how this late tradition of Islamic philosophy viewed the relation between philosophy and prophecy and of course also reason and revelation.

26. On Mullā Rajab 'Alī, see Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne*, pp. 83ff.

27. Selections of his writings and those of some of his contemporaries and the philosophers of the next generation are to be found in Āshtiyānī and Corbin (eds.), *Anthologie des philosophes iraniens*.

28. On Mullā Shamsā, see Ibrāhīm Dībājī, "Aḥwal wa āthār-i Mullā Shamsā Gilānī," in *Collected Papers on Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism*, pp. 52–85. The author lists forty known works of Mullā Shamsā. See also Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne*, pp. 120ff.

29. Corbin has made a profound study of Qāḍī Sa'īd's work on the symbolism of the Ka'bah. See his *Temple and Contemplation*, trans. Philip and Laidain Sherrard (London: KPI, 1986), pp. 183–262. Qāḍī Sa'īd's most important work is perhaps his commentary on the *Kitāb al-tawḥīd* (The Book of Unity) of Ibn Babūyah. Another of his major works is his commentary upon the *Enneads* of Plotinus known to Muslims as *The Theology of Aristotle*. Qāḍī Sa'īd represents another remarkable type of flowering of Islamic philosophy in the full light of the verities of revelation and prophecy. He deserves to be much more studied as a philosopher who was also a theologian and mystic. On Qāḍī Sa'īd in addition to the above cited work, see Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne*, pp. 245ff.; and Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 4, pp. 123–201. This latter chapter is among the most significant written by Corbin on a member of the School of Isfahan.

30. The most important contribution of Fayḍ to philosophy was in the domain of philosophical ethics, while he also wrote some works on Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy. His great fame, however, is primarily in the field of the religious sciences and gnosis. As for Lāhijī, as we saw earlier, he was a great authority in Shi'ite *kalām* and also well versed in *falsafah*.

31. See Ashkiwārī, *Maḥbūb al-qulūb*, 2 vols., Ibrāhīm Dībājī and Ḥamid Ṣidqī (eds.) (Tehran: Daftar-i Nashr-i Mirāth-i Maktūb, 1998–2003).

32. Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 4, pp. 27–28. See also Corbin, "L'idée du Paraclet en philosophie iranienne," in his *Face de Dieu, face de l'homme* (Paris: Flammarion, 1983), especially pp. 341–45.

33. On Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī, see Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne islamique*, pp. 168ff; see Corbin, *Philosophie iranienne et philosophie comparée* (Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy, 2004), pp. 63–66; and Sayyid Aḥmad 'Alawī, *Sharḥ al-qabasāt*, the introduction of Ḥ. Nāji Iṣfahānī. In his edition of *Taqwīm al-imān*, 'Alī Awjabī has provided a scholarly biography and bibliography of 'Alawī, pp. 138–53.

34. See the introduction of Rasūl Ja'fariyān to Mīr Muḥammad Bāqir ibn Ismā'īl Khātūnābādī's translation of the Four Gospels, *Turjuma-yi anā'īl-i arba'ah* (Tehran: Daftar-i Nashr-i Mirāth-i Maktūb, 1375 [A.H. solar]), pp. 20ff.

35. See *ibid.*, p. 22. The second part of this book has been translated into English. See Henry Martyn, *Controversial Tracts on Christianity and Mohammedanism* (Cambridge: Smith, 1824) with additions by Samuel Lee.

36. Rasūl Ja'fariyān in the above cited work refers to two Latin works, one by Bonaventura Malvasia, *Dilucidatio Speculi verum monstrantis . . .*, and the second by Filippo Guandagudi, *Apologia pro Christianan religione . . .*, both published in Rome, the first in 1628, and the second in 1631.

37. The text of this work has been published in *Sālnāma-yi mūrāth-i islāmī-i Īrān* (Tehran, 1374 [A.H. solar]).

CHAPTER 12. MULLĀ ṢADRĀ AND THE FULL FLOWERING OF PROPHETIC PHILOSOPHY

1. See Ibrāhīm Dīnānī, "Daw jaryān-i mutafāwit-i fikrī dar ḥawza-yi falsafī-yi Iṣfahān," in his *Niyāyish-i fīlsūf* (Mashhad: Dānishgāh-i 'Ulūm Islāmī-yi Raḍawī, 1377 [A.H. solar]), chapter 18, pp. 335–50.

2. See S. H. Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī and His Transcendent Theosophy*; H. Corbin ed. and trans., *Le Livre de pénétrations métaphysiques* of Mullā Ṣadrā (Paris: Verdier, 1993); Fazlur Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1976); chapters by Hossein Ziai and Nasr on him in Nasr and Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 635–62; and "Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī," in Nasr, *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, chapter 22, pp. 271–303. There is a whole foundation in Persia devoted to the propagation of his teachings. It organized a major international conference on him in Tehran in 1999 and another one in 2004. It has also planned several conferences on him in London in collaboration with the Islamic Institute of England. The foundation in Iran publishes the journal *Kheradnameh-e Sadra* primarily in Persian, and the Islamic Institute of England publishes the journal *Transcendent Philosophy* in English devoted mostly to the thought of Mullā Ṣadrā and his school.

3. Although Mullā Ṣadrā differed from his teacher on many points, he also followed him closely in many matters as for example in accepting the famous principle "There is no efficient cause in existence except God" (*lā mu'aththir fi'l-wujūd illā 'Llāh*). See 'Alī Awjabī, "Dūrnamā'ī az andīshahā wa naẓariyyāt-i Mīr Dāmād," *Kheradnameh-e Sadra*, vol. 4, no. 14, March 1999, pp. 64–70.

4. Corbin, Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn Āshtiyānī, and myself have provided a bibliography of his writings, the latest in this series being in Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, pp. 39–50. Since the compilation of these lists, however, much research

on manuscripts of his writings has been carried out in Persia. A work that is comprehensive and incorporates not only our earlier efforts but also those of later scholars is Ibrahim Kalin, "An Annotated Bibliography of the Works of Mullā Ṣadrā with a Brief Account of His Life," *Islamic Studies* (Islamabad), vol. 42, no. 1, Spring 2003, pp. 21–62. The most complete bibliographical study of the Ṣadorean corpus is Khurramdashti, Nāhid Bāqirī, and Aṣgharī, Fāṭimah (eds.), *Kitābshināsi-yi jāmi'-i Mullā Ṣadrā* (Tehran: Bunyād-i Ḥikmat-i Islāmī-yi Ṣadrā, 1999).

5. See Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, chapter 3, pp. 55–68.

6. As yet no translation of this work exists in a European language, but one is planned in English. So far the following works of Mullā Ṣadrā have been translated into European languages: *al-Ḥikmat al-'arshiyyah* translated by James Morris as *The Wisdom of the Throne* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); the *Kitāb al-mashā'ir*, trans. Corbin as *Le Livre des pénétrations métaphysiques*, and by Parviz Morewedge (in an unsuccessful translation as far as many passages are concerned) as *The Metaphysics of Mullā Ṣadrā* (New York: Society for the Study of Islamic Philosophy and Science, 1992), and by S. H. Nasr with his own commentary, Ibrahim Kalin (ed.) (forthcoming); *Risālat al-ḥashr*, trans. Christian Jambet as *Se rendre immortel: Traité de la résurrection* (Paris: Fata Morgana, 2000); *Risālah fi ḥudūth al-'ālam*, trans. Sayed Bagher Talgharizadeh as *Die Abhandlung über die Entstehung* (Berlin: Schwarz, 2000); and *Iksir al-'arifin*, trans. William Chittick as *The Elixir of the Gnostics* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2003).

7. On the meaning of *al-ḥikmat al-muta'āliyah*, see Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, chapter 5, pp. 85–97.

8. Several of the works cited above deal in depth with these philosophical ideas. In addition to them, see Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 4, pp. 54–122; and Zailan Moris, *Revelation, Intellectual Intuition and Reason in the Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā*.

9. Corbin, *The Voyage and the Messenger*, trans. Joseph Rowe (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1998), pp. 206–07. For the relation between prophetic philosophy and Mullā Ṣadrā's metaphysics, see the chapter of this book entitled "Prophetic Philosophy and the Metaphysics of Being," pp. 205–15. On Corbin's views on prophetic philosophy, see also his *En Islam iranien*, vol. 1, pp. 43–53; and his *A History of Islamic Philosophy*, pp. 23–104.

10. Although this doctrine is usually associated with Shi'ism as studied extensively by Corbin, especially in the first two volumes of his *En Islam iranien*, it has its correspondence in Sufism within the Sunni world. On this notion in Ibn 'Arabī, see Michel Chodkiewicz, *Seal of the Saints*, trans. Liadain Sherrard (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993).

11. See S. H. Nasr, *Islamic Life and Thought* chapter 15, "Mullā Ṣadrā as a Source for the History of Islamic Philosophy," pp. 169–73.

12. "The secret of the act of being, of existing, must not be sought in the substantive form of the verb (Latin *ens*), but in its imperative form (Arabic *K-N*, Latin *esto*, not *fiat*)." Corbin, *The Voyage and the Messenger*, p. 206.

13. On selections of the writings of Ismā'īlī philosophers, see S. H. Nasr and Mehdi Aminrazavi (eds.), *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia*, vol. 2. Corbin has also dealt in many of his studies with this issue. See for example his *Trilogie ismaélienne* (Tehran-Paris: Andrien Maisonneuve, 1961). That is why in this book we have not devoted a separate chapter to Ismā'īlī philosophy in relation to prophetic philosophy. In speaking of prophetic philosophy in Islam one must, however, always remember the importance of Ismā'īlī philosophy.

14. The complete Quranic commentaries of Mullā Ṣadrā have been assembled and published in one series by Muḥammad Khwājawī as *Tafsīr al-qur'ān al-karīm*, 7 vols. (Qom: Intishārāt-i Bīdār, 1363–67 [A.H. solar]). On Mullā Ṣadrā's Quranic commentaries, see also chapter 7, "The Quranic Commentaries of Mullā Ṣadrā," in my *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī* . . . , pp. 123–35.

15. On angels in Christian thought, see Steven Chase (trans.), *Angelic Spirituality* (New York: Paulist, 2002).

16. See H. Corbin, *Les Motifs zoroastriens dans la philosophie de Sohrawardī*, 1946; and *En Islam iranien*, vol. 2, pp. 81ff.

17. See Fazlur Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam*; and his "Ibn Sīnā," in Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, vol. 1, pp. 498–501.

18. It was Henry Corbin who singlehandedly revived the significance of the imaginal world in the modern West where the term *imagination* is almost always associated with unreality. From the Center for the Study of the Imaginary founded by Gilbert Durand in France to the Temenos Academy founded by Kathleen Raine in Britain, the central influence of Corbin's teachings about the imaginal world or *mundus imaginalis*, based on the teachings of Islamic metaphysicians, is evident. See Corbin's classical study *Alone with the Alone: Creative Imagination in the Sufism of Ibn 'Arabī*. On Ibn 'Arabī's doctrine of the imaginal world, see also W. Chittick, *Imaginal Worlds: Ibn al-'Arabī and the Problem of Religious Diversity*; and his *Self-Disclosure of God* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), chapter 10, pp. 331ff. As mentioned earlier, in order not to cause confusion between the Islamic metaphysicians' view of *khayāl* (imagination), and the modern understanding of this term, many years ago Corbin and I decided to use the adjective *imaginal* rather than *imaginary* for the Islamic concept of imagination, and the term has now come to be accepted in many European languages.

19. See Nasr, *Islamic Life and Thought*, chapter 8, pp. 96ff.

20. On the meaning of trans-substantial motion in relation to natural philosophy and physics, see Ibrahim Kalin, "Between Physics and Metaphys-

ics: Mullā Ṣadrā on Nature and Motion," *Islam and Science*, vol. 1., no. 1, June 2003, pp. 59–90.

21. *En Islam iranien*, vol. 1, pp. 43–53.

22. For a study of Mullā Ṣadrā's philosophy in light of revelation and prophecy, see Zailan Moris, op. cit.; and Christian Jambet, *L'Acte d'être: La philosophie de la révélation chez Molla Ṣadrā* (Paris: Fayard, 2002). See also Joseph Lombard, "The Place of Prophecy in Mullā Ṣadrā's Philosophy of Perception," in Seyed G. Safavi (ed.), *Perception according to Mullā Ṣadrā* (London: Institute of Islamic Studies—Salmān-Āzādeh Publication, 2002) pp. 129–50.

23. The full extent of the influence of Mullā Ṣadrā in India has not as yet been studied. Over four decades ago when I visited some of the major libraries of India specifically in order to study manuscripts of Mullā Ṣadrā, I was amazed at the number of manuscripts of his works in such places as the Rampur and Khudābakhsh Libraries. Among them the number of manuscripts of the *Kitāb al-hidāyah* and the very large number of commentaries and glosses written upon it (much more than in Persia itself) was truly amazing. See Akbar Thubūt, "Sharḥ-i hidāya-yi Mullā Ṣadrā dar Hind," in *Kheradnameh-yi Sadra*, vol. 1, no. 3, March 1996, pp. 100–07; and "Mullā Ṣadrā dar Hindūstān," in S. H. Nasr, *Ma'ārif-i islāmī dar jahān-i mu'āṣir* (Tehran, Shirkat-i Kitābhā-yi Jībī, 1348 [A.H. solar]), pp. 123–1323.

24. See Mahmut Kiliç, "Mullā Ṣadrā dar dā'ira-yi andishmandān-i turk," *Kheradnameh-e Sadra*, vol. 2, no. 8–9, 1997, pp. 102–104.

25. At once logician, epistemologist, metaphysician, poet, and saint, Sabziwārī represents the concrete example of the teaching and the living of prophetic philosophy in a period not far from our own, he having died in 1289/1878. See our *Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, chapter 23, pp. 304–19; and T. Izutsu, "The Fundamental Structure of Sabziwārī's Metaphysics," which is the introduction to *Sharḥ-i ghurar al-farā'id* or *Sharḥ-i manzūmah* of Sabziwārī, part 1, "Metaphysics" (Tehran/McGill University, Montreal: Institute of Islamic Studies, Tehran Branch, 1969), pp. 1–152. This is the most extensive and masterly treatment of Sabziwārī's metaphysics in a European language. See also Ghulām Ḥusayn Riḍā Nizhād, *Ḥakīm Sabziwārī* (Tehran: Sanā'ī, 1371 [A.H. solar]).

There is definitely a need for an extensive monographic study in the English language on this remarkable figure.

CHAPTER 13. FROM THE SCHOOL OF ISFAHAN TO THE SCHOOL OF TEHRAN

1. On this important figure who was at once philosopher, theologian, gnostic, and poet, see S. H. Nasr, "The School of Isfahan," in *The Islamic Intellectual Tradition in Persia*, pp. 258–62; and Fayḍ Kāshānī, *Uṣūl al-ma'ārif*,

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Seyyed Hossein Nasr

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