

T.N.K.

THE ISMAILI SOCIETY

SERIES B. No. 6

SIX CHAPTERS

or

Shish Fasl

also called

Rawshana'i-nama

by

Nasir-i Khusraw

Persian Text, edited and translated into English, by

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NOTICE

The aim of the "Ismaili Society", founded in Bombay on the 16th February 1946, is the promotion of independent and critical study of all matters connected with Ismailism, that is to say, of all branches of the Ismaili movement in Islam, their literature, history, philosophy, and so forth. The Society entirely excludes from its programme any religious or political propaganda or controversy, and does not intend to vindicate the viewpoint of any particular school in Ismailism. The "Ismaili Society" propose to publish monographs on subjects connected with such studies, critical editions of the original texts of early Ismaili works, their translations, and also collections of shorter papers and notes. Works by various authors are accepted for publication on their merits, i. e. the value of their contribution to the knowledge of Ismailism. It is a consistent policy of the "Ismaili Society" to encourage free exchange of opinions and ideas so long as they are based on serious study of the subject. It may be noted that the fact of publication of any work by the "Ismaili Society" does not by itself imply their concurrence with, or endorsement of, the views and ideas advanced therein.

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PREFACE.

This booklet offers the text and a translation of yet another, apparently genuine work of Nasir-i Khusraw which has hitherto remained unknown. It explains briefly and clearly the author's philosophic outlook, and is thus a valuable key to the understanding of his other works, and of his position in Ismailism. To help the students, a detailed index of technical terms and all expressions which appear to be peculiar to the author, or are used by him in a special sense, has been provided.

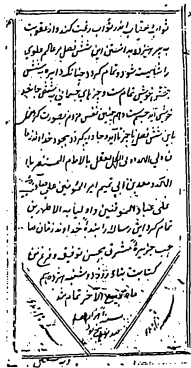
The text in this edition had to be printed in accordance with those archaic usages in orthography which were current in Nasir's own time, i. e. the fifth c. A. H./eleventh c. A. D., namely, without the use of the "Persian" letters, p, ch, zh and g. This was forced upon us by circumstances. Unsurmountable difficulties, almost the complete impossibility of printing anything, especially Persian or Arabic texts, in India, induced us to try to print this booklet in Cairo. In Cairo, however, although there was no scarcity of facilities for printing in Arabic type, only very few presses were equipped with necessary

"Persian" letters. Thus we were confronted with two alternative possibilities, either of availing ourselves of the opportunity of printing the book without those letters, or of giving up the idea of printing the text. We chose the first because in the case of a work of Nasir-i Khusraw the use of archaic orthography was surely quite legitimate.

I have again to acknowledge my sincere and profound gratitude to the "Ismaili Society" of Bombay for their generous patronage and invaluable assistance in my studies of Ismailism, especially in hard times such as these.

Bombay, the 1st Sept. 1948.

W. IVANOW.



The last page of the copy "A".

چمن نوبه سپهر نیست با قمر با بر سپهر
 در دل بار اگر در فرا باشد نشسته
 مسلمانان در حقیقت
 بعویت کوهن باین شش فصل تا جزب مجرب اید و بجا
 و اندر در خود خداوند زمان ولی الله و بی العقل با امام
 استفسر الله معہ بن ابی تیمر و ابوالموئین صلوات الله
 علی عباده المؤمنین و اولیایہ الامم من تمام کربان
 رسالہ بندہ خداوند زمان سماج جبریت
 متوقف بحسن توفیق و فراموشی است
 غزلت شکر روزگار نام
 و بنسبت بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم گفتار اول
 بنام کردگار یا کردگار که هست از وہم فکر و گفتار
 نمود اول نمود آخر زبیرا تا اول بود آخر زبیرا
 کجا اورا بخشیم سر زبون که هست سر زبون جان جان

INTRODUCTION.

The Work. In my booklet, "Nasir-i Khusraw and Ismailism", published in January 1948 in series 2 of the "Ismaili Society", no. 5, pp. 51-52, I have already discussed the contents of the *Shish-Faṣl*, the question of its authorship, and the strange fact that its real title is the *Rawshanā'ī-nāma*, i. e. the same as that of the well-known didactic poem of Nasir. I do not therefore consider it necessary to enter again into a full discussion of these points here. I would like only to recall the fact that Nasir's authorship of this work may be accepted with a fair degree of confidence on the basis of three proofs. One is the tradition current amongst the Ismailis of Central Asia (although, we may admit, this is by no means always reliable). The second is the reference to the book *Miftāḥ wa Miṣbāḥ* (on p. 23 of the original text) ¹, which the author mentions as his own composition. This same book is also apparently several times referred to as the author's own work: in the *Khwānu'l-Ikhwān*, ² although here the two parts of the title are referred to separately: *Miṣbāḥ* on pp. 20, 113, 116, and *Miftāḥ* on pp. 148 and 153.

The third, and perhaps the most convincing proof that the book is by Nasir, is found in the language and diction of the treatise, together with the terminology. Its diction closely resembles that of the *Gushā'ish wa Ruhā'ish* and the *Khawānī-l-Ikhwān*, belonging perhaps to the same period as those books, in Nasir's activities. Nor does its language differ much from that of the *Zāda'l-musāfirin*, and, to a smaller extent, of the *Wajh-i dīn*. In the case of the latter two such difference may be explained by the fact that in these two works a considerable proportion of the text appears to be either a literal or very close translation from the Arabic, and this, as usual, very much affects its phraseology and diction. Generally speaking, Nasir's language is very individual, so that it is difficult to think that anyone else would chance to write in exactly his style. To check my own impressions, I have consulted some of my learned Persian friends who are in a position to give an authoritative opinion. All of them, including Dr. Hasan Taqi-Zada, who has done so much work on Nasir, agree that the language is his.

It should be noted, however, that we cannot be certain about the peculiarities of Nasir's language until we find really old copies of his prose works. Those which we possess at present, both those which have been preserved in the Ismaili community on the Upper Oxus and those in the Constantinople

libraries, have passed through repeated re-copying by inferior scribes. This particularly applies to the pious Badakhshanis. The Persian of their religious literature is a foreign language to them, speaking, as they do, various local dialects. Being mostly people of very little education, they often misunderstand the text and commit many errors while re-copying it. And, what is much worse, they rarely hesitate to introduce their "corrections", sometimes of the widest kind, which finally upset the reliability of the text.

The Language. For the reasons mentioned above we must exercise much caution in attributing various features of our copies to the original. We may not even be perfectly certain concerning such archaic usages as all these *hami*, *andar*, *sipas* and *mar-rā*, because these have long since become traditional in Badakhshan, and are used almost automatically. There are, of course, genuine archaisms in the text which one would hardly expect to be deliberately introduced by uneducated copyists. Examples of these are the suffix *-i* "of historical narrative", or forms of syncopated Perfect tense, as in (p. 16) ... *nām-i Awwal az 'Aql isfādasī*, or (p. 35) ... *'ālam az gashan āsūdasī*.

An interesting feature are the occasional instances of the unusual position of the negation in the sentence, if this is not due to the sentence being a literal translation from an Arabic original. We see on p.

6: ... na uz nist bu-hast ziwund, or, ibid.: ān-chi mar-i-rā Jadd bāshad wa khudāy bāshad, instead of khudāy nu-bāshad.

There are many instances of the perfective verbal prefix *bi-* being used with forms which in modern Persian works do not take it, as in (p. 52) *ī. bi-rasānanda-i* (a translation of the Arabic *ana mundhir*).

There are many cases in which the adjective precedes the substantive, contrary to the rules of Persian grammar, or participles receive the form of the Plural (as, p. 5, *āfarīda-hā*). There are many cases in which the form of the comparative degree in the adjectives, with the suffix *-tar*, is used in the sense of the superlative degree, not implying any comparison.

An interesting word appears thrice (pp. 22 and 35), *j-a-k-u-l* (*jākīl*, *chākīl*, *jāgīl*, *chāgīl*, *jākual*, *jāgu'al*, *chākual*, *chāgu'al?*), glossed "sharaf wa būlā-tar," p. 22. I have not found it in any dictionary, and my inquiries in Tehran from learned Persians elicited no reliable information.

The Manuscripts. The text in this edition is based on two copies, both coming from Çanjur. One (A), on the whole offering better readings, although also a very poor copy, is dated Monday, the 18th Rab. II, 1295/ the 21st April 1878. This date has been crudely altered, obviously with the view of making it much earlier, so that it is impossible to be quite certain of it.

It contains 69 pages of greyish Khoqand paper, 20 by 12 cm., 15 lines to a page, 8 cm. long, within marginal lines. There are a few occasional additions on the margins.

The other copy (B), undated, is obviously older. It systematically follows the archaic way of writing *ch* as *j*, although *p* is invariably differentiated from *b*. Otherwise there is not much difference between it and A. The volume, which also includes an unfinished copy of the poem *Raushanā'i-nāmus*, consists of 84 pages, 16 by 11 cm., 12 to 14 lines to a page, about 7 to 8 cm. long, and is written on thick brownish Indian paper. It is written by several different hands, mostly quite unformed and childish, and has many marginal notes, not connected with the text.

Real variants between the text in these two copies are very rare, although there are very many discrepancies obviously attributable to negligent copying: single words or parts of sentences being omitted, or repeated, or transposed. As usual, Arabic quotations are often so mis-spelt as to become almost unrecognizable, and the orthography of Arabic words is mostly "phonetic".

The Edition. My aim in preparing an edition from these two inferior copies was simply to make the text accessible to students. It is obviously futile to strive to do more than this. No useful purpose can be served by the postponement of the publication of

the text until better copies are found. Even a bad text is better than none. Generally speaking, no one can take it upon himself to give a really reliable edition of any text except a well qualified scholar whose mother tongue is the language of the text. In this respect we still remain too much under the influence of the ideas which were current a hundred years ago and were based on the practice of the edition of Greek and Latin works. These, however, are in a different position because these languages are no longer spoken. It is quite different with still living languages such as Persian or Arabic. Nothing is so futile and ridiculous as the supposed "critical" editions of Persian or Arabic works by persons who even do not speak these languages, let alone "feel" them, and derive their information only from dictionaries, with all their inaccuracies and errors.

The Contents. The author repeatedly mentions (cf. pp. 3, 47, 57 and 58 of the original text) his determination to make his opusculum as concise, simple and plain as possible, so that its contents can be understood and learnt by the disciples, obviously of no high education, even without the aid of a teacher. Obviously in line with this he concentrates his attention only on certain questions to which he attributes special importance, and also generously, although not systematically and thoroughly, translates many original Arabic terms and expressions into Persian.

With all this, although the *Shish-faṣṭ* produces an impression of exceptional clarity and simplicity as compared with other prose works of Nāṣir-i Khusrāw, the student may find it much below the standard the author wished to achieve. The style is very uneven. In some places the author is so abrupt that it is difficult to understand what he really means. In other places he indulges in endless involved sentences, so interrupted by quotations and translations of the verses of the *Qomn* that he forgets to finish them. Of course, much of this slipshod and negligent style may be attributed to the imperfections of copyists. So many lengthy sentences begin with *chunān-ki*, or other similar expressions, and it is more than probable that many of these expressions were automatically inserted by scribes who did not properly understand the argument. It is, however, undeniable that involved sentences are a typical feature of Nasir's writings, and form a great obstacle to the easy comprehension of his thought.

The same applies to his good intention of making his work intelligible to the uneducated by translating Arabic terms. In this respect he is even worse than in the matter of style. Nearly all the really technical theological terms have been left without a translation. This, of course, would be quite legitimate because many of them in Nasir's times had already been well acclimatised in Persian, but amongst those which he has

not translated, or even explained, we find some which would hardly be familiar to a non-specialist, as in the case of *uḥa*, *ḥudd*, etc., while, on the other hand, not much advantage seems to be derived from translating such words as *zamān* (*rūzgār*) or such common expressions as *khilqat*, *ḥarakat*, etc., by *āswinish*, *ḡubish*, and so forth.

Thus his good intentions merely create more difficulties because it is usually quite uncertain whether there is any difference in meaning between the Arabic and its Persian equivalent, or whether the author uses this or that word as a technical term or in its plain, colloquial sense. In a philosophic work this, of course, is bound to produce much inconvenience to the student.

In addition to these shortcomings of a purely individual nature, the text, in common with all works on *ḥaqā'iq*, presents much difficulty for understanding and interpretation because of the manner in which the argument suddenly leaps from philosophical matters into the field of theology, only to jump again into the sphere of mythology, Kabbalistic and other superstitious speculations, and so forth. This, however, is directly connected with the structure of the Fatimid Ismaili doctrine. It would be useful to consider it here, and explain its nature.

Highly developed versions of Islamic theology which make use of philosophical speculations for

strengthening their appeal to the more educated circles of society, as in Ismailism, and advanced orthodox doctrine, are highly synthetic compounds in which the stratification of the ingredients may often be traced with ease. In all such attempts at analysis we must start with the axiom that all such doctrines were Islam first and last, just plain Islamic doctrine accepted as a whole with all its details, in letter and spirit. All philosophical, superstitious, mythological, mystical and other elements were only auxiliary means to strengthen and support the basic beliefs of Islam. They were used, or tolerated, only in so far as they served this purpose. All that could not be reconciled with purely Islamic elements was ruthlessly disowned and rejected, regardless of the fact whether this was consistent with the philosophy adopted by the school, or not. Purely religious elements unreservedly dominated and overruled everything. Thus, when speaking of the "philosophy" of Ismailism, Sufism, and so forth, we must always realize that these were not independent and internally consistent systems, but pieces and fragments of second hand wisdom introduced to amplify this or that religious dogma or idea. This particularly applies to Ismailism in which such philosophy and references to mythological or Kabbalistic speculations were needed to develop one particular aspect of Islam, namely its theocratic basis in the form of the doctrine of Imamāt.

What was Greek philosophy at an earlier period, was by the time Islam began to appreciate it and take interest in it, nothing but an accumulation of debased and popularized knowledge, richly mixed with all kinds of heterogeneous elements. Coming into Islam almost exclusively through the Christian Church and gnostic sects, it was automatically carrying with it many varied precipitations. Some of these could find a favourable chance to develop, as was the case with the ancient device of allegorical interpretation of myths, scriptures, rites, practices, everything, what in Islamic milieu has come to be known as *ta'wil*. It was, of course, neither an invention of the Ismailis, nor was it confined only to them, but practiced, often tacitly, even by the most orthodox specialists in Quran exegesis.

The method of *ta'wil* to a great extent served as a kind of mortar, keeping together pieces of the most heterogeneous extraction and combining them into a finished system. In the *Shish-fa'il* it is used only in very moderate doses, obviously owing to the intention of reducing the size of the work, and especially because the author does not deal much with the theory of Imamate, where it is mostly used.

The *Shish-fa'il* is obviously compiled from various popular *da'wat* works which were available to the author, but for some special reason he did not plan it on the usual pattern of the *haji'iq* works of a popular

nature, of which we possess many. They form a concise systematic treatise on the doctrine of Ismailism. Narir wanted to deal here only with the questions of the nature of the soul and its relation to the Godhead, therefore he leaves out many other aspects of the doctrine, especially the theory of Imamate. It is necessary to note that although there are undoubtedly many gnostic and Marcionite ideas implicitly accepted in the argument, the author completely disregards such cardinal problems as the origin of evil and of matter. He does not even mention these important subjects. In his treatment of the story of creation and the soul, he skilfully takes refuge in purely religious speculations every time he comes to a difficult place as far as philosophy is concerned. Certain points remain quite dubious, and raise questions which find no answers.

We see that Satan is never mentioned, the reason for "disobedience" of souls, their ultimate fate, and so forth, remaining obscure. A great deal is written, with many repetitions, about the relation between the *'Aql-i Kull* and *Nafs-i Kull*, the part of the human soul in the process of the gradual purification of the *Nafs* from its primordial defect, etc. The latter, as one may understand, depends on the gradual transference of the elements of the *'Aql-i Kull* to deserving souls in whom alone the synthesis of the elements of the *'Aql* and *Nafs* can take place. But there is nota

word of explanation as to how such independent "influence" (*isthar*) works, obviously over the head of the *Nafs*? If it is quite automatic in its working, how then comes the discrimination between souls, and why do some of them become "disobedient"?

Terminology. We have already mentioned the author's treatment of various terms which he has to use. Before speaking of his terminology, it seems to me, it would be useful to draw the attention of students to an important point which, to my knowledge, has not yet been properly discussed. Naturally enough, many technical terms have the form of Arabic *maṣḍar*s which are regarded by grammarians as "names of the action", verbal nouns, such as "work" or "working" from the verb "to work", or "eating" from the verb "to eat". In the Arab *maṣḍar*, however, one very often finds that it implies not only the action, but also the object of it. For instance, in Sufic language, *ishq*, lit. "loving," "loving admiration," often denotes beauty, the object of the loving admiration. *Imān* is not merely believing, but also the object of believing, belief.

With this information we may find an easier approach to the rendering of many of these technical terms into English. We may begin with those which occur so many times in the text, "Aql-i Kull and *Nafs-i Kull*, usually translated by "Universal Reason" and "Universal Soul," terms which hardly convey any clear idea. We can easily see that *aql*, originally "reason",

may also imply the object of the reasoning, or the result of it, the "reasoned", or, in application to the expression "Aql-i Kull,"—"the Rational Harmony of Existence". This would much more nearly convey the idea.

Similarly, *nafs*, which in Arabic already has so many meanings besides that of "soul", if treated as a *maṣḍar*, implying the object, may be translated as emanation, with (to be noted) strong element of "materialisation", this is why the *Nafs* is the creator of the material world. The term *nafs* is also used in many different ways here, as "soul" in the ordinary sense, *nafs-i juz'ī* (individual soul)⁵ or as a psychological or biological faculty, etc.

The same may be applied to the difficult expression *ḥudūd*, plur. *ḥudūd*, which the author uses so much, never giving any explanation. In addition, he uses it in various senses. This term, meaning limit, boundary line, frontier, etc., cannot be rendered by such equivalents, which have no meaning in the context. But it becomes clear if we note that it implies not only the limit, but also the "limited", what it limits, i. e. in our text the "sphere of competence, action, authority." Thus *ḥudūd-i 'ulwī* may be aeons, supreme principles of creation, while the *ḥudūd-i sūfī*, in the indiscriminate use of the author, may mean the phenomena of this world, or also Prophets and other super-men raised by the *Nafs* in this world.

There is an enigmatic triad *jahl*, *foth*, and *khayâl*, which regularly re-appears in early treatises on the *haqā'iq*, but is never explained. In fact, explanation usually consists, in the works of Nasir and of others, in the statement that they are symbolically associated with the angels Mikā'il, Jabrā'il and Isrā'il. Despite all my search, I so far have been unable to find any sensible explanation, and it appears to me that here we have to deal with erroneous translation of some Greek or Syriac terms. They are undoubtedly of a gnostic origin, and appear in Manichaeism, in exactly the same combination as here, i. e. belonging to the same order as the 'Aql and Nafs: Reason, Sense, Intention, Thought and Imagination. The parallel is complete if we give *Nafs* the meaning of "sense", which is quite permissible ⁶.

It is obviously very difficult to decide in every individual case whether this or that expression is used by the author as a technical term, or not, and whether he attaches some special sense to this or that ordinary word which is quite commonly used. The author, with his haphazard manner of translating certain terms, or leaving them without a translation, does not help us. Sometimes he is so ambiguous and so much corruption has crept into the text that the translator can only depend on intuition. It would be a great achievement to prepare a detailed index of Nasir's terminology from those prose works which

have been edited so far. This would help us very much with the edition of further texts.

* In order to make it easier for consultation, the terms are here arranged alphabetically.

Āfaridgār, *khāliq* and *zāni'* are used to convey the idea of the creator, maker. We may note the "Marcionist" tendency, rigorously carried through, by which God, the One, is never recognized as the direct creator, the maker of the world. This is the task of the *Nafs-i Kull*. There are, however, expressions such as on p. 57: *āfaridgār* ki 'Aql ast (obviously also indirectly). The verb "to create" is expressed, in addition to *āfaridan*, by *bu-husht āwirdan*, or (52) *farāz āwirdan*. The verb *sākhan* is not used here in this sense.

āfarinish not only refers to the act of creation, but also to its result, the creation = the created world. On p. 48 an expression occurs *āfarinish tā'if kardan*, to weaken the creation, i. e. obviously to obstruct and slow down the tempo of the evolution of the created world.

'ahd-i Imām-i zamān (p. 55) or 'ahd-i Khudāwandi-zamāna (p. 56), i. e. the oath of allegiance to the Imam, unfortunately for the student, are not commented upon, obviously because the matter does not come under the head of philosophy.

ākhirat, the hereafter, life after death, is not discussed, and here appears only once, p. 34, in the expression *rūz-i ākhirat*, obviously the Judgment Day.

'*ālam*, world (only twice replaced by the Persian term *jahān*, on p. 45: *ṣūrat-i jahān*, and p. 63: in *jahān*). The term is used very loosely, in a colloquial manner, in the sense of the realm, sphere, region, as (54) '*ālam-i haqiqat*, (39) '*ālam-i nafs*, etc. There are three '*ālams*: the '*ālam-i jismānī*, or *sūfi*, or *kathif*, i. e. the material, visible world. '*Ālam-i 'uluwī*, or *latif*, is the world of the higher realities. And '*ālam-i suwūm* (11) which is the '*ālam-i dīn*, the "third world", or the world of religion, obviously simply means the religion of Islam.

amihāl, p. 50, the Plur. of *muthal* (10), allegory, symbol, prototype.

'*Aql*, by itself, is very often used instead of the full term, the '*Aql-i Kull* (never *Kullī*). It is the '*Aql* so-to-speak, written with a capital *A*, as against ordinary human reason, '*uql*, which is only on a few occasions specially defined as '*aql-i juzwī* (49), or '*uql-hā-y-i juzwī* (i. b. d.).

ārām (28) is the opposite to *jambish*, which is Nasir's equivalent for the Arabic term *harakat*, and thus must be an equivalent of the usual *sukūn*. These two Arabic terms for some reason are avoided in this text. Occasionally *ārim* is also used as an equivalent of *rāhur*, rest, acquiescence, bliss.

Asās, *Asāsīn*, is used very often, but never translated into Persian. Incidentally his attributes are mentioned as (52) *khudāwand-i ta'wīl*, or (54,55) *nigāh-bān wa parwārdgār-i in hama huṭūd*

aql, *uql-hā*, is used both in an ordinary sense, and as a term relating to the higher realities, as in (52) *aql-hā-y-i 'ālam-i 'uluwī*, obviously the main or basic principles of the higher world.

athar, Plur. *āthār*, has been already discussed above. Note the combination on p. 17: *athar wa fīl*.

Awwal, the First, i. e. the first creation, '*Aql*, *Awwal Hasti*, or (51) *Awwal-i hasti-hā*.

Bāb is mentioned several times, but only once defined as *bāb-i Inṣām* (53).

bān and *qāhīr* are here used only on a few occasions, without special explanations.

bay'at ba-Khudāy is here mentioned only once, p. 46, and it is not clear what connection it has with the '*uhd*.

bāz-gashr, obviously for the Ar. *ruj'at*, return, as in *bāz-gashr-i nafs-i mardūm* (35), or *bāz-gashan-i nafs-i juzwī* (36) here only means the final re-union of the individual soul with its source, the '*Nafs-i Kull*, and has nothing to do with any idea of re-birth.

buẓurgwār, great, eminent (26,27,35,44) has here the meaning of Divinely predestined greatness, in the case of great Prophets and Imams, *buẓurgwār mardūm*, in whom the '*Nafs-i Kull* attains the peak of its perfection.

chiz, thing, is used here (14,58) only colloquially, not in the sense of a philosophical term.

dā'ira-y-i Imām-i zamān (56) is a strange expression which probably does not occur in Arabic works on *ḥaqā'iq*, and obviously means the period of the office of an Imam, parallel to the *ḥawr* of a *Nā'iq*. In the Fatimid works it is usually expressed by the term *waqt*, or, as in old works, *qirān*. Cf. my "Studies in Early Persian Ismailism", 1948, p. 48.

dar-khūrd (7, 13, 36, 45) covers a number of ideas such as relation, harmony, fitting in, coinciding.

dhāt here means not only substance (18, *dhāt-i 'Aql-i Kull*), but also matter, material substance, as in *dhāt-i nafs-i 'Alī* (18), where it simply means "flesh".

gawhar, substance, matter, is also used loosely here: *gawhar-kumanda-y-i gawhar* (8), i. e. (the one) who has made matter what it is. But there are expressions such as *gawhar-i la'if* (= *Nafs*) and *gawhar-i kuthif* (= 'alam), and even *gawhar-i nafs-i nāmīya* (3).

ghāyat wa nihāyat (51-53) do not always mean the highest or finest grade of development of something, but often something into which the object is transformed, as in the sentence: fire is the *ghāyat* of air.

ḥadd, Plur. *ḥudūd*, has already been discussed above. Here it is often used colloquially, and may be translated by "stage", as in *ḥadd-i quwwat*, *ḥadd-i fī'*, *ḥadd-i rīzlat*, etc.

ḥus alternates with *hasī*, and it is difficult to see whether this implies any special difference in the mean-

ing, or is due to the negligence or bad Persian of the copyists. Its opposite is *nisī* and *nisū*. It is not only an abstract notion, as in *ḥast gashan*, but often means creation, being, as in *ḥast-i mukhust*. *Ḥast-i-hā* simply means beings, and sometimes even, as on p. 19, psychical faculties.

ḥikmat-lā (48-50) is a colloquialism: wonders, intricate things.

ḥisr-i dhāt (17), the final limit of properties of a substance, apparently in the sense of the limit beyond which it cannot act.

judā' (14-17) here means individuality rather than separate existence.

junbidan, *junbish*, *junbanda*, which is so often used, appears to be Nasir's translation of the Arabic verb *ḥ-r-k* with its derivatives, which he decidedly avoids, only once (27) using the word *muḥarrrik*. We have seen that its opposite is *ārām*.

kanāra, which literally means border, edge, here is strangely used in the sense of designation (58): *ḥarf kanāra-y-i chiz bāshad*. Is it an unsuccessful "correction" for *kanāya*, allusion, suggested by the further discussions of the Prophet occupying the position on "the edge" between the two worlds, the lower and the higher?

kār-kard (40), in the sense of "production", is probably used in accordance with the "Marcionistic" tendency, to avoid expressions such as *makhfiq*, *khilqat*,

khulāwand is freely used in the sense of the Ar. *ṣāhib*. The latter appears only once (69) *ṣāhib shinākhi-sa-i kalima*, which is found in the concluding lines of the treatise where traditionally Arabic terms are used for the "pomp".

kull, the Arabic word meaning whole, entirety, completeness. Here it is repeatedly used in the sense of the source of something, or its genus (*jins*), as in *kull-i khwīsh* (35,36,39,48,49). This may be regarded as an individual feature of this text.

mānand is sometimes used as a substantive, instead of *mānandagī*, similarity, not as an adjective.

marūtib-i dīn (57) is an old *ḥaqā'iq* term (*marātib-i dīn*) which does not mean the "degrees" of religion, but its basic principles or dogmas. The word *marātib*, Plur. from *marātib*, here does not appear in its more common sense of a "step, stair, degree", but in the sense of "position, place in, office, dignity," from the original *r-i-b*, to fix, make firm. It means simply "the foundations of the religion", without any idea of their relative importance among themselves.

mardum, in the sense of human being, man, is here systematically used instead of *ādām*, *insān*, etc. *Mardumi* means humanity (28), and *mardumān* = men.

markaz-i zanin (54) does not mean the centre of the earth, in the modern sense, but the core of it.

miyānujī is here commonly used in the sense of Ar. *wāsi'a*.

mi'min here means an Ismaili.

Nafs, like (simply) *'Aql*, is here often used alone instead of the full term, *Nafs-i Kullī*. Sometimes the latter term is used in the form of *Nafs-i Kull*, apparently without any change in the meaning. Instead of *nafs-i jizwī* Nasir uses *nafs-i mardum*, human soul, and instead of *nafs-i nātiqa*—*nafs-i sukhān-gī'y*, while *n. ḥisyyū* and *nāmiya* remain untranslated.

nist, *nisti* (cf. under *hast*) in this text very often appears to mean a vacuum, non-existence in a crude material sense, emptiness from material objects. It is this meaning which, in the "Marcionist" tendency of the author, compels him to the theory that God has not created the world from *nist*.

nu-jām, defect, is only once replaced by its Persian equivalent (45) *ziyān*.

rūzgār on several occasions is used in the sense of "time" (21,26,57), although *zamān*, alternating with *zamāna*, is more common.

zūrat is loosely and colloquially used in the sense of either idea or form.

zamāni is often used for *zamānat* or *zamānī*.

yakī, with the accent on the last syllable, in the sense of oneness (1,19), alternates with *yakūnagī*, *far-dānīyyat*.

zamān and *zamāna* are indiscriminately used in expressions such as *Imām-i* or *Khulāwand-i zamān* or *zamān*, apparently without any change in the meaning.

¹ By the expression "original text" I mean the combined text based on the copy A, described further on. The pagination is according to A. It has been thoroughly marked both in the edited text and in the translation.

² Edited in Cairo, in 1940, by Dr. Yahyá Kharráshib, from a copy dated 862/1458 in the Aya Sophia Library, Constantinople. I may add that since I wrote my comments in the preceding booklet on the inaccuracies of the text, I have had the chance to examine the photograph of the original copy, and found that the errors are due not to the editor, but to the text itself. Only the discovery of another copy may possibly help us to correct them.

³ The usual type of literal translation from Arabic into Persian, especially in quotations from the Coran, must be quite familiar to every student of Persian. Such literal translations at once leap to the eye because of their unnatural order of words and often peculiar expressions, rarely used in ordinary style. A question may be raised in connection with this: many of my learned Egyptian friends acquainted with the original Ismaili works, comment emphatically on their exhibiting traces of what may be called "foreign accent", i. e. the use of expressions and order of words which are not in agreement with the spirit of literary Arabic. If this be so, may it not be traced to something analogous to the corruption of Persian in the literal translations from Arabic mentioned above? It is true of course, that many eminent Ismaili authors were of Persian origin. But it would be interesting to study the question and find out whether at least some of such deviations may be attributed to excessive subordination of their Arabic to the foreign usages of the language of the original, which might have been Persian.

⁴ As the religious literature of the Badakhshani Ismailis is in Persian, and apparently was never translated into local dialects, its Persian has become a sort of "church language". As in many instances of a similar situation in the West and elsewhere, such "church languages" are usually extremely conservative, and resist all attempts at modernisation. In practice, all such archaic usages are automatically repeated in copying, without any "feeling" for their original meaning.

⁵ The term *jami*, "partial", is more in the nature of the opposite to *khali* rather than the bearer of an independent meaning. Every author of works on *haqiqi* emphasises the fact that the *Nusus Kull* certainly must not be imagined as the sum of all *jami nusus*. The same applies to the *usuli-nusus*.

⁶ It is a well-known fact that anti-Fatimid propaganda made great capital out of tearing out of their context in Ismaili works or fraudulently mis-interpreting isolated expressions, trying to prove that these were taken from Dualism, Zoroastrianism or Manichaeism, especially in connection with the *Shu'ubiyya* bogey. While studying Ismaili literature and its mentality one feels unable to give the slightest credence to the theory of borrowing, especially conscious and deliberate borrowing of elements from such sources as Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc. If, however, there are occasionally instances of striking affinity, this is due not to borrowing, but to the spontaneous development of related elements derived from a common source. In the case of Manichaeism, e. g., such parallelism is obviously due to the influence of early gnostic ideas which have been to such a great extent absorbed by nascent Islam as a whole.

TRANSLATION.

In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

Praise be to God whose names (i. e. attributes) are manifest while their real nature (*ma'ni*) is hidden from us. They reveal themselves in creation, while remaining (directly) inaccessible to perception by the (human) senses. He, God, is nearer to us when we realize His might, reflecting over our own helplessness, but becomes remote from us when we want to penetrate (the mystery of) His being a Creator through (what we know of) His creation. He is the Lord to whom applies neither anything applicable to material bodies, nor anything that may be predicated of spirits. Everything (in the world) is His creation, and He, in His oneness (*yaki-y-i khwish*), is above the categories of when, how and how much.

Thanks be to Him for the benefit (*ni'mat*) which He has bestowed upon us by having sent His chosen Prophet to awaken us from the sleep of ignorance, in order that we might recognize the greatness of His bounty (*minnat*). It was shown to us in His having, by His generosity and exaltedness, brought us from non-existence into being, and opened to us the door of eternal life by His recognition (*shinukhi-i khwish*). Also for His having generously given us, in His might, all that He had created in (His act of) the creation. For

His having shown to us the way of seeking for it (i. e. recognition of God) through association [2] with His Chosen ones. And for His having enabled us to receive that blissful and eternal gift, and to find a place in the abode of eternity by (His) wisdom (*hikmat*). Thanks be to Him, such thanks as are worthy of the grace which He has bestowed (upon us)! May He protect us against the intrigues of devilish people, scheming antichrists!

Glory be to the protector of protectors, that light of the souls of the obedient slaves of God, the guide of those who have strayed from the right path, the Apostle of God to humanity and the Jinns, Muhammad Muzaffar,—peace be upon him! And, after him, upon the Commander of the Faithful (*Amir al-mu'minin*), on the one who subdued tyrants, the one who was the ascetic amongst ascetics, the devotee amongst devotees, the *mujtabi* of the righteous and the *qibla* of those who recite the prayers of the Truth (*namāz-guzārān-i Haqqiqat*), 'Alī Murtaqā! And upon their descendants who are the leaders of humanity, the interpreters of the Book of God, the trustees of the Wisdom of guidance and truth (*'ilm-i hudā wa sidq*), the Imams in both worlds and the lieutenants of God (*khalīfatān-i Khudāy*). May continuous praise to them remain to the end of times, so long as the skies are rotating, so long as the elements support the continuation of life, and the spheres by their movement measure absolute eternity!

The beginning of the Book. Some devotees of the true Imam and Lord of that source of life, the guardian of the community of his Grandfather from the evil wrought by the devils in corporeal form, inquired about the human soul: did it exist before it was born in a (human) body, [3] or not? Why has it appeared in a human body? Where shall it go after the separation from that body, and what will then happen to it? What should be (the right) belief concerning the oneness of God (*tawhīd*)? What should they know of the spiritual and material elements (*hudū'at-i laṣīf wa kuthīf*) of the universe, in order that the soul, after its separation from the body, should attain a reward? Is it those basic principles (*hudūd*) of the creation which are the object of our worship? Why should the Command of God (i. e. the Creative Volition, *amr*) deserve worship for attainment of the reward (*thawāb*), while neither does any advantage accrue to God from worship, nor any loss from disobedience?

We shall answer these questions in the most concise manner in order that it may not be difficult for them to acquire (*ba-yād giriftan*) that knowledge, and that every one may be able to study (*ma'līm-i khwīsh gardānidan*) at any time¹. We have found that it is sufficient to answer here only those questions which have been put to us above. And we have given to this book the title the Book of Enlightenment (*Ra'ishanā'ī-nāma*), because its contents are intended to bring light

to dark minds, and remove the rust of ignorance from all hearts.

We have divided this treatise [4] into six chapters (*fasl*), arranging the material in such a way that it will be easy to find each of those subjects. We pray God to help us in this, through the intercession of the Lord of the Truth, the Sun of the World of Religion, the Imam of mankind, praying God for assistance, Ma'add Abū Tamīm (i. e. al-Mustansir bi'l-Īh), the Commander of the Faithful (*Amīr al-mu'mīnīn*)! The Glory of God be upon him so long as the world is at work, so long as the skies rotate, and there is space and those who occupy it! *Wa's-salām!*

The first chapter (p. 4) on the recognition of the Oneness of God.

The second chapter (p. 13) on the Word (*Kalima*).

The third chapter (p. 23) on the Universal Soul (*Nafs-i Kull*) and its work (*jumbish*).

The fourth chapter (p. 30) on the origin of the human soul, endowed with reason (*bā' aql*).

The fifth chapter (p. 48) on the necessity of the existence of a *Nāsiq*, an *Asās* and an *Imām*.

The sixth chapter (p. 59) on reward and punishment (after death), and an explanation of these.

[Note. The headings of the chapters as given here sometimes differ in wording from the headings in the text itself.]

The First Chapter, on the Recognition of the Oneness of God.

We say, by the generosity of the Lord of the time and the ties between him and humanity, the Imam Mustansir bi'l-Īh,—prayers of God be upon Him!—that eternal bliss (ḥaqq) may be attained by the human soul (only) through the recognition of the oneness of God (taḥdīd). This is the knowledge of God, equally removed both from anthropomorphism (*ushbīh*) and also from agnosticism (*ta'sīl*), which divests Him of His true attributes. Such faith (*iḥbāt*), free from both these errors, is the knowledge of God [5] being One. Thou shouldst not say that God is unique by His being perfect either in might or wisdom, while all that is below Him possess only imperfect might (or wisdom). If thou sayest so, then it is implied that might or wisdom is the source of His oneness. (This is wrong, because) everything which depends (for its existence) on any cause (*'illat*) is thus the result of the working of that cause. But God is above being caused by anything, and is Himself the origin of all causes. Therefore it is necessary to know that God's oneness is not defined or limited by anything. It would be better to believe and recognize that oneness belongs to Him not on account of His happening to be unique (of His kind); and this is why we know of His being one. (This is because) everything that has another thing

to match (*just*) it must be of the same kind (*shakl* = pattern) as that thing, so that they would be two, in number and form, a pair of things of one and the same kind (*shakl*). But God neither has a genus (*shakl*), nor is He one of a pair (*just*) with any one else to match Him. No, thou must realize that He is one in the sense that He is the One who brought into existence all the creations (*afarida-hā*), both spiritual and material (*laif wa kathif*), which are subject to counting under the First (*nukhust*) which is the 'Aql-i Kull. The latter is (the principle) which God brought into existence not from nothing (*na az nist ba-hust āward*).² God put its cause (*'illat*, i. e. the cause of its existence) into itself (*andar ū paywast karid*), making it independent of any intermediary cause (*niyānāp*). [6] Thus between the first cause (of the world), i. e. the 'Aql-i Kull, which itself had a cause of its existence (*ma'lūl būd*)...³ Thou must recognize that first cause as the cause of all causes. God Himself, in His oneness (*far-dāmyat*), is free from being either a cause or the result of causation. Know that God has brought into existence that first cause, not from nothing (*na az nist ba-hust āward*). In His oneness He cannot receive any increment (*afzūni*). Even if all beings (*hasi-hā*) disappear, He will not suffer any loss (*nuqsān*) in His oneness, because it is the Ipselty (*huviyyat*) of God which has brought them into being. The categories of cause and caused, property and being in possession of

property, limit and being limited, cannot be either attributed to Him, or denied to Him, or have any likeness to Him. In fact, these categories never possessed such likeness, that He might become greater with the addition of them, or suffer a loss without them. He is beyond being or not-being. And thou must realize that everything to which thou mayest attribute existence, may also be predicated with non-existence as an opposite (*ladid*) state. But if something has no existence (generally), one cannot attribute to it non-existence (i. e. existence or non-existence cannot be attributed to something which does not exist as an idea). This is because existence and non-existence are the opposite of each other. And nothing which has an opposite number (*ladid*) can be a god. Also know that everything that may be thought in association with something else, and cannot be imagined without such association, is called *mulāf ilay-hi*, i. e. associated, related to. Such a thing, however, must be a creation (*malhūq*). God [7] cannot depend on association with anything else (*ilāfar bar na-girad*), except when this is attributed to Him allegorically, or is logically postulated (*az rāh-i majāz wa dar'urat*).⁴ For this reason we say that the world and its creator must both be under the "first caused" (*ma'lūl-i āward*), i. e. 'Aql, because the *Nafs-i Kullī*⁵, which is the builder of the material world (*taqdīr-kunanda'i 'ālam-i jismāni*), has a position below that of the 'Aql. The *Nafs* is in fact the creator

of the world, and the world is its creation (*makhlūq-i ʿālam*). If the world had no relation (*al-rahīqah*) to the *Nafs*, it would be unable to receive its properties from the latter. This connection (*al-rahīqah*) of the world with the *Nafs* is embodied in the idea of *gawhar*, substance. The world is a material substance (*gawhar-i kullīyah*), while the *Nafs* is a spiritual (*lūghīyah*) substance. The *gawhar*, substance of the world, has received (its) form (*ṣūrah*) from the *Nafs*. God, however, is beyond the idea of a (perceptible) substance, *gawhar*. He it is who made the *gawhar* what it is. This is why nothing (*shayʿ*) can be related to Him (in the material world), except in an allegorical sense, or logical construction (*taʿrīf-i dūrīyah*), or owing to the difficulty of expressing thought when speaking on oneness of God, *tawḥīd*.

An illustration of this,—in order to make it clearer and also to prove its truth,—would be the case of a man who were to grasp a handful of dates or straw, and later on were to throw these away. He would still be the same man whether holding them, or having thrown them away. No one would say that when he held a handful of dates or straw he was bigger, [9] or that now, when he no longer holds it, he is smaller. This is because that date or straw is not similar to him. Similarity (*mūnānīyah*) is only possible between (e.g.) human beings, and dissimilarity (e.g.) between man and beast. As dates or straw have no similarity or

dissimilarity with man, no one would say he was bigger while holding these, or smaller without them,—although, however, man has in common with dates and straw the substance of the vegetative *nafs* (*nafs-i nāmiyah*).

For this reason it is impossible to attribute to God being either a cause or the result of causation because both these categories have been produced by Him (*ḥaqīqat-i ʿālam*). He is the All-High, above both these categories, and neither does an advantage accrue to His oneness from any cause or causation, nor, if these are taken away, does it suffer any loss. We are saying all this metaphorically, not discussing the reality (*ḥaqīqat*), because human speech (or reason) cannot deal with matters concerned with *tawḥīd*, dealing with them directly (*ba-ṣarīḥ-i ḥaqīqat*). (Human) speech and speaker are both dependent on what has been created (*ṣarīḥ-i maʿnā*) by Him. Speech (or reason, *nuḡ*) is powerless, unable to penetrate the true realities and understanding (*ḥaqīqat-i waḥīdīyah*) of His ipseity (*ḥuwiyyat*). This is because, as we have already said, speech and the speaker are both below the 'Aql, and therefore they cannot perceive (lit. define) anything except what is (also) under it 6.

To sum up, [9] concerning the oneness of God (*tawḥīd*), thou must realize that whatever spiritual or material entities have come into existence, it is He who has brought them into being, not from nothing (*huw az*

nist), because (His) own being (*waḥīd*), in His ipseity (*ba ḥuṣṣiyat-i kullīyah*), is above existence or non-existence 7.

Thou must also realize that whatever may be existent (*ḥaṣṣi dārūd*) may also, contrary to this, be non-existent, while what does not generally exist cannot be (regarded as temporarily?) non-existent.

These states mutually exclude each other. And that which has something to be its opposite number (*ḥadd*), cannot be God. God is He who has brought from not-being (*nist*) into being (*ḥast*) the initial being (*ḥast-i mukḥast*), so that existence (*ḥast*) and non-existence (*nist*) should both (*juft*) be created by Him, and should stand side by side (of each other), by His command. This is because both the quality (*ṣifat*) and what is qualified by it (*ṣifat-paḥlir*) are under His power (*andar mulk-i ū*), while He Himself, in His ipseity (*ḥuṣṣiyat*), is above everything, and nothing can have a relation to Him (*ba-d-ū paywasat-i nist*), just as He said (Coran, cxii, 1): "Say, God is one".

These four letters (with the help of which the word Allah is written) He intended as symbols for four principles (*ḥadd*),—two spiritual (*rūḥāni*) and two material (*ḥimāni*), [10] by which the oneness (*waḥdāniyyat*) of God can be proved. One of them is an *alif* (letter A) which is a straight line, to which all letters can be joined, while it does not join any letter. All letters have developed (1) from it (*az ū tarbiyat yāfa and*),⁸ because all

letters that exist form curved (*junbinīda*) lines. The *alif* symbolizes the 'Aql-i Kull from which all the spiritual and material entities have received existence, and all are connected (*paywasat*) with it, while it itself in its power depends on nothing, being above everything.

The next is the letter *lām* (L) which consists of a line the lower part of which is drawn forward. (Thus it) possesses length and width, like a surface (*sath*). It resembles *alif*, but all letters are joined to it, and it itself joins various letters. The *lām* symbolizes the *Nafs-i Kull* with which on all sides both the spiritual and material entities are connected, and which resembles the 'Aql just as the *lām* resembles the *alif*.

The third letter is (also) a *lām*, similar to that preceding one. It is, however, equal to only a half of the degree (importance) of the *alif*⁹. It symbolizes the *Nātiq* who on all sides is connected with the *Nafs-i Kull* [11] and receives support (*ta'yīd*) from it in his organisation (*ta'rif*) of the system (or world) of religion, which is the "third world" (*sawwum 'ālam*).¹⁰

The first world is the world of spiritual (*la'if*) entities, the second is the material (*kaḥif*) world, and the third is the world of religion. The *Nātiq* occupies in the last one the position of the 'Aql, just as that second *lām* (in the word Allah) resembles the *alif*.

The fourth letter in it (i. e. in Allah) is *hā* (H) which symbolizes the material world, possessing length, width and breadth. It occupies the fourth place (*darajā*) from

the *alif*, and is a circle in which (one) end (of the line) is brought down to meet the other end. It symbolizes the *Asās* who is connected with the *Nātiq*, receiving from the latter spiritual support (*ta'yīd*) by the power of the *Nafs-i Kull* in his (task of) the explanation of [12] the *sharī'at*. This is just like this world which has length, width and height and reveals (*sharḥ-i chiz-hā hamī bi'ī n āra*) various matters such as minerals, plants, animals, and foodstuffs for the bodies of men ¹¹. The *Asās* brings back the souls of the faithful (*mū'minīn*) to the recognition of the oneness of God (*shinākht-i taḥḥīd*) and the interpretation of the *sharī'at* (in its relation to) the higher world (*'ālim-i 'ulwī*), so that ultimately creation may re-join its source (*awḥāl*), like (the line in the) letter *hā*, which is a circle, whose ends are joined together.

Then know, brother, what God the All-High says in the verse which we have mentioned above: these four spiritual (*rūḥānī*) principles, and four material (*jismānī*) principles (*ḥudūd*) ¹² are His creations (*ba-ḥaṣṭ āwurdā'i* ū). After this He says: "Allah is the Lord". By this He means that these four *ḥādīs*, principles, are the creations of God. To them belongs superiority (*faḥḥ*) over everything spiritual and corporeal. This is because all corporeal beings (*jismāniyyān*) are under the *Nātiq* and *Asās* and all the spiritual (*rūḥāniyyān*) are under the *'Aql* and *Nafs*. And both corporeal and spiritual beings acquire superiority (*faḥḥ*) through these principles (*ḥudūd*) which are above them.

Thereafter He said: "He (God) does not give birth to any one and is not born". This means [13] that all that are below these two spiritual (*ān dū rūḥānī*, i. e. *'Aql* and *Nafs*) possess similarity to them, and have come into existence through them, just as everything is born from something. Similarly, every one who is under the *Nātiq* and *Asās* in the corporeal world (*jismāniyyut*), spiritually (*ba-zādan-i nafsānī*) is born from them through the (religious) knowledge (*'ilm*).

But whatever is born, will become some day like its parent, while nothing, either corporeal or spiritual, will ever be associated with Him (i. e. God).

Then He said: "And He has no partner". This means that whatever things exist, spiritual or corporeal, match one other (*idar-khārd-i yak-i digar omd*), and this their property forms a proof that God has created them in such a way as to be like one other, while uniqueness (*yakanāgi*), and therefore causelessness, belongs to Him.

Here ends this chapter, intended for the instruction of the *muṣṭajīb* (i. e. the newly initiated adept) who may (with its help) believe (in the correct way), through the recognition of God's oneness (*shinākht-i taḥḥīd*) avoiding falling either into anthropomorphic theories, or agnosticism (*taḥbiḥ wa ta'īl*), by the generosity of the Lord of the time, peace be upon him!

The Second Chapter, on the Word of God, be He glorified and All-High!

God should be recognized as the cause of all causes, and one must also know that the word (Kalima) is an utterance (sukhan), and that the Word (uttered by God at the creation), was, as they say, "be". This was an action (aṣḥar) coming [14] from God. Such an action, however, has no (organic) connection, similarity or dissimilarity (in substance) with the Agent (mu'atḥir). We know (His) Word in the form of (human-like) speech (sukhan) only to make it easier for every one to understand. We know that speech, uttered by anyone, never is similar to that speaker, in any respect, and never becomes like him. As the meaning of the Word of God was "be", we know that that command was perfect (umām ast), because He,—be He glorified,—has not created it from anything. Therefore all that had to come into existence (būdani būd), did come, in the most perfect way. As the Word, which was the cause of that creation, was perfect (umām), and acting without any intermediary (miyānāji), it was one with (i. e. inseparable from) what was caused by it (ma'lūl-i ī). We (therefore) say: the first cause is the Word (of God), and what it has caused, the 'Aql, came into existence through it. If we, in Imagination, separate them one from the other, the 'Aql will lose its perfection (namely its position) of being the first caused (ma'lūl-i auwal). But when it

loses its perfection, the latter will also be lost by the Kalima. As we speak of the first cause and its first caused, and know that there was no intermediary between them, it would be futile to divide them one from the other, except in the name, just as we say "the light of the sun", or "the disc of the sun". For this reason we say that the 'Aql is both the cause and the caused, [15] both Reasoning ('Aql) and the result of the reasoning (Ma'qūl), because its original cause is inherent in it, without separation, and its substance (dhāt) is known only in association with that (cause). Therefore it is both the object and subject of knowing (dānista wa dānanda) because it is the source (aql) of everything that has existence. It cannot know anything outside its own substance (dhāt), because the 'Aql possesses knowledge (dānīst), but outside its own substance there exists nothing that could be known (dānistani). It is itself the 'Aql, Reason, and also the 'Aql, the one who reasons.

Therefore we may say that the Kalima, Word, is one (or: unity?—yaki), in Arabic waḥda, and the 'Aql is also one 'or: unity?', and is called one, wāḥid. 1) But whatever is counted is under (i. e. implies the existence of) one, because if we imagine that one does not exist, then no number would be possible. But if you give up all the numbers beyond one, one will still remain. Therefore just as all that exists (hama ḥaṣṣi-hā) is under the 'Aql, it is itself the First Existence (Nukhustān Ḥaṣṣi),

while existence and the 'Aql cannot be separated, because only man seeks for individuality and understands it, possessing (for this) a faculty (*athar*) bestowed by the 'Aql. It is by the power of that faculty that he makes inquiries (*bāz jiyād*) into the (nature of) things. [16]

As we have made it obvious that the 'Aql is the first entity which had been brought into existence by God, it would be improper for us to try to ascertain its individual nature (*hasti*). This is because if we want to understand the individual nature of the 'Aql, we should have to possess a faculty (*athar*) which would be subtler and higher (*sharij-tar wa bar-tar*) than the 'Aql itself. (Only) with the help of such faculty can we seek to understand the individual nature of the 'Aql. But if there were anything (*chizi*) which possessed a nature (*hasti*) higher than that of the 'Aql, the latter would lose the position of being the first creation, and this position would be transferred upon that entity (*chiz*) which had existed before it. So, when we have realized that we possess a faculty derived from the 'Aql, and that we, with the help of it, can recognize the things (*chiz-hā*) which are under it (i. e. 'Aql), we may infer that that power (*quwwat*) contained in the reason ('aql) forms part of its substance (*uz dhāt-i ūst*), and comes from its (i. e. the 'Aql's or God's?) blessing (*rahmat*). This is because the reason ('aql) is compelled (*majbūr ast*) to perceive and systematize (*shinākhan*

wa zir āwurdan) various objects (*chiz-hā-rā*). Therefore we say that we may distinguish the 'Aql (or human reason, 'aql!) from other things (*chiz-hā*) by its ability to know its own nature (*dhāt-i khwīsh-rā*) and other things, while nothing below it ('Aql) possesses (such) power (*quwwat*). Therefore it is distinguishable (*julāst*) from other things (*chiz-hā*) by the possession of such power (*quwwat*); and it is impossible that it should be endowed with other properties (*khāsiyyat*) than this. But if it is distinguished (*makhāṣṣ*) by such power, it follows that it must have had someone who endowed it with such property (*khāṣṣ-kunanda*), [17] making that feature (*ṣifat*) the firmly segregating boundary line (*thiṣṣr-i dhāt-i ū*) of its nature.

When thus it has become obvious that, as has been mentioned above, the 'Aql must have someone who is stronger than itself (*qāhir*), it follows that we may know this Stronger One, i. e. God, by the power of that inferior (*maḥṣūr*) one, the reason ('aql). But it is impossible for the inferior to comprise the stronger one. When we realize this, we arrive at the correct understanding of the oneness of God (*taḥḥid*), and, at the same time, of the position of the 'Aql.

We also say that we cannot find the faculty of reason (*athar-i 'aql*) unaccompanied by the human soul (*bi nafs-i insāni*), while (such) soul (*nafs*, unaccompanied by the former (i. e. 'aql), would be incomplete and

weak (*nā-tamān wa ʿaʿīf*). This circumstance makes it necessary to realize that God has created them from all eternity (*ʿazal*) as a pair (*ijfā*), and that their action and power (*athar wa quwwat*) cannot manifest themselves without their mutual assistance. This, however, indicates the fact that both these are firmly bound together by that special feature (*andar hijāb-i in khūṣṣiyat*) which we find in them, and are inseparable. This is because Divinity does not belong to anything which requires the help of something else for the manifestation of its action and work (*athar wa ʿiʿl-i khawish*): [18] And if this position (*hāl*) of the 'Aql-i Kull has been recognized, in the sense that its action (*athar*) cannot manifest itself except through the human soul (*nafs-i insāni*), we may infer that the 'Aql was the first being (*muwal hasti*). It also follows that the *Nafs-i Kull* was (like) seed sown in the substance (*dhāt*) of the 'Aql-i Kull. Thus thou wilt realize that only in this way its (i. e. *Nafs-i Kull*'s) coming into existence and being one is derived (*bur khizad*) from the 'Aql-i Kull. Yes, it is one, but (potentially) plural, independent of everything that is below it. It is because one does not depend on other numbers, in its oneness, but two, three, and other numbers need the existence of one in order to come into being.

Thus 'Aql is the primal entity (*nukhustān hasti*) by which it is possible to understand (*yāʾsun*) things

(*chiz-hā*), while there is nothing by which one can understand the 'Aql. This is why God said (vi, 103): "Sight perceives Him not, but He perceives men's sight; for He is subtle, the aware". This means: sight (*bināʾi-hā*), which denotes the 'aql, will not comprehend Him, while He comprehends sight; and He comprehends the subtle and aware (*latif wa khabir*) amongst what is created (*chiz-hā*). This means that it is the reason, 'aql, thinking of which the soul (*nafs*) comprehends things (*chiz-hā*) with its help. Therefore it would not be proper (*wājib*) that one could [19] comprehend it, i. e. 'aql itself, by thought. By the "sight" He (i. e. God) here means the thought by which one can comprehend subtle (*latif*) things. This may be illustrated by the case of the lion who devours human beings, with the help of the strength which it possesses; but it is impossible that the lion, with the help of the same strength, could devour itself. Therefore we must realize that the 'Aql (or generally reason) is able to know ('ālim) by its own substance and not through any (acquired) knowledge (*na ba-ʿilm*), and active (*qādir*) by its own substance, not through any force (received from outside, *na ba-qudrat*). It is in its substance independent (*bī-niyāz*) of any thing, because all other things, in their entirety, originate from it. And thou, in spite of this, wantst to comprehend that entity (*hast*),—whether its power, or self-sufficiency, or whatever it may be!

We say: the 'Aql is acting (*junbūda*) in a way, and in a way at rest (*ārāmīda*), i. e. static, and this is why all that stands under it is either active or static. But the movement (or activity, *junbūlan*) of the 'Aql is not similar to our activity, produced by a need. This is because the 'Aql experiences no need, nor is there anything above it that it, 'Aql, should wish to strive to become like to it. No, its activity has the form of praise to the Creator [20] because the 'Aql realizes its own position. Praise to God is eternal activity, movement not in space, nor is it an action produced by wish or want. That movement of which we speak here is the manifestation (*padīd āmadan*) of the *Nafs-i Kull*, (emanating) from it. This is because through that movement which the 'Aql-i Kull made in praise of God the *Nafs-i Kull* appeared from it, by the power of the Word (*Kalima*) of the Creator which had become one with the 'Aql.

The emanation of the *Nafs* from the 'Aql was instantaneous, beyond time, and the former, when it had emanated from the latter, was in a way similar, and in a way dissimilar to it. The similarity of the *Nafs* with the 'Aql consisted in its being potentially perfect (*amān*), and the dissimilarity in its being in fact imperfect. The cause of the actual imperfection of the *Nafs* was its coming into existence from the Word of the Creator by the instrumentality (*miyānaji*) of the 'Aql, while there was no intermediary whatever

between the 'Aql and the Word (*Kalima*). For this reason it would be improper (*wājib na-būd*) that what had been produced by the 'Aql should be exactly like itself. There was no time, however, between the coming into existence of the 'Aql, its being united with the *Kalima* of the Creator, and the manifestation of the *Nafs* from it, because time itself was produced by the action (*fi'l*) of the *Nafs*. It would be improper [21] that there should have been time before the existence of the *Nafs* which was the cause of its own existence: it is impossible that anything could exist before its own cause. God the All-High mentioned this emanation, stating precisely this fact that it was not in time (liv, 50): "And our bidding is but one word, like the twinkling of an eye". With regard to time there is nothing quicker than the glancing at something and the noticing of it. Between looking at and seeing something there is no difference in time (*tafawut-i rūzgārī*).

The quiescence (*ārām*, i. e. remaining static) of the 'Aql consists in its being self-sufficient (*bī-nyūz*) while all that is below it is in need of it. And if thus its attribute is self-sufficiency, it would be improper that it should act in a way different from what was mentioned above, i. e. offering thanks to God. Therefore, as has been explained, the 'Aql is the First (*Awval*), but everything that is the first is also bound to be the last,

because everything that follows it (and descends from it) is bound to be derived from it. In this way the 'Aql is also the East (*Āl-hur*) because all that it has produced will at the end return to it. [22] This is because the activity of the *Nafs* has as its object the attainment of that self-sufficiency which the 'Aql possesses. And as the origin of the *Nafs* is the 'Aql, it inevitably must return to the latter. The 'Aql is manifest (*qāhir*) because everything that exists, visible and knowable, comes from it; and it is also hidden (*hūm*) because nothing has a superior or more exalted position (*jūkūl wa būlīyat*).¹⁵ Everything possesses its superiority (*jūkūl*). God says (lvii, 3): "He is the first and the last, the manifest and hidden, and He knows everything". But with all this greatness and might which the 'Aql possesses, no creation is more obedient to God, and more thankful. Just as *Muḥafā*, peace be upon him and his Progeny! says: "The first that God created was reason ('Aql). God said to it: come near! And it approached Him. Then He said: go back! And it returned. Then God said: by My greatness and glory! I have never created anything nobler than thee! By thee I shall reward, and by thee I shall punish". [23]

The story of the obedience and humility of the 'Aql to God has been narrated with various philosophical indications (*bu-dalīl-hā-yi 'aqlī*) in the book *Miḥāṣ wa Miḥāḥ* which we composed before this

(*piḥ at in*). If thou recognize the 'Aql as possessing such qualities (as have been described), thou wouldst know it in its proper position (*hūdūd*). Then the 'Aql's recognition of the unity of God (*tauhīd shīnākhan-i 'Aql*) will become right to the mu'min, and he will not fall into error in his ideas concerning the principles of creation (*hūdūd*).

By the mercy of the Lord of the time, may his mention be extolled and glorified, peace be upon him!

The Third Chapter, on the *Nafs-i Kull*,
its Position and Activity.

The *Nafs-i Kull* is called the "Second" (*Thānī*) because it is the second after the 'Aql. None amongst the higher and lower principles (*hūdūd*) is higher than it, below the 'Aql. It possesses the numerical position of two while the position of one belongs to the 'Aql. Just as there is no number, after two, in which two would not be contained, so there is nothing, neither man nor angel, whose existence would not be due to the *Nafs-i Kullī* (sic). The latter, like the 'Aql, [24] is perfect only potentially, and actually it is imperfect, because it descends from the Word (*Kalima*) of the Creator through the instrumentality (*miyānāji*) of the 'Aql. And whatever comes into existence with the help of an intermediary, cannot be similar to that intermediary in every respect. It may only be

potentially similar to it, in the way that the son, when grown up, will some time become like his father, complete in his manhood. But it is impossible that the offspring should be similar to its father from the very moment that it separates from its parent. Were that possible, manhood itself would be realized, being at once able to manifest itself in the offspring.

For this reason it is therefore said that the *Nafs* is similar to the 'Aql potentially, not actually. It came into existence through the instrumentality of the 'Aql, and the thing that is born from another has to be nourished by the latter before, one day, it becomes similar to its parent. An example is the human sperm which, falling into the womb of the mother, and being nourished, one day becomes similar to the father, with the help of that nourishment which it gets from its mother, by the force (*quwwat*) derived from the father. Thus the child comes from both of them just as God said (xc, 1-3): "I shall not swear [25] by this city, and thou art at liberty to act as thou pleasest in it, nor by the parent with his offspring". Here the "land" (or town) allegorizes the *Nāniq* who is the city (*shahri-stān*) of knowledge (because he said¹⁶: "I am the city of knowledge, and 'Alī is its gate"). Then God said: "Thou art free in this city in what thou art doing", i.e. in appointing the *Asās*. He says: "I shall not swear by the father and the offspring born from him". This oath is by the 'Aql whose position in the higher world

is that of the father, and by the *Nafs* whose position (*hadd*) is that of the offspring. The *Nafs* came into existence from the 'Aql, and had the potentiality of one day becoming perfect. It started trying, and began to derive instruction (*fā'ida*) from the 'Aql. It was like the child which in the womb of its mother is nourished (growing) by the force (*quwwat*) which has been laid in it, and it is possible that one day the sperm will become a man.¹⁷ That liquid (*āb*) always absorbs nourishment (*mā'ida*) in the womb of the mother. Similarly, the *Nafs* derives instruction and nutrition (*fā'ida wa mā'ida*) from the 'Aql, and strives to attain perfection. The *Nafs* is the architect of the material world (*khudāwand-i tarkib-i jismūni*), and it is the *Nafs* which started (*junbish kardā ast*) the movement of this world. The purpose (*sabab*) [26] of that activity (*junbish*) which it develops is the search for its perfection, and this is attained in the eminent persons (*nafs-hā-y-i bīzurgwār*) who appear in this world, such as the souls of the Prophets, *Asāsēs*, *Imāns*, *hujjats*, *dā'īs*, *ma'dhūns* and *mustajibs*. The object of its producing (*farāz āwurdan*) this world was to produce (*farāz āwurdan*) souls (*nafs-hā*), in order that in them (*bi-d-ūn*) the *Nafs* itself would become perfect, and ultimately attain the position (*daraja*) of the 'Aql. This was because the *Nafs* did not possess the position (*daraja*) of the latter, and wanted to make itself instantaneously similar to the 'Aql. It failed,

however, to rectify its (original) defect (*nuqsān*). It had no such strength (*tawānā'*) as the 'Aql had, producing it (the *Nafs*) instantaneously, without time. It, however, instantaneously produced an entity similar to itself: when it moved to create an entity similar to itself, its movement (*jumbish*) resulted in the appearance of the *Haylā* (prototype of the world); then the form (*ṣūrat*) of this world came into existence, through it. All the perfection (*tamāmi*) which belonged (*bi-bāyāt*) to it, the *Nafs-i Kull* laid into the *Haylā*. (Such perfection), however, did not act instantaneously (*bi-ḥāl ḥāṣṣān na-y-ānuāl*), and so it shaped the world from that *Haylā*, laying into it the power of the souls of the knowing (*al-ʿāqilān*), still incomplete, like the human sperm, which possesses the potentiality of producing many individuals in the course of time. [27] Therefore the world came into action (*bi-ʿamāl ḥādīq ḥādīq*) by the power (*qawwāt*) which the *Nafs-i Kull* (*sic*) had put into it, in the form of the souls (*nafs-hā*) of the *Nābiq*, *Asīs*, *Imāms*, and others, for the purpose of bringing those forces from potential possibilities into the state of realized realities. And as soon as the world started acting (*bi-jumbul*), from its action, units of time (*zanān zanān*) came into existence,¹⁹ while the world itself became space (*makān gashā*) due to that movement. And in (that) space in time by its action all that the *Nafs-i Kull* had laid into it began to increase (*fādil āmadān girift*). Till now we

see that its procreative faculty has been continuous (*ṭā'ish-i 'ālam paywastā gashā*), and cannot be stopped, and that it cannot be helped that the *Nafs-i Kull* expands this world, producing from it those great souls (*nafs-hā-y-i buzurgwār*) and one day rectifying its defect (*nuqsān*). When that defect has been rectified, the *Nafs-i Kull* will become similar to the 'Aql-i Kull, thus attaining what it aimed at from the beginning.

The difference, however, between what the 'Aql has done, and what it (*Nafs*) is doing, consists in the fact that the former has produced it outside time (*bi-zanān*), while the *Nafs* can only achieve what it does within time. This is why we have said that the 'Aql is moving (*mutaharrik*), or acting, by offering thanks to God, while it is static, quiescent (*sākin*) in so far as it is self-sufficient. And for this reason the *Nafs*, which came into existence through it, [28] acquired both movement and quiescence, potentially. Its working (*jumbish*), however, actually started by its attempting to attain its own perfection, while its quiescence is due to the fact that it is connected with the 'Aql, which is self-sufficient, and that it, *Nafs*, derives its guidance (*fā'ida*) from it. In a similar way, in the world organised by the *Nafs-i Kull*, both movement and quiescence are in existence, as in the case of the earth which is quiescent and the skies which are moving (*jumbān*). No material body (*jism*) is free from one of these states (*wasf*).

Similarly, the action (*fi'l*) of the *Nafs* is of two kinds. One is perfect potentially but imperfect in realisation, as in the case of the creation of the world which is potentially perfect, but only (gradually) comes into existence. It is like humanity: individual men are born (and die) while mankind is spread all over the world, and the whole purpose of the world is in humanity (*'ālam dar mardum junla ast*). Therefore the action (*fi'l*) of the *Nafs* in this world is only potentially (in general) perfect, before its (final) realisation. But in some other actions the *Nafs* is perfect both potentially and actually, as in the case of the production of the souls of *Nāriqs*, *Asāsēs* and *Imams*, who are the (only) real men (*niardinnūn-i ba-hajjārat*), by the nature of their souls (*ba-ṣūrat-hā-y-i nafs-i khwīsh*), as the Prophet said: "Do not debase your faces because God has created [29] Adam after His own image, and breathed into him the growing force (*nūniya*)¹⁹ from His Spirit". Then know that the Divine Image (*ṣūrat-i ʿIzāfi*) is the *Nafs-i Kull*, the Divine Spirit is the Word (*Kalima*), and Adam, by the command of God, is the *Nāriq* of his time. At every period²⁰ he, Adam, by its (i.e. *Nafs*'s) power (*quwwat*), in his (individual) corporeal forms (*ba-ṣūrat-hā-y-i nafs-āni*), is in it (i.e. the world) as the image of the *Nafs-i Kull*, while the Word of God (*Kalima'i Būri*) would be the spirit in it (or in him, Adam I). This is as God says (xxi, 91) in the story of Mary, peace be upon her I

"The daughter of 'Imrīn who guarded her sexual organs, and We breathed into her of Our Spirit". This means that Maryam did not turn her ear to the devils (*Iblisān*) with their speeches. This is because the sexual organ is like the ear,^{20a} and the ear symbolizes the sexual organ because through it comes the corporeal form (*ṣūrat-i jismāni*), and through the ear the mental idea (*ṣūrat-i nafsāni*). "She guarded her sexual organ" means that she did not turn her ear to those who only teach the *ẓāhir*, formal side of the religion (*ẓāhir-sukhamiyān*), disregarding its esoteric interpretation (*u'wīl*). "And We, in the Word (*Kalima*), have given her the lot of bringing up Jesus" [30]—peace be upon him,—until he becomes the Prophet.

Therefore in that tradition in which the Prophet says "Do not disgrace your faces", he meant: "Do not take your spiritual guides, Imams, from amongst the enemies of the True Family (*khāndān-i haqq*), making through this the images of your souls as horrid as the faces of devils". The *u'wīl* of the "face" is the Imam, because the *mu'min* is recognized by his Imam, as God said (xvii, 73): "The day when we will call all men by their Leader (Imam)".

May God keep us steadfast in obedience to the Imams and may He call us by them on that Day, by His generosity and mercy!

The Fourth Chapter, on the Creation of the Human Soul
in the Material World.

All that appears in the material world from the *Nafs-i Kull* is of three categories (*manaba*), as the material world (itself) occupies the third place, from the 'Aql-i Kull, after the *Nafs*, to wit (*inẓdik gardānidan*). (In these three categories) the 'Aql-i Kull is like the man, the *Nafs-i Kull* is like the woman, and the *Hayilā* from them is like the sperm, while the material world is like a child,—potentially it contains many offsprings. And as the world is the third after those higher (*latif*) principles (*hūdūd*), all that appears in it [31] from the *Nafs-i Kull* with the help (*ta'yid*) of the 'Aql, also can be divided into these categories (*manaba*). The first of these is the vegetative soul (*nafs-i nāmīyā*) which is (contained in) the growing plants (*nis'ani-hā*) of the world, like grasses or trees. The second is the sensory soul (*nafs-i hissiyyā*) which is (contained in) all speechless animals, herbivorous and carnivorous, or aquatic. The third is the speaking, or reasoning (*sukham-gūy*) soul which is (in) human beings who are endowed with the faculty of speech, and receive influence (*uṭhar*) from the 'Aql. All these three (kinds of) *nafs* are influences (*uṭhar-hā*) of the *Nafs-i Kull*. (Two of these) ²¹ kinds of *nafs* do not receive their food (*khīrīsh*) from the 'Aql-i Kull, as the human soul does; therefore, as all that does not receive food from it does not return to it, plants and animals cannot return to

the higher world (*'ālam-i 'ulwī*). Similarly, that (human) soul which does not possess the faculty of speaking, and has no share of reason (*uṭhar-i 'aql*), will never return to that world.

The work (*uṭhar*) of the *Nafs-i Kull* is like the light which shines upon the earth from the sun, so that the earth becomes lit by that light. And when the sun sets, the light also disappears. When the sun shines upon a crystal or upon a mirror which can collect an amount of the light of the sun, the light becomes so bright through action of the crystal or mirror that from it [32] fire can be lit, from which one may get light at any time. Thus it would do the same work as the sun is doing, proportionately to its size producing light and warmth.

Similarly, when the effect (*uṭhar*) of the (activity of) the *Nafs-i Kull* is manifested in the human body (*kālbād-i mardān*), and when the latter gets its "food" (*khīrīsh*) from the 'Aql-i Kull, by acquiring the knowledge of its own origin (*asl*), by knowing and recognizing the oneness of God (*taṭhīd*), then, through all this, the (human) soul (*nafs*) in that body becomes similar to the *Nafs-i Kull*, its origin, just as the effect of the sunshine in the crystal or mirror would appear similar to the sun itself. But (as in the case of the crystal or mirror) when the sun sets, the light of that (visible) fire disappears, so, in the same way,

when that soul (*nafs*) receives "food" from the 'Aql-i Kull, and, having become similar to the latter, returns to the *Nafs-i Kull*, it attains eternal bliss (*shauḥb*) when the *Nafs-i Kull* itself re-joins the 'Aql-i Kull.

Thus we have found in the material world ('*ālam-i jismāni*) three forms of the action of the *Nafs* which benefit it: one vegetative (*rūḥanda*), as (in) plants, the other "eating" (*khāṇanda*) as (in) animals, and the third "speaking" (*sukham-gūy*) as (in) human beings. All these three kinds of *nafs* we have found collected in the human being, thus saying: man is growing like the plants, because by eating he [33] increases in size: he is eating like the animals, because he consumes food and drinks; there are two categories, and the third which the man has is that of being able to speak. Therefore we say that it follows that in man the world has reached completion. And if the completion (or perfection, *aimāmi*) of the world depends on man, it follows that the soul (*nafs*) of man should become detachable from its body and go to the higher world ('*ālam-i 'ulwī*), because it came from there. It cannot also return to this world because what had attained perfection cannot acquire imperfection (*ināqsān*). If the human soul was here, and through it the world had become perfect, it would be impossible for it to be sent back here again because this would be excessive, and excess over perfection constitutes a defect.

Even if it were to be brought here, the world would not become different from what it is to-day. If it returned (to this world), it would act exactly as it acts to-day, as God says (vi, 28): "And could they be sent back, they would return to what they were forbidden, for they are very liars". This means: that day the souls of the sinners would say: Oh, if they would take us to that world so that we should live according to the commandments of the Lord of the time, and become *mu'mins*! Then it will be said to them: if they were taken there, [34] they would return to what they were doing, as they are liars.

Therefore we may say that the force (*quwwat*) of the *Nafs-i Kull* is spread (*gusardā*) in the corporeal world ('*ālam-i jismāni*), so that the world is full of it. But, being itself immaterial (*luṭif*), that energy does not occupy any visible space. Although no place in the world remains free from the *Nafs-i Kull*, it has no spatial existence (*az jāy khūd hasti na-dārul*).²² As, however, the world has risen from it, whatever is born by the elements (*ḥabā'i*), the action (*athar*) of the *Nafs-i Kull* accepts (*padhīrad*) that production, so that it becomes animated (*jānwar*). And if from (that) action (*jumbish*) a plant (comes into existence)...²³ The human being at first is similar to a plant, in the womb of the mother, receiving increase without (consciously) seeking it, just as a plant grows without being conscious of its growth (*bi-dānish*). Thereafter, having been

born by its mother, and coming into this world, it resembles an animal who knows nothing except eating and sleeping. Whatever it finds it takes into its mouth, be it straw, or (the aromatic) *isparghan* grass, it does not make any difference. A small child acts similarly. It does not seek anything except what is eatable, [35] eating whatever is put into its hand, or at once putting it into its mouth, until the reasoning (*nāri-jā*) *nafs* effects its influence upon it (the child), and it becomes able to speak. Then the child takes to speaking, learning the names of everything. ²⁴

We have already seen that the creation of the world really originated from the *nafs-i nāmīya*, the vegetative force, manifested (chiefly) in plants, and then from the sensory (*hissi*) *nafs* which is (specially) peculiar to animals. Then again comes the "speaking" (*sakhan-gūy*) *nafs*, and this is (in) human beings, to whom belongs superiority (*jākilī*) over plants and animals. All these three kinds of energy (*quwwat*) have come together in man. The world has thus never produced anything better than man. Therefore we realize that nothing has been produced nobler and greater than human beings. ²⁵ The rotation of the spheres with the glittering of the stars was created for the sake of great humanity (*buzurg-e-jā nūrdu'mī*) ²⁶ because if the purpose of the creation had been already attained by the existence of the world, the latter would have ceased to undergo (further) alterations (*ta' gashan āwāda-i*). ²⁷

The body of man, receiving its nourishment from the (material) world, is bound to return to the elements when the soul becomes separated from it, because the elements are its source (*kull*). ²⁸ (For a similar reason) it is inevitable that the (human) soul should return to the *Nafs-i Kull*. The question only concerns the manner in which it will return. If its return to its source is [36] in harmony (*dar-khārd*) with it, the soul will attain the bliss (peace, *rāhat*) which the ignorant regard as the state of God Himself because they say that He, the All-High, personally created this world (*farāz āwāda ast*). But, as we know, it was the *Nafs-i Kull* that (in reality) constituted (*tarkib kardā ast*) this world, and thus it is to it, the *Nafs-i Kull*, that the soul should return. And when the soul re-joins it, the faithful (*mu'mīn*) shall be like the creator of the world (*ḡāni-i 'ālam*),—may God be exalted above what sinners say, greatly exalted!—He, God the All-High, is exalted above what ignorant people say, far above!

If, however, the return of the individual (*jirgwi*) soul to its source (*kull-i khwīsh*) is not in harmony (*ba-mikhālafat*), it will meet with suffering and hardships whose painfulness is described by being placed in the midst of fire, the position which will never come to an end, may God protect us from the punishment by fire!

When the mu'min recognizes the principles (created) by God (*hudūd*), he ceases to attribute to Him anything that is incompatible (*nā-sazā*) with His greatness, or make God similar to His creations, recognizing the position (*ṣull*) of every principle (*ḥadd*). Therefore God says about such people (*xi*, 3): "...and that ye seek pardon from your Lord,—then repent to Him. He will cause you to enjoy a good provision to a named and appointed time, and will give privilege to every one deserving privilege; but if [37] you turn your backs, I fear for you the torment of a "Great Day".—The "named and appointed day" means that He will show you the way towards the knowledge of the Truth (*'ilm-i ḥaqqat*) in this world, when you acknowledge (*inqār kunūd*) the Lord of your time *Khudāwand-i zamāna* (*i khwīsh*) who is the Teacher (*parwardgār*) of your souls by knowledge (*'ilm*). Then He says: "fulfil (*sic*) your duty (*thaqī bi-dhīl*) to your *sic*) superior (*khudāwand-i ṣull*) according to his position. If you turn your faces away from him, I shall send to you some of the torments of the Great Day". 29

For this reason the mu'min must recognise the true position of every principle of the creation (*ḥadd az hudūd*) in the material and spiritual world, never treating the lower one as the higher, or the higher as the lower one. He must recognize them according to their true position, thus following the straight path

(*rāh-i rāst*). Whosoever treats an inferior thing (*chīz*) as the higher becomes one of those of whom God says (*v*, 76): "They misbelieve who say: verily, God is the Messiah, the son of Mary. But the Messiah said (himself): O sons of Israel, worship God, my Lord and your Lord. Verily, he who [38] associates nught with God, God hath forbidden him Paradise and his resort is the Fire, and the sinners shall have none to help them". This verse is applicable to those persons who said that the Commander of the Faithful 'Ali b. Abi Tālib,—peace be upon him,—is nearer to God than our Prophet, Muḥammad Miḡfā,—peace be upon him,—or those who say that the Commander of the Faithful is God. Such people are hyperbolists (*ghāliyān*). The Commander of the Faithful (himself) said: "The Apostle of God (once) placed his mouth upon my ear and conveyed to me a thousand chapters (*biḥ*) of knowledge (*'ilm*), and in each chapter a thousand (new) chapters become revealed to me". As he (himself),—peace be upon him,—[39] asserts that the Apostle of God was his teacher, every one who says that he is more important than the Prophet, or greater than the latter, will be a liar. And whosoever spreads false ideas about the *Waḡī* of his *dawr*, i.e. the period of the domination of a religious law at the time when he lives, he will be a *kāfir*, unbeliever. For this reason the verse quoted above proves that it was

revealed concerning the hyperholists (ghāliyān). As God says that some people were saying about Jesus that he was God, while Jesus himself said: "O sons of Israel, worship your God who is my God, too".

We may say thereafter that the perfection (*tamāmī*) of the *Nafs-i Kull*, and the latter's passing from the state of potential to the actual attainment of it, is achieved in the souls of *Nāṣiṣ*, *Asāsēs*, *Imānis*, and their followers. These souls, before their entering their bodies, had no (individual) existence (as thou couldst point it out), but they remained (in existence) potentially in their source (*kull-i khavish*), just as one man may potentially be (the progenitor of) many men. It is just as all the 'Alawis, i.e. descendants of 'Alī, who are at present in the world (as living) souls, and those who were before them, or will come after them, are all from the substance (*dhāt*) of the soul of the Commander of the Faithful 'Alī [40] which contained them potentially. But so long as they were not connected with their bodies, it was impossible to take notice of or count them.

Similarly, all the people who have come into existence in the world, were all together (*ba yak bār*) potentially contained in the *Nafs-i Kull*, gradually coming out in the world. The world itself, in its entirety, was contained in the *Nafs-i Kull* before it came into existence, but possessed no (visible) form

(*ṣūrat*), and was not differentiated (with regard to individual things of which it consists,—'*udul bar ū na-y-ustād*), until it attained (visible) existence. The proof of the theory that all men are contained in this world is that they come out from it, and we know that what has not been contained in something, would not come out into existence from it. Similarly, in every grain of wheat there are (potentially) contained many grains which may gradually generate from it, while (e.g.) in sand no wheat is contained. 30

When it has been thus ascertained that the world is one of the products (*uz kār-kard*) of the *Nafs-i Kull*, we may realize that in a like manner all the creations (*khār-kard-hā*) have been originated by it. Thus the world creates (*kār-gar*) through it. Therefore (one of the) proofs that the world is the product of the *Nafs-i Kull* is (the existence of?) human beings (*markūmī*) because they come into existence in (from) the world in that way (*ba-d-in ṣūrat*). This proves that all human beings were potentially contained in the *Nafs-i Kull*, and that potentiality (*ghurwar*) was received by the *Nafs-i Kull* from the '*Aql-i Kull*. Therefore the origin of man is in the Word '*Kalimat* [41] in which, however, it was contained potentially, to be realized (*ba-ḥ'ī āyad*) in this world. The purpose of his realization (*ba-ḥ'ī āmalan*) is to become similar (*tmānnalat*) to its origin (*asl*), and accept the knowledge (*'ilm*) of the Prophets, who in this world occupy in

effect (ba-sh') the position of the *Nafs*. When man, by accepting the knowledge of the principles of the creation (*huḍūd*) and realizing the truth of the oneness of God (*taḥīd*) becomes similar (*imnand*) to the *Nafs-i Kull*, and (thus) re-unites with it, he will receive the reward (*thawāb*). It is like the drop of sperm which falls into the womb of the mother, and, by feeding there, becomes similar to its mother and father. If, however, man does not attain the recognition of the oneness of God (*taḥīd*), if no Divine guide meets him, he will remain in this world like an animal, who only eats and then dies in this world, earning no reward (*thawāb*), thus becoming nullified like the sperm which comes out of a man, but from which neither the male nor female receive anything except a temporary pleasure. That liquid does not stay in the womb of the woman and does not turn into a child. It often happens in the world that a man has only one offspring, although he copulates very many times during his life. This is beyond his control, [42] as it is not that a child is conceived at each copulation. In the same way it does not follow that everyone who has the appearance of a man and teaches others should be a Prophet. If that be so, the purpose for which the world had been created would have been already attained, and the skies would have come to rest from their rotation. Therefore if those who are ignorant of the principles of knowledge and

do not follow the right path, or oppose the Lords of the Truth (*Khudāwandān-i ḥuqq*), pandering to their lower passions, they will for ever remain undergoing punishment, will never re-join the *Nafs-i Kull*. This will be like the child which does not receive complete development in the womb of its mother, and does not have all (its limbs) set as they should be in order that its body may attain ordinary human form. Its stature will be defective, weak; it will not possess either eyes or ears, and will remain sick and suffering during the whole of its life.

Verily, it is necessary to know that the birth and up-bringing of souls in bodies completely resembles the birth and up-bringing bodies themselves, being neither more nor less than this, as God says (lvi, 61-62): "We produce you as ye do not know. Ye do know the first production; why then do ye not mind?" [43] This means: if you knew that the creation of your souls is like that of bodies, then you would not commit a mistake. But as the up-bringing of the body depends on the force of the soul (*nafs*), it follows that the conditions (*ḥāl*) of the soul in the creation would equally be similar to those of the body, as God says (xxxii, 27): "Your creation and your rising again are but that of one soul".

The answer to the question: "we want to know: should we worship the (high) principles (*huḍūd*) by the

command of God?"—is this. You must know that the recognition of the oneness of God (*tauhid*) requires that you should not take, or wish to take as God any principle (*hadd*), either high or low. Therefore, as the *hadd*s cannot be divine, worship cannot be due to them. Worship to God first comes from the 'Aql-i Kull which is the worship of thanksgiving. No other creature can offer worship such as that. By its greatness, purity, might and wisdom its worship has no limits. Next to it is the worship by the *Nafs-i Kull*, in the form of [44] this great created world which it has produced. This is its form of worship of the glorious God. All that it had power to do was combined in that worship of God. It produces many great souls (*nafs-hā-y-i buzurgvār*) at present and will do at all times, until the *Qiyāmat*, when it will produce that noblest of all creations, the *Qā'im*,—the choicest greetings be due to him!

The worship by every high principle (*shu'ūd-i 'ulvi*) is in accordance with its powers. In the material world the first place belongs to the worship of the *Nās*, peace be upon him, which is the noblest and most perfect form of worship in this world, as no slave of God can practice it. Next comes worship by the *Asās*, in which are combined the ultimate limits of the worship of all worshippers. Then comes worship by the true Imam (*Imān-i ba-huqq*), then that of the *bāb*, of the *hujjats*, *dā'is*, *mu'allimān* and *mustajibs*,

in proper sequence. Worship is the more pleasant and more substantial (*buzurg-tar wa bish-tar*) to God the more educated and advanced is the worshipper. From the 'Aql-i Kull to the *mustajib* all strive to worship God and earn a reward. This is distributed by the 'Aql-i Kull for their not interfering with its own worship of God, [45] and their attempts at adopting, as far as possible, similar ways of worship.

It has been asked why man receives a reward for worship and acquiring (religious) knowledge (*'ilm*) while no advantage accrues to God from his worshipping, nor is any loss caused by his neglect to do this? The answer to this is as follows. Worship is like a body to that world (*ān jahān-rā*), and knowledge (*'ilm*) is like a soul. Every worshipper's spiritual body (*kālbud-i nafsāni*) becomes stronger as his knowledge grows and is purified. When his actions (*'amal*) are in harmony with his knowledge (*'ilm*), the constitution (form, *sūrat*) of his soul becomes perfect. It will receive in the higher world (*'ālam-i 'ilvi*) all the pleasures and enjoyments of that world (*khūshī-hā wa nīmūt-hā-y-i 'ālam*), just as a sound body in this world completely enjoys the pleasures of this world. Therefore the search for knowledge (*'ilm*) and right behaviour in this world help man to put things right in the life after death (*gūn-i ākhirat*). His behaviour is like a body and his knowledge like a soul (*jān*); as God says (xxxv, 11): "To Him good words, ascend, and

He takes up a righteous deed", i.e. pure speech is stronger, and good action supports it. 32 Therefore [46] the stronger (*ḡīrat-i qawī*) is the man's soul when he sends it (to that world), the correspondingly more pleasures will he find there, as God says (lxiii, 20): "Then be steadfast in prayer, pay the *zaka't*, and lend to God a goodly loan, for what ye send forward for yourselves of good, ye will find it with God. It is better and greater hire". That "lending" for the *mu'min* is the following of the obligatory prescriptions (*tesjibāt*), so that his oath of allegiance to God may be realized by these. This is 119 *dirhams*, because if you count the numeric value of the letters in the word *ḡusanan*, it will be 119. 33

Further on God says: "The more you send forward for your souls", i.e. all that you acquire by knowledge (*'ilm*) and good actions (*'amal*),—"the better it will be near God", and earns greater reward. But those who do acquire knowledge, but do not act righteously, will have in that world their souls sick and blind, remaining under eternal punishment, as God says (xx, 125): "He shall say: My Lord! Wherefore hast Thou gathered me blind when I used to see!—He shall say: Our signs came to thee, and thou didst forget them; thus to-day thou art forgotten". [47] This is what that unfortunate man will say at the *Qiyāmat*. To forget (neglect) means

to withdraw from something, and the signs of God are the Imams,—peace be upon them.

"Therefore we may say that the advantage derived from worship, and loss resulting from disobedience, refer to the soul itself, not to God,—be He Glorious and Exalted! When a soul learns knowledge (*'ilm*), but does not act according to it (*'amal na-kunad*), it becomes sick and blind. In that world sweets in the mouth of the sick will taste bitter, his head will ache from glare, and he will suffer without anyone causing him pain; thus he will be unable to enjoy sweets or light.

Such is the purpose for which the human soul has come into the material world, as has been briefly described above. The *mu'min* will realize that he was brought here so that he might be brought up by knowledge, and (ultimately) return to his source. His being is due to that defect (*nuṣṣān*) which distinguishes the *Nafs* from the 'Aql. Until the soul comes into this world it neither possesses separate existence (*na shumār bar way istadl*), nor can it possess substance (*dihāt*), nor develop [48] distinctive qualities (*ishmat*). Now that it has acquired existence (*hasū yāfi*), it has also acquired the power to attain the idea of its original source (*ḡīrat-i kull-i khwīsh*). If it errs, spoiling by this the creation (*āfarinūh dā'i kunad*), it becomes deserving of all kinds of punishment. If

however, it follows the guidance of the Lords of the Truth, i.e. the Imams (*khulāwānān-i ḥaqiq*), and recovers the idea of its original source (*ḡurūt-i kull-i khwāsh*); its knowledge (*ilm*) will all prove to be true (*all*) when it reaches the higher world. According to that knowledge it (the soul) will not perish, but will receive the reward which it deserves; as God says (ix, 121): "Verily, God wastes not the reward of those who act righteously".

So much is quite enough for those who would consider this without prejudice. For those, however, who are prejudiced, and who (in any case) intend to deny what is true, proofs and arguments, speaking much or remaining silent would be equally ineffective.

The Fifth Chapter, on the Necessity of the Nāḡiq, Asās and Imān.

The recognition of the Nāḡiq, Asās and Imān is as necessary as the recognition of the Kalima, 'Aql and Nafs. It should be conscious, not merely resting on the authority of others (*bi taqlid*). This is because in the creation of the skies and earths, and of what lies between them, we see many wise arrangements (*ḥikmat-hā*): the straightness or curvedness of the skies and earths, the rotation of the sun which sometimes stands (high) in the sky, sometimes in the middle of it, and sometimes (low) at one side of it. Warmth

and cold [49] either enter the world, due to this, or leave it. The earth rests in winter, and brings fruit in the summer. Otherwise arrangements (*ḥikmat-hā*) whose working (*āthār*) we observe in this world prove that, before this universe was created, there was a Creator who brought it into existence. It was the Creator who placed all these wise arrangements (*ḥikmat-hā*) in the world.

In man, the crowning product of the world, we find proofs of the activities of the Nafs and of 'Aql. From these we may infer that the world was produced by the (*aḡ ḡan'at-i*) Nafs, supported (*u'yūd*) by the 'Aql. When the Lords of the Truth (*khulāwānān-i ḥaqiq*),— peace be upon them,— had revealed all this to us, our reason understood it, knowing that it was really so. This is because in this world the 'Aql-i Kull is the true Imam (*Imām-i ḥaqiq*), while the faithful believers (*mu'minān*) are in possession of individual (human) reasons (*'aql-hā-y-i jurūḡ*). As (individual) reason receives force (*taḥwīr*) from the 'Aql-i Kull, it is capable of understanding this. If it had no such force, it would be unable to comprehend it. It comprehends the true parts (*jurūḡ-hā-y-i rāstī*?) of the object in its genus (*aḡ kull-i khwāsh*). 34 This is why God says (iv, 84): "Do they not meditate on the Coran? If it were not from God, then would they find in it many a discrepancy". [50] The *u'wil* of this verse shows that the Coran, as it is known to us, contains only

symbols, or parables (*amthāl*). Reason cannot understand their implications and is bewildered by their contradictions, if their true implications are not revealed by the true Imam (*Imām-i haqq*).

As we see such wise arrangements (*hikmat-hā*) in the world, and are powerless to understand them, unless some one explains them to us, God deemed it wise to send someone (*yak tan*) from amongst human beings who would explain to people the story of the creation, and would call them to follow the right way. Such a person would occupy in this world the same position as the 'Aql occupies in the higher world. He is the *Nāṣiḥ*, peace be upon him! He has the power to comprehend by his knowledge (*'ilm*) all the powers of the *Nafs-i Kull*, thus becoming an intermediary (*miyānujī*) between the two worlds and deriving his knowledge, through his clear mind (*ḍal-i rawshan-i khwāsh*), from the spiritual (*latīf*) world. He delivers it to the material (*kathīf*) world in eloquent (*faṣīḥ*) language, as God says (xxvi, 193-195): "The Faithful Spirit (*ar-Rūḥul-Amīn*) came down with it upon thy heart in order that thou shouldst be of those who warn in plain Arabic language". Therefore the *Nāṣiḥ* [51] in the material (*jismānī*) world is the ultimate limit (*ghāyat-i hamā'i ghāyat-hā*) in knowledge,³⁵ and no material being (*hadd-i jismānī*) can be superior to him. His learning of the knowledge of the higher world (*'ālam-i 'ulwī*) was done through his luminous soul

(*nafs-i rawshan*), and not through his physical ears in the manner in which we hear.

For the *Nafs-i Kull*, which is beyond time, to-day is just the same as it was at the beginning of being (*awwal-i hasrī-hā*). In the material world, however, it gradually reveals in time that potentiality (*quwwat*) which it had received from the 'Aql-i Kull. The Apostle of God, in a similar way, entrusted those powers (*quwwat-hā*) which he received by his enlightened soul from the higher world (*'ālam-i 'ulwī*), to one person (*yak tan*). That person was worthy to keep the deposit (*wad'iat*) of Divine Signs and still unrevealed mysteries (*ramz-hū-yi pāshida*). These were revealed to him in their entirety, without explanation or comment (*bī sharḥ wa bī wafā'il*). That person (*yak tan*) was the *Asās* of the Prophet who had to deliver all this to humanity in the course of time, with necessary explanations; as God says (xvii, 170): "And the Corn which We have divided, that thou mayest read it to mankind leisurely, and We have sent it down", i.e. in order that thy descendants, the Imams, by the command of God, at their own times should [52; explain thy Book to people, bringing its meaning from the form (of the letter) of the Divine Revelation (*anzil*) into that of the revelation of its inner sense (*ta'wil*) and spreading it in time amongst humanity. He, the Prophet, at the end of his life left the command to his descendants, who are the true

Imams, *Imāmān-i ḥuṣṣ*, that they should convey to people its inner meaning; as God says (xiii, 9): "Thou art only a warner, and every people has its guide".

As this world is the product of the *Nafs-i Kull*, supported (*ta'yid*) by the 'Aql-i Kull, so the world of religion ('*ālam-i dīn*) is the creation of the *Asās*, acting with the powers (*qiwāmat*) received from the *Nāṭiq*,—peace be upon him! Of all the principles of the spiritual world (*hudūd-i 'ālam-i latīf*) the first is the 'Aql which is superior to everything in the higher world. Below it there are three: *jidd*, *faḥ* and *khayāl*, in the hierarchy of the creation (*ba waṭib*). These (three) are the principles of the higher world, whence they are manifested in the lower world ('*ālam-i sūfi*). Here the *Nāṭiq* corresponds to the 'Aql (of the higher world), being the highest and finest point in humanity. He occupies, in comparison with other men, the position of the sky which nothing on the earth can ever reach. Below him there is the *Asās*, corresponding to the *Nafs-i Kull*. He is the Lord of the *Ta'yid* and the creator (*bār-khūdāy*—i.e. *bārī-khūdāy*?) of the explanation of the law (*sharī'at*), just as the *Nafs-i Kull* [53] is the master of the composition (*khudāwand-i waṭib*) of the lower world ('*ālam-i sūfi*). Below it, corresponding to the *jidd*, is the Imam, corresponding to the *faḥ* is the *bāb* of the Imam, and corresponding to the *khayāl* is the *ḥujūt*. These five lower principles correspond to those five higher principles; as the

Apostle of God said: "I took it from the five, and handed it to the five."³⁶ For this reason it is said that the *ta'yid* (divine support) does not descend beyond the rank of the *ḥujūt*. These five ranks (*hudūd*) have Divine support (*ta'yid*), by the help of which they deliver to people the knowledge of the (basic) truths (*ḥuṣṣā'iq*), by the order of the Lords of their time (*khudāwandān-i dawr-i khwaṣṣ*) and the *Nāṭiq* of their time, in order that the world-of religion ('*ālam-i dīn*) should be kept strong. Just in the same way those five principles of the higher world convey Divine help (*ta'yid*) from the Word (*Kalīma*) to the lower world, so that it may be strong.

For this reason we say that the human soul which is joined to the human body cannot become separated from the earth which is the ultimate resort of the bodies (*ghiyāṭ-i k ilhād-kā*). Similarly, earth cannot be separated from water which is its ultimate resort, or from the humidity (*urī*) of which it has been created (*farāham āwurda*). In the same way water is the ultimate resort of air, and air of fire, being derived from it (*az ū girifta*).³⁷ All these as a whole have become [54] the lower world in which all these things are inseparable from one other. (Even) that greatest circle (i.e. the outer celestial sphere) is connected with every tiny particle (*nuga*) in the body (*markaz*) of the earth.³⁸ The *Nafs-i Kull* is their guardian and guide (*niḡāhbūn wa parwardgār*), receiving assistance (*ta'yid*)

from the 'Aql. In a similar way in the world of religion the *musayyib* is in the position of mankind in the material world, his upper limit being the *ma'dhūn*, just as the ultimate limit of the human body is the earth. The *ma'dhūn*'s highest limit (*nihāyat*) is the *d'ā*, and the *d'ā*'s the *hujat*, just as the ultimate limit of water is air. The limit of the *hujat* is the *bāb*, just as that of air is fire, and the limit of the *bāb* is the Imam, just as the highest limit of fire is the firmament (*falak*). All these, in their entirety, are interconnected with each other. In the same way (in) the world of absolute truth (*'ālam-i-haqīqat*) everything is connected, from the Imam of the Truth (*Imām-i-haqiq*) down to that weak *musayyib* who is like (one of) the smallest particles of earth (*tanūn nuqtā'i zamīn*), so that nothing is left out of the system. The *Asās* is the guardian and guide (*nigāhbān wa parwardgār*) of all these ranks (*hudūd*), by the power of the Divine help (*u'yūd*) which he receives without any intermediary, just like the guardianship of the *Nafs-i Kull* of the lower world, which it exercises with the *u'yūd* of the 'Aql. Every rank mentioned above occupies the position of the Imam in relation to those ranks which are below him, in the order mentioned. And God (55) says (xvii, 73): "The day when We will call all men through their leaders (Imam)", i.e. the *musayyib* through his *ma'dhūn*, the latter through his *dā*, the latter through his *hujat*, and so forth, up to

the *Asās* and *Nāziq*. Similarly, the Apostle of God says: "We are from the Light of God, and our associates (*sh'ūn-nā*) are like a blessed tree which has roots, fruits and leaves, just as every tree has".

By the sense of this *ḥadīth* every *mu'min* who swears allegiance to the Imam of the time becomes one of the descendants of *Muṣṭafā* (peace be upon him!), thus being of the Divine Light. His return therefore will be to that place to which the whole tree shall return, because he has become one of its leaves. When the *mu'min* becomes associated with the true holy family (*khandān-i-haqiq*), and accepts the true doctrine (*ḥaqiq*), (56) obeying it explicitly and implicitly (*ba-zāhir wa bāḥin*), he, although weak in the world, will come into the circle (*dā'ira*) of the Imam of his time, and will attain a great position, on his own merits, as God says (ii, 24): "Verily, God is not ashamed to set forth a parable of a gnat for anything above it". The *u'yūd* of this is that the gnat, small as it is, has the likeness of an elephant which is the largest animal. Thus it is potentially not so weak as to be unable to have that likeness in form. This symbolises the weak *musayyib* who spiritually is as small as a gnat. When he swears allegiance to the Lord of his time and obeys him as much as he can, he, with his weakness, receives a share in the position of his Lord, just as the gnat has the form of an elephant by creation, despite its small size.

Therefore when man who is the crown of creation obeys the ranks of the lower world (*ḥuḥūd-i sūfiā*), [57] he will return to the Creator who is the 'Aql, and through it he will reach the higher world. He will then, just as the 'Aql-i Kull, offer God the worship of thanksgiving, having no other form of worship to offer. When the souls of the obedient slaves of God reach the higher world, they have no other form of worship than offering thanks to the Creator, as God says in the story of those who enjoy rest in Paradise (c. 10-11): "And their salutation therein shall be *salām* (peace). And the last of their invocations will be: praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds!"

Thus we have outlined the principles (*murāb*) of religion, the higher and the lower, all that every *mu'min* is required to know.

The seven high principles (*ḥudū-i 'ulwī*) which are called *ḥudū-i 'ulwī*, or "high letters", and which are regarded as symbols of predestination (*qadar*), are seven letters. Briefly, the story [58] is this: you must know that a letter (*ḥarf*) is a token (lit. "edge", *kanāra*) of things. The Prophets were standing between these two worlds. By their spiritual (*ḥarf*) selves they formed the "edge" (*kanāra*) of the spiritual world, while by their bodies they formed the "edge" of this material world. Every Prophet that came (to humanity) occupied a position on the "edge" of that world,

possessing the power to derive advantage (*ḥā'idar*=knowledge) from that world, and deliver it to this world. The *Qā'im*,—may his prayers be upon us!—being the ultimate highest point (*ghāyani'l-ghāyāt*) of the creation, for whose sake the *Nafs-i Kull* has produced this world, has the most perfect share in that (higher) world. It may even be said that the perfection (*imāmī*) of the *Nafs-i Kull* depends on him (*ba-d-ū'sū*).

One must know that Adam had the "edge" (of the higher world) which is denoted by the letter *n* (*nān*). The "edge" of Moses is denoted by *y* (*yā*), while that of the *Qā'im* will be denoted by *r* (*rā*). This position (*maqām*) has become the last. 39 First they invoke Muḥammad, and after him the *Qā'im*. Muḥammad's "edge" is denoted by *d* (*dāl*). Every one of these letters has an explanation, but we have agreed in this treatise, as was mentioned at the beginning, to follow in it the principle of brevity.

Thus, when the *mu'min* recognizes the meaning of each of these letters, and acquires firm faith in the greatness of each [59] as denoting the position of the Apostles of God, he will be satisfied. 40 This is because however much we may try to explain (all this), human speech will never be able to convey a complete idea of the (real) properties of spiritual principles (*ḥudū-i ḥuḥūd-i rūḥānī*). Speech is material (*ḥim*), being composed of letters (and sounds produced

by the palate or tongue and air. But by material things one cannot explain anything except for the material. The intelligent student who reads this chapter will understand that what we have said here is true. And the supreme truth is that we are bound to obey as humble slaves the Lord of the time, the prayers of God be upon his slaves, the *mu'mins*: May God help and assist us!

The Sixth Chapter, on the Reward and Punishment after Death.

One must know that the rectification of that defect (*nuzjān*) which is inherent in the *Nafs-i Kull* will be achieved at the manifestation of the *Qā'im-i Qiyāmat*, the one "Who riseth at the Resurrection Day",— peace be upon his mention (*alā dhikr-hi's-salām*)!— (He is the one) whose advent is the purpose of the creation of the world. By him the rectification of that defect will be achieved, and he is the implied purpose (*ma'nā*) of this world. All that exists is like a word, or the sound of it, and he is its meaning (*maḥlūḡ*), from all eternity. All that exists is straw and bark (compared with him). All the great Prophets came into this world to warn humanity of his impending advent. [60] They uttered their warnings, frightening the people with his power (to punish them); as God says (lxxviii, 1-3): "Of what do they ask each other?

Of the mighty information whereon they do dispute". When he comes, the auspicious constellations will all shine in the sky under his control, while the skies and all that they contain will become impotent (to cause evil), obeying him as humble slaves. He will eradicate violence, lies, atheism and fraud from the world by his authority, which he will receive from God, as *Muḥṣabī* says,— peace be upon him! "Even if there remains (of the destined duration of time) only a single day, God will prolong it until there comes a man, a descendant of mine, who will fill the earth with equity and justice even as it has been filled with oppression and injustice". [61]

When he will put right the affairs of the material world, and when religion is purified by his power, atheism and disobedience to God will vacate this world, as God says (lxxxii, 19): "The day when no soul shall control aught for another. And the command then will belong to God", i.e. that "except for the order of the *Qā'im*,— the greatest greetings be to him!— no one will act at that time, while to-day everybody amongst the enemies of religion picks up an alleged prophet who gathers a band of people around himself presenting them as a community of his followers, issuing to them orders and prohibitions, while they acknowledge his authority. God says (lx, 31): "They take their priests and ascetics as their lords instead of God". This means: the Christians and

monks take their priests and headmen as gods, i.e. they have turned away their faces from (the obedience to) the commandment of the Prophet with regard to his *Asās*, which was issued by the command of God. They, by their caprice, obey the enemies of religion.

Thereafter the *Qā'im*,— peace be upon him!—will depart from this [62] world, and go to the higher world (*'ālam-i 'alvi*), where the *Nafs-i Kull* through him will attain the position of the *'Aql-i Kull*, while every soul, those of the *mu'mins* and of sinners, will receive from the *Qā'im* the reward or punishment which they deserve. Those who were obedient to the Imam (of their time) and followed him, recognizing the *Qā'im* (who was to come) on the destined day, and believed in the truth (of the prophecy concerning) his advent, will all become associated with the *Nafs-i Kull*, returning in company with it to the Word (*Kalima*) of God. Blessings and eternal strength, peace and eternal happiness will immediately descend upon them, because peace, bliss and might belong to it (the *Nafs-i Kull* or the Word?) while knowledge and mercy will be contained in their substance, never separating from it. Those *mu'mins* who thus return to the Word (*Kalima*) of God, will receive untold and unimaginable good, peace, bounty and ease. Whatever any one of them wishes will instantly become available to him, without need for the use of any intermediary (means to obtain it), as God says (xliii,

71): "Therein is what souls desire and eyes shall be delighted, and ye therein shall dwell". [63] It may be said that thought cannot visualize what the fortunate souls will receive, as God says (xxvii, 17): "No souls know what is reserved for them of cheerfulness for eye, as a reward for that which they have done". And *Muṣafī*,— peace be upon him!— said, describing Paradise: "There is therein that which the eye has never seen, nor the ear heard, nor thought passed in the mind of man".

But as for those souls who do not obey God, do not know the purpose of the creation of the world, do not recognize the *Qā'im*,— peace be upon him!— they belonged to the crowd which imagined they could go to God, [64] without recognizing His laws (*ḥudūd*). (They will perish) as God says (iv, 135): "Who so disbelieves God, His angels, His Apostle and the Last Day, has committed a grave error". But the one who does not believe in God is he who does not recognize as true (*ba-ḥaqqiqat*) the position (*ḥādīd*) of the Prophet. He who does not believe in angels does not recognize the *Asās*, and does not believe in him. Those who do not believe in the Revealed Books are *kāfirs* who deny recognition to the Imams, the lords of *al-'ālam*. Those who do not believe in the Apostles of God do not recognize the *ḥujjats* and *dā'īs* who are messengers (*rasūl*). And the one who does not believe in the Last Day (*Rūz-i Ākhirat*) is an unbeliever (*kāfir*) who

denies the advent of the Qā'im, — peace be upon him! He will therefore receive punishment, and if all the sufferings, tortments and pains in the world be collected, they will form but the smallest portion of that which is due to him. That punishment will come into the soul without any intermediary, or means to stop it (*bāz-dāranda*). [65] Every time the disobedient souls think that they may become accustomed to the torment and bear it easily, their torture will start afresh, as God says (iv, 59): "Verily, those who disbelieve Our signs, We will broil them with fire; whenever their skins are well done, then We will change them for other skins, that they may taste the torture". The "signs of God" are the true Imams (*Imāmān-i haqq*). The souls of the *mu'mins* will see the souls of the sinners whose torments from this will grow more intense. The sinners will (not!) see the Qā'im, — peace be upon him! He will take the restfulness (*raḥat*) of the disobedient souls and add it to the share of the *mu'mins*, as God says (lxxxiii, 15-17): "No, from their Lord they will be veiled on that day. [66] And then, verily, they shall broil in Hell. Then it shall be said: this is what you once did call a lie". This means that God the All-High swears to those people who have turned away their faces from the true Imams and did not profess faith in the Qā'im of the Resurrection. On that day they will be prevented from seeing their Creator, i.e. the Qā'im, — peace be

upon him! Whoever recognized him in this world, knew his mission, and professed faith in him, will on that day receive a reward from the Qā'im, in proportion to his knowledge (*ma'rifat*). But those who have not recognized him — the noblest greetings be upon him! — when seeing him (the Qā'im) in that world, will think, observing his glory and might, that he is God. They will get eternal punishment. Such will be the reward and punishment meted out by him (the Qā'im) to people, because both light and smoke come from fire, burning as well as comforting warmth. Warmth and light are the share of the *mu'mins*, and burning and smoke are [67] the share of sinners.

With regard to knowledge of the condition (*ḥāl*) of souls before the advent of the Qā'im, — peace be upon him! — both in the case of the *mu'min* and the idolater (*mushrik*), it will be like that of a tree in winter. One tree may remain fresh and full of juice (during the winter), while another becomes dry, deprived of its roots. In winter both look the same, but that living tree has an "eye" watching for the advent of the spring. When spring comes, green leaves come out of it and flowers of good smell and colour; fruit, sweet of taste, well shaped and scented with muscus will appear on it then. If that tree were a man, he would be very happy. But that tree whose roots have been cut, and which has become dry, will

with the advent of spring-time become darker and drier with every day, and its branches will fall down. It will break and burn when rot sets in. 41 If tree like that were a man, he would be very sorrowful, deploring the chance he has missed of attaining happiness with the advent and manifestation of the Sun [58] with its glory (*Jahāf*). (On the contrary, the *mu'min* will be on that day in the higher world (*'ālam-i 'ulwi*) like that living tree which had an "eye" for the advent of the *Qā'im*,—peace be upon him!—attaining eternal bliss (*r.āḥat-i jāvidi*). And the disobedient soul, in the higher world (*'ālam-i 'ulwi*) will be like that dried tree which always fears lest it will be burnt to-morrow, when the *Qā'im* makes his appearance (*q.ūm-i*).

For all these reasons the human soul may find peace in knowing these Six Chapters which we offer in this book, and in following its advice in all sincerity (*bu-rā'at*). This book deals with the man who recognizes the (importance of the) Word (*Kalimā*) of God and attaining re-union with the 'Aql through the acquisition of knowledge of the oneness of God (*ḥuṣūl*). By his knowledge of the position of the *Nafs-i Kull*, with its efforts at the attainment of the position of the 'Aql, he will realize what was the purpose of the creation of the world. He will get rid of his doubts and suspicions, never attributing to God the All-Highest part of the *Nafs-i Kull*. He will

recognize the latter as the source of his own existence by learning the circumstances of his own coming into being. He will no longer be bewildered and in doubt as to the place whence he appeared in this world, and whither he will go. He will be brought up in the knowledge of the (real) position of the Apostles of God, of the *Wajis* and *Imams*, and the (necessity of) obedience to them. Thus, by following the True Path (*Tarīq-i Ḥaqq*), he will earn his reward. By his knowledge of (the acts which bring) reward or punishment [59] he will develop an ardent desire (*nighbat*) to earn that reward, and will be afraid of punishment.

By knowing (the contents of) these Six Chapters he will thus become eligible to dwell in the higher world, attaining perfection, just as the circle becomes complete by its six parts, and as the material thing becomes a solid body by the possession of six sides. In the same way the human soul, by acquiring with the help of these Six Chapters a (correct) idea (*ḡirāf*) of the world-wherein everything would be in its proper place, will become eternal, by the mercy of the Lord of the time, the Friend of God and Friend of 'Aql, the Imam al-Mustanṣir bi'l-ḥikmah Ma'add b. Abi Tamīm, the Commander of the Faithful,—the prayers of God be upon his true slaves and sincere adherents!

This is the end of the treatise, (completed) by the slave of the Lord of the time, the one in charge of the East (jazira'i Mashriq),⁴² by the grace of his assistance.

The transcription of this book was finished on Monday the 18th of the month of Rabi'u'l-akhir, 1295, the 21st April 1879.⁴³

NOTES TO PAGES 25- 88.

¹ This probably means independently of the help of the teacher, whenever the student finds leisure.

² What seems to underlie all these emphatic denials of God having created the world "not from nothing", is the too "empirical" conception of "nothing" which for the author merely conveyed the idea of a vacant space, vacuum. With real Stoicistic or gnostic zeal this work denies the idea of God being directly responsible for the creation, having made it from anything. The *Nafis Kull*, which is the actual creator, Demurge, has simply "produced" it, - there is no mention of what. It is also necessary to add that there is also much possibility of the text being not what the author really intended to say. Such abstruse speculations are surely far beyond the capacity of the understanding of the uneducated villagers of Qanjar who copied the text, not rarely introducing their own "emendations".

⁴ The sentence is interrupted in both copies.

⁴ It is not easy to understand the common ground on which symbol and necessity are contrasted or put into juxtaposition. One would at once suggest that the second word should be read *shar*, form, figure. But it seems that at any rate the earlier copy, the original of B, had *shinwar*, because the uneducated copyist childishly spells it as *turnar*. Of course, it is also quite possible that the earlier copies were no better than these with regard to spelling. In a passage further on in which the same expression re-appears, the spelling in both copies remains the same.

⁵ For the passages in which the term appears in this form, instead of the usual *Nafis Kull*, see the index.

⁶ Apparently repeated by mistake.

⁷ It looks as if the terms *huzi* and *nisi* in these discussions would be more correctly rendered by "presence" and "absence". The expression *huzi* here often brings to memory the *vorhanden sein* of German philosophers. The passage from these last words up to "cannot be God" repeats verbatim the passage on p. 6 of the original text (p. 5, lines 3-11 of the edition).

⁸ So in both copies. Would it not be better to read *tursh*, arrangement?

⁹ Apparently because it is connected on both sides, while the first *lam*, in the word *Allich* is joined only on the left.

¹⁰ In the text there is *'dm*, but it is obvious from the end of the sentence that it should be read *'blm*. While the expression *'blam-din* re-appears here several times, the combination *'blaw-din* is found only in this particular place.

¹¹ The strange use of the term *shar'i* in this sentence may perhaps imply its being used in the sense of "teaching the utility" of the articles enumerated here.

²⁹ Here *haidūwandi fa'īl* probably means the Imam. The explanation does not follow the original text of the *Coran*. It may be noted that Palmer's translation is inaccurate.

³⁰ The basis of the comparison is apparently the small size of grain or pieces of sand.

³¹ Strike out the *huma* after the word *ma'jīn* on p. 27, the fourth line from the bottom, of the text.

³² The author's Persian translation of this verse is obviously more correct than Palmer's.

³³ It is not clear whether this was a uniform religious tax in the community. At Nājir's time *di-hum* was a small copper coin.

³⁴ In this mutilated passage we find in both copies *ju'wīl A-wa dūm az 'Aql Kull uharī salūl ju'wī mar an-sal bi fadhīlāt*, while in B the end of this phrase is *ju'wī in-sal na-padhīlāt*. Neither version obviously gives any connected sense. Further on: A-*ju'wīlāt nūr-i* and B-*ju'wī-hāy-i nūr-i padhīnān*, the true parts of the object? The version: *ju'wī-hāy-i nūr-i padhīnān* would also be meaningless.

³⁵ In both copies in both cases *'ilm*, world is used. The second is obviously a mistake for *'ilm*, knowledge.

³⁶ This *ḥadīth* also appears in a different form: *wa'illim min ḥum wa wa'ilm dū ḥum, wa bay-i wa bayā-hi in ḥum, wa anā wa al ḥay-i ḥum*,—Dr. M. Kamīl Hussein, of Cairo, informed me.

³⁷ This is merely an echo of the ancient ideas of the four elements according to their weight: earth, water, air and fire. Each of these ultimately changes into the next one, or becomes restored by condensation.

³⁸ *Mawlū* here does not mean the "centre", in our sense, but the core, the main part of the body. The idea is that of the all-pervading interconnection of the parts of the world, everything in it.

²⁹ In A—in *magāmi magāddum ākhir shūd*. In B—in *magāddum wa ākhir shūd*. Both obviously pervert the original text which is not easy to restore.

⁴⁰ This obviously means: satisfied by grasping the truth of the idea, without the need for lengthy discussions.

⁴¹ Some Persians insist that old trees, especially cypresses (plane) which sometimes attain considerable age and become hollow inside, may spontaneously become ignited when rot sets in. Of course, it is not easy to verify such statements.

⁴² The term *ja'ira* here means not the island, but the "diocese", or "see" of a *ḥujat*. If it really was the title of Nājir's Khuraw, then he, perhaps, really was the *ḥujat* of those wild places in which he was so unhappy, and his appeals to Cairo aimed at being appointed the *ḥujat* of Khurāsān, as a far more civilised country. In a ms. containing several short Isma'ili works, and coming from Qanjaz, I have found a page, obviously the end of a copy of the *Shah-Faḡl*, with a colophon dated 1104/1692. The text entirely coincides with our colophon, except for the addition of the name of the author: Amir Sulṭān Sayyid Nājir-i Khuraw.

⁴³ The date in A has been altered, and it is possible to read 1195 in the centre, while on both sides it appears as 1206. The 18th of Rab. II was in 1195 a Friday, and in 1206 a Thursday, not a Monday, as mentioned in the colophon. At the beginning of the treatise the reverse page contains the colophon of another work, copied by the same hand as that of the *Shah-Faḡl*, clearly dated the 13th Rab. II 1296. In 1295 the 18th Rab. II was a Sunday, and such a small discrepancy is quite permissible, as probably based on the visibility of the moon. It seems, however, that the copy is older than a mere 70 years. In order to give an idea of the handwriting of the copies, I offer a photographic reproduction of the last pages of both, slightly reduced.

INDEX

IMPORTANT

Figures not preceded by the stroke / refer to the pages of the Introduction and Translation.

Figures preceded by the stroke / refer to the pages of the original manuscript, indicated in square brackets in the text and the translation. They do not refer to the pages of this edition of the text.

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ERRATA

The Editor of the "Jemāil Society" offers his apologies for the presence of misprints which chiefly consist of the absence of necessary accents. Such errors are not due to negligent proof-reading, but have resulted from the types breaking in the process of printing, on the machine. In the present unprecedented difficulties with printing in India it is impossible either to get proper quality of the types, nor receive necessary spacers and replacements for the machinery from Europe. Everything has been done to improve the quality of printing, but the circumstances are stronger than individual efforts.

Errors:—p. 3, top line: insert l at the beginning. —p. 5, top line: insert l at the beginning. —p. 11, bottom, right corner: for "nora" read "nor a".—p. 22, line 6 from bottom: insert a comma after "true". —p. 32, line 9: insert a full stop after Nafs.—p. 65, l. 14: insert "of" after "up-bringing". —p. 71, l. 5 from bottom: the broken figure of the footnote should be 34. —p. 89, note 7, top line: nisi.—p. 90, line 2: read the first word: jamāni.—p. 91, Accents have been broken in note 25, line 1: būn. Line 5: in. Line 6: būn. —p. 93, note 39, first line: in. Note 42, line 10: Sulṭān.

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