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Eine noch engere Eingrenzung von Ort, Zeit und Beweggrund der lautlichen Umgestaltung in *Allāh* zwingt zu bloßer Spekulation. Dennoch soll zum Abschluß, mit aller gezielenden Vorsicht und ohne Anspruch auf Beweisbarkeit, eine sich hier aufräugende Vermutung geäußert werden: daß nämlich die Einführung des getrübbten *ā* (und auch bereits der Velarisierung?) durch den Propheten Mohammed selbst erfolgt ist, und zwar anläßlich des Auftretens des Gottesnamens *Allāh* in der koranischen Verkündigung³⁹. Der Prophet, dem die syrische Lautung durchaus bekannt gewesen sein kann, hätte sich — in Anlehnung an diese — des getrübbten *ā* vorsätzlich und wohlbewußt bedient, um den „heidnischen“ assoziativen Konnex zu brechen und der neuen Bedeutung eine akustische Stütze zu bieten.

Actes 499—505, und DERS., The Qur'an and Belief in a „High God“, Der Islam 56 (1979) 205—211.

³⁹ Bekanntlich findet sich der Gottesname *Allāh* in der ältesten Schicht der Offenbarung noch nicht (vielmehr wird dort *rab* „Herr“ gebraucht). Genauer: die 29 Suren, in denen *Allāh* nicht vorkommt, sind — mit der einen Ausnahme von Sure 54 — der „ersten mekkanischen Periode“ der Klassifizierung nach TH. NÖLDEKE zuzuordnen; man vergleiche auch das Arrangement der Übersetzung von R. BLACHÈRE, wo *Allāh* erstmals im 7. Stück (Sure 91), dann im 10. (Sure 95), dann erst wieder im 15. (Sure 82) genannt wird. Man erinnert sich auch, daß in der „zweiten mekkanischen Periode“ der Name *ar-Rahmān* eingeführt wird (GdQ I 121), die Benennung der Gottheit somit bemerkenswerten Schwankungen unterlag — ein Umstand, der die anvisierte „syrische Entlehnung“ vielleicht weniger implausibel wird erscheinen lassen.

SULTAN BURHĀN AL-DĪN'S SUFI CORRESPONDENCE

By William C. Chittick, Woodbury, Conn.

Qādī Burhān al-Dīn Ahmad ibn Muḥammad is well-known to scholars of Turkish history and literature as the sultan of Sivas, from 783/1381—2 until his death in ca. 801/1398, and as an important early poet¹. Although it is known that he also wrote two works in Arabic, until now no one has pointed out the relevance of one of these works to the development of the School of Ibn al-'Arabī, nor has anyone discovered his Arabic correspondence with another member of that school.

Sultan Burhān al-Dīn was born on 3 Ramadan 745/8 January 1345 into a family of '*ulamā'*' in Kayseri, where his father, Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad, was *qāḍī*. At the age of 14 he traveled with his father to Cairo to pursue advanced studies in the sciences of the day. While there he heard that Qūṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī had come to Damascus. Al-Rāzī (d. 776/1374—5), an outstanding philosopher and theologian, is the author of many works, among them his famous *Muḥākamat* or "Trials", in which he judges between the commentaries of Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and Fakīr al-Dīn al-Rāzī on the *Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt* of Ibn Sīnā. Burhān al-Dīn went to Damascus and studied with al-Rāzī for a year and a half. While there he also studied the principles and philosophy of medicine from Ibn Sīnā's *Canon* with one Sayyid Muḥammad al-Nīlī².

¹ See J. RYPKA, "Burhān al-Dīn, Qādī Ahmad", Encyclopedia of Islam (new edition), vol. 1, pp. 1327—8; Y. YÜCEL, *Kādī Burhāneddīn Ahmed ve Devleti*, Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi, 1970. A contemporary Persian account of his life, the source of almost everything that is known about him and his reign, was written by 'Aziz ibn Ardashīr Astarābādī Baghdādī, *Bezm u rezm*, Tūnkīyat Enstitüsü nşr., Istanbul, 1928; summarized by H. H. GIESECKE, Das Werk des Aziz İbn Ardashir Astarabadi. Eine Quelle zur Geschichte des Spätmittelalters in Kleinasien. Leipzig, 1940 (Sammlung orientalischer Arbeiten. 2. Heft).

² ASTARĀBĀDĪ, *Bezm u rezm*, p. 67.

Astarābādī, Burhān al-Dīn's friend and biographer, notes that while studying with al-Nīlī, Burhān al-Dīn became acquainted with a certain Sufi whom he was to meet again years later when he assumed his father's position as *qāḍī* in Kayseri. In Sultan Burhān al-Dīn's own words, "God made the existence of that Sufi the cause of my success in the affairs of both this world and the next. He made him my guide upon the Path and the means for my spiritual awakening (these two sentences are evidence that Burhān al-Dīn became his spiritual disciple). This was so true that whenever I was faced with any obstacle, it could be removed by the slightest effort or attentiveness on his part". The Sufi always used to tell Burhān al-Dīn that one day he would become sultan and accordingly addressed him as "king" (*malk*).³

Burhān al-Dīn became *qāḍī* in Kayseri in 766/1364—5. Eventually he became a vizier, then an atabeg, and finally sultan of the lands of the house of Eretna. But during this whole period he retained his interest in Sufism. In fact, his involvement with the metaphysical speculation of the School of Ibn al-'Arabī seems to have become serious only in the last period of his life when as sultan he was occupied with continual intrigues and campaigns with neighboring states.

In order to understand a little of the background of the type of Sufi speculation with which Burhān al-Dīn concerned himself, it is necessary to recall the importance of certain key figures in Ibn al-'Arabī's school. Šadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī (d. 673/1274) was Ibn al-'Arabī's foremost disciple⁴. He systematized the master's teachings and trained many students, among them Fakhr al-Dīn 'Irāqī, author of the *Lamā'āt*, an exquisite mixture of Persian prose and poetry which summarizes al-Qūnawī's teachings employing the language of love⁵. A number of commentaries were written on the *Lamā'āt*, the most famous of which is by 'Abd al-Rahman Jāmī (d. 898/1492). But probably the earliest was written by 'Alā' al-Dīn Yār-'Alī Šīrāzī, who intersperses his work with long passages quoted from the writings of Ibn al-'Arabī,

³ ASTARĀBĀDĪ, pp. 79—82.

⁴ See W. CHITTIK, "The Last Will and Testament of Ibn 'Arabī's Foremost Disciple and Some Notes on its Author", *Sophia Perennis*, vol. IV, no. 1, Spring 1978, pp. 43—58.

⁵ See W. CHITTIK and P. L. WILSON, *Divine Flashes: The Lamā'at of Fakhrud-dīn 'Irāqī*, New York, Paulist Press (The Classics of Western Spirituality), forthcoming.

al-Qūnawī, and two of al-Qūnawī's disciples who had the greatest influence in the spread of his teachings: Mu'ayyid al-Dīn al-Jandī and Šāḍ al-Dīn al-Farghānī, both of whom died in or about the year 700/1300⁶.

In the midst of describing the political events of Burhān al-Dīn's reign, Astarābādī refers to a dream of Burhān al-Dīn in which he saw the Prophet. He writes that the circumstances of the dream had to do with Burhān al-Dīn's new concern with the writings of Ibn al-'Arabī and his followers:

"In those days the sultan was becoming interested in the sciences of the Sufi shaykhs. Apparently, the reason for this interest was that he had sent a pair of carpets with Shaykh al-Islām 'Alā' al-Dīn Yār-'Alī (Šīrāzī) to the holy tomb of the 'Pole of the Verifiers'⁷, Šadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī. A group of Sufis who spent their time at the tomb sent a copy of the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam* (Ibn al-'Arabī's great masterpiece) adorned with Šadr al-Dīn's own handwriting to the sultan as a blessing⁸. And of course, when a book falls into the hands of a seeker after knowledge, he studies it..."

"When the sultan began to study that work, which comprises divine verities and comprehends the details of the Profession of Unity (*tawḥīd*) and Verification..., the springs of the mysteries of Lordship flowed forth. His outward and inward eyes were illuminated by the light of the divine sciences. His lucid nature and discerning mind conceived a desire to acquire and perfect this discipline. He perused many books in this science and, with the help of holy effusions and a pure temperament, was able to solve the difficulties and obscurities of

⁶ See my article, "The Last Will and Testament"; for some quotations from their works see W. CHITTIK, "The Five Divine Presences: From al-Qūnawī to al-Qaysārī", forthcoming.

⁷ *Qutb al-muḥaqqiqīn*. Al-Qūnawī and his followers refer to their own particular school of Sufism as that of "Verification" (*taḥqīq*) and to themselves as the "Verifiers", i. e., those who verify their own findings by gaining an inward vision of the realities of things (*taḥqīq al-ashyā'*) as they exist in God's own Knowledge of them.

⁸ A copy of the *Fuṣūṣ* in al-Qūnawī's own handwriting, which was among the works endowed by him at his death, is now preserved in Istanbul in the Türk ve İslam eserleri müzesi, no. 1933. This might be the work referred to, in which case it must only have been loaned to Burhān al-Dīn (technically, as an endowment, it never should have left the mosque at al-Qūnawī's tomb).

all of them. The hidden things of the worlds of the Unseen and the Visible were shown to his illuminated consciousness."⁹

From this passage we see that Sultan Burhān al-Dīn must have come under the influence of Yār-'Alī Shīrāzī, a devoted follower of the teachings of al-Qūnawī and his disciples. Other references to Shīrāzī in the sultan's biography show that he was a trusted member of the court, sometimes even sent on political missions.¹⁰

Burhān al-Dīn maintained good relationships with the 'ulamā' in general throughout his reign and often participated in debates with them. According to his biographer, he outshone all the scholars of his day. If one can judge from the quality of his works, this is probably not too much of an exaggeration.

In the new *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Jan Rypka states that Burhān al-Dīn is the author of two "juridical works". But "of far more importance is the *Dawān* of Burhān al-Dīn, containing over 1500 ghazals...". The poems are concerned mainly with "profane love; mystical notes are sounded more rarely". To call the two prose works "juridical" is misleading to say the least. And whether or not Burhān al-Dīn was a "mystical" poet may have to be reconsidered in the light of the evidence provided in his Arabic works.¹¹

Sultan Burhān al-Dīn wrote an Arabic treatise entitled *Tarjūḥ al-tawqīḥ* in the space of about a year from 798/1396 to 799/1397. Astarābādī explains that 'Ubaydallāh ibn Mas'ūd al-Bukhārī (d. 747/1346—7), known as Ṣadr al-Sharīḥ, wrote a work entitled *al-Tarqīḥ* on Hanafite "Principles of Jurisprudence" (*uṣūl al-fiqh*, a discipline which is as much philosophical as juridical), and then commented upon his own work in *al-Tawqīḥ*. Ṣad al-Dīn al-Taftāzānī (d. 797/1394—5 or 791/1389), the famous theologian, wrote a commentary rejecting the arguments of *al-Tarqīḥ* called *al-Taḥwīḥ*. Burhān al-Dīn's work sets out to prove that most of al-Taftāzānī's objections and criticisms are groundless.¹²

⁹ ASTARĀBĀDĪ, pp. 383—4.

¹⁰ ASTARĀBĀDĪ, pp. 334, 357.

¹¹ I have in mind an analysis of the images and concepts of the poetry along the lines we have followed for 'Irāqī in the introduction to the Divine Flashes.

¹² ASTARĀBĀDĪ, pp. 500—503. I was not able to find a manuscript of this work, and in any case its importance must be judged by those familiar with the development of *uṣūl al-fiqh*.

More important for our purposes is a work which the sultan wrote in a space of twenty days sometime before the above treatise entitled *Ikṣīr al-sā'ādāt fī asrār al-ibādāt* ("The elixir of felicities concerning the mysteries of the rites").¹³ Far from being a juridical work as might be judged from the title, it is one of the most masterly summaries of Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī's teachings ever written.¹⁴ Rypka does point

¹³ An excellent manuscript in large and careful *thulūḥ* copied by someone who knew Burhān al-Dīn personally is preserved in the Süleymaniye Library. Ayasofya 1658.

¹⁴ Burhān al-Dīn was not the only sultan ever to concern himself with the works of al-Qūnawī. Although not himself the author of treatises on this subject, Mehmet the Conqueror seems to have been fascinated by al-Qūnawī's writings. At his request, three commentaries were written on al-Qūnawī's key metaphysical work, *Miftāḥ al-ghayb*. Two of these are in Arabic: *Faṭḥ miftāḥ al-ghayb*, by Muḥammad ibn Qutb al-Dīn al-Iznīqī, completed in 874/1469—70 (Ayasofya 1932, dated 874; Ṣehid Ali Paşa 1271, dated 874 — both of these were in part copied from the original —; Crh. 1050, dated 916; Ṣehid Ali Paşa 1272, dated 931; Ṣehid Ali Paşa 1273, tenth century; Hkm. 478, dated 1070; Topkapı emānet hazinesi 1481); and *Sharḥ miftāḥ al-ghayb* by al-Qirīmī, completed in 874/1469 (Halet Ef. 284, collated from the author's copy with the author; Ayasofya 1931). More interesting is the third commentary, *Mawṣūfīd al-dhāwāq bilā rayb*, by Shaykh Ahmad al-Ilāhī, completed at his *zāwiyah* in Edremit in the year 880/1475—6 (Istanbul University F. 304, 373 folios, tenth-eleventh century). After mentioning that he has been ordered to make the commentary by Mehmet, al-Ilāhī writes, "In accordance with the firm command of the Commander, ... this noble commentary on this subtle Arabic work will be written in the most graceful of tongues (*amlāḥ-i ālsināh*), i. e., eloquent Persian." Sultan Mehmet also ordered al-Qūnawī's treatise to be translated into Persian (Ayasofya 2089, from Mehmet's own library; Pertev Paşa 278 m, also perhaps from his library; the card catalogue attributes this copy to Shaykh Ahmad al-Ilāhī, but the translation is very different from the one in al-Ilāhī's commentary; Haçı Mahmud Ef. 2610; [Millet] Seriiye 911/4, a short portion of the work, copied in 1299). Although there is no mention of Mehmet in this work itself, its translator writes as follows in the introduction to another work (the Persian translation of the first half of al-Kāshānī's *Iṣṭihāḥ al-sūfiyyah*, Ayasofya 1657; the same work without the introduction is attributed by the copyist to al-Qirīmī, Rṣd. 444/ff. 61—93, dated 871/1467): When Sultan Mehmet was inspired to have *Miftāḥ al-ghayb* translated into Persian, "his blessed glance fell upon this least of his servants ... But the command of the sultan, who is obeyed by the whole world, must be obeyed ... Necessarily I strove to obey this awesome command ... However, since entering into this science of the Profession of Unity depends upon an awareness of the technical

out that it is 'held in high esteem even now amongst the *'ulamā'*," but as is obvious from the content, these *'ulamā'* can only be of the type sympathetic with Sufism and conversant with Ibn al-'Arabī's teachings. Besides the Arabic, a Turkish translation is also extant.¹⁵

This work of about 170 folios is divided into two sections, the first an introduction and the second a discussion of the rites. The introduction in turn is divided into three parts, the first of which discusses the nature of "Being" (*al-wujūd*) following al-Qūnawī closely. The second discusses the order in which things are given existence (*tarīq al-ijād*), and the third God's wisdom (*hikmah*) in bestowing existence upon things. The terminology of the second and third parts of the introduction is based on that of al-Qūnawī and more especially that of his disciple al-Farghānī. The influence of the latter's *Muntaha-l-madārīk* — itself based on lectures given by al-Qūnawī — is strongly in evidence.¹⁶

Unlike many such attempts at summarizing the doctrine of the "Oneness of Being" (*waḥdat al-wujūd*), Burhān al-Dīn's introduction is by no means a string of quotations lacking unity and internal harmony. It is a skillful re-presentation and even re-creation of a difficult teaching in a vibrant and spontaneous style which could only come from years of constant meditation upon Ibn al-'Arabī's ideas and al-Qūnawī's mode of expression. The fact that Burhān al-Dīn composed the whole work in twenty days confirms the impression of a complete terms of the shaykhs... it also became incumbent upon me to translate this work (of al-Kāshānī)... Therefore I have also translated it...."

In addition, a commentary on al-Qūnawī's *al-Nuṣūṣ*, entitled *Kashf al-ḥaqā'iq min bayn al-daqqā'iq*, was dedicated to Mehmet "for his study" (*li-ʿajl muṭālaʿah*) (Ayasofya 1937). This is the same work, with a different introduction, as *Asrār al-surūr bi-l-wuṣūl ilā ʿayn al-nūr* by Ibrāhīm ibn Ishāq ibn Sulaymān, known as Musannif al-Sarazī (Esad Ef. 259, Crh. 1034 m, Pertev Paşa 292/1, 647/12, Hamidiye 761/5). Mehmet's interest in al-Qūnawī is also illustrated by a copy of the commentary on the *Fuṣūṣ* of al-Qūnawī's disciple al-Jandī from Mehmet's own library (Şehid Ali Paşa 1240, dated 869/1464—5).¹⁵ Şazeli 52/2.

¹⁶ Published in two volumes in Istanbul, 1293/1876. Al-Farghānī wrote this work originally in Persian, then translated it himself into Arabic. In the Persian text he includes an introduction by al-Qūnawī, who explains that the work is based upon his own lectures. The Persian original, entitled *Mashārīq al-darārī*, has been printed in Mashhad by S. J. Ashbiyānī, 1357/1978. H. Ritter published al-Qūnawī's introduction in *Türkiyat mecmuası*, 7—8, p. 27.

assimilation on his part of these complicated Sufi teachings. And his mastery of the subject also suggests that he himself had practiced Sufism for years and had attained to high stages of realization on the Sufi path.

But in many ways more interesting than the first half of the book is the second half, where Burhān al-Dīn discusses in a series of "illuminations" (*al-ihāh*) the mysteries of the basic Muslim rites, such as the canonical prayer and its accompanying ritual purification, fasting, and the pilgrimage. Here Burhān al-Dīn applies al-Qūnawī's metaphysics and cosmology to all the details of the rites, showing how each act manifests transcendent principles and becomes a means whereby man can attain reintegration into his Origin.

In the second section of his work Burhān al-Dīn explains and clarifies in great detail various allusions found in al-Qūnawī's teachings to the fundamental importance of the Sharīte ritual for Sufi practice. As far as I have been able to discern, he displays an originality witnessed among only a few of Ibn al-'Arabī's followers. It is possible that this second part of his work is based upon writings of figures with whom I am not familiar. But it is not derived from the works of any of the well-known masters, such as Ibn al-'Arabī, al-Qūnawī, al-Farghānī, al-Jandī, al-Kāshānī, al-Qaysarī or al-Jīlī.

In a recent visit to the Süleymaniye Library in Istanbul, I came across a manuscript of a third Arabic work by Sultan Burhān al-Dīn, his correspondence with a Sufi called "Alī"¹⁷. Judging from the style and content, it was written at a time when Burhān al-Dīn had already studied the writings of Ibn al-'Arabī and his followers, but had not yet mastered their content to the extent one finds in *Asrār al-ihādāt*.

The manuscript is an early one, probably from the ninth/fifteenth century, and is written in a particularly difficult although precise hand lacking most diacritical marks. Burhān al-Dīn's correspondence is preceded by al-Qūnawī's correspondence with Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī¹⁸ and a number of short letters to and from al-Qūnawī¹⁹.

¹⁷ Ayasofya 2349. Burhān al-Dīn's letters are on ff. 42b—43a and 46b—48a; 'Alī's are on ff. 43b—45b and 48b.

¹⁸ See W. CHITTICK, 'Mysticism vs. Philosophy in Earlier Islamic History: the al-Ṭūsī, al-Qūnawī Correspondence', *Religious Studies*, vol. XVII, 1981, pp. 87—104. Manuscripts of this correspondence are relatively common.

¹⁹ Copies of some of these letters are found only in two other manuscripts: Esad Ef. 1783 and Konya Mevlana Müzesi 1633.

Although the copyist has made no note concerning Burhān al-Dīn's authorship, there are sufficient indications within the text to establish this with certainty. In the second letter the Sufi 'Alī (who mentions his own name in the fourth letter) addresses his correspondent as "Sultan of Sultans... Burhān al-Dīn", and then proceeds to answer the points raised by Burhān al-Dīn by employing the phrase, "the Sultan says...". He also refers to the sultan's temporal and spiritual ranks in the following terms: "the perfect one of our age and the caliph of our time, the lieutenant of the prophet Muṣṭafā, the inheritor of the saint Muṣṭafā; he who joins together the two virtues of logical demonstration (*burhān*) and direct vision (*ḥayāt*); the holder of the two levels of direct perception and mystical intuition; the member of the ranks of the sultans of the Verifiers; he who has reached the highest horizon of the exalted ones; he who contemplates the lights of those brought nigh; he who is aware of the mysteries of holy angels; the shadow of God in the lands, the sultan of sultans, the demonstration of the world and religion, the helper of Islam and the Muslims — may God make his sultanate everlasting and illuminate his demonstration".

In the third letter of the correspondence, which Burhān al-Dīn wrote to 'Alī in answer to the second, Burhān al-Dīn quotes a passage from 'Alī, but in the quote replaces the expression "the sultan says" with "Ahmad says", thus establishing that his own name is indeed Sultan Burhān al-Dīn Ahmad. Finally, the fact that the content of the correspondence, i. e. its intimate concern with the metaphysics of al-Qūnawī, coincides exactly with the subject matter of parts of *Iksār al-ḥādīth*, leaves not the shadow of a doubt as to Burhān al-Dīn's authorship.

The actual content of these letters would only be of interest to a specialist in the School of Ibn al-'Arabi involved with the intricacies of the works of al-Qūnawī, since the whole discussion of seven folios revolves around the interpretation of a short passage from al-Qūnawī's *Miṣbāḥ al-ghayb*²⁰: Does the Supreme Pen (= the First Intellect) possess knowledge of all things known by God, or only of those things which are predestined for existence in the world? Burhān al-Dīn

²⁰ This work was published on the margin of its commentary by al-Fanārī, *Miṣbāḥ al-ḥayāt*, Tehran, 1323/1905—6.

maintains the second position, while 'Alī holds the first. Several quotations are assembled from the above work as well as from al-Qūnawī's other major texts on metaphysics: *al-Nuṣūṣ*, *al-Nafahāt*, *Tafṣīr al-fāḥishah* and *al-Hādīyah*²¹. References are also made to al-Faḡhānī's *Muntaha-l-madārīk* (under the name *Sharḥ al-qaṣṣidah*, since it is a commentary on a *qaṣṣidah* by Ibn al-Fāriq) and al-Kāshānī, the commentator of the *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*.

In his opening letter, Burhān al-Dīn refers to the fact that 'Alī has interpreted a particular passage in a certain sense. From this we might conclude that 'Alī was the person with whom Burhān al-Dīn had studied the text. Burhān al-Dīn also refers to the fact that 'Alī has been intimately involved with these Sufi teachings far longer than himself, thus strengthening the impression one has that 'Alī was or had been the sultan's teacher. Then Burhān al-Dīn expresses his dissatisfaction with 'Alī's interpretation and proposes his own.

In his answer to this letter 'Alī praises the sultan for his comprehension and profundity and protests that there is nothing he can add to what the sultan has said. "It is a condition of the level of servanthood that I content myself with the sultan's words... as Rūmī has stated in his *Maṭnawī*,

"Although the king should sit with you on the ground, know your own rank and sit more politely than he" (II, 341). But since the sultan has indicated orally to his servant that he should write something on this problem... it is incumbent for him to obey." Then 'Alī proceeds to enumerate and reject each of Burhān al-Dīn's arguments.

In the third letter of the series, Burhān al-Dīn in turn rejects each of 'Alī's arguments with interesting interpretations of some of the most difficult points of al-Qūnawī's metaphysics²², and then adds a list of

²¹ The first three of these works have been published: *al-Nuṣūṣ*, appended to al-Kāshānī's *Sharḥ manāzil al-sā'irīn*, Tehran, 1315/1897—8; also, appended to Ibn Turkah's *Tamhīd al-qawā'id*, Tehran, 1316/1898—9. *Al-Nafahāt*, Tehran, 1316/1898—9. *Tafṣīr al-fāḥishah*, as *Ijāz al-bayān fī tafṣīr umm al-ḡur'ān*, revised edition, Hyderabad—Deccan, 1368/1949; also as *al-Tafṣīr al-ḥayātī li-l-ḡur'ān*, ed. by A. 'Atā', Cairo, 1389/1969. *Al-Hādīyah* is al-Qūnawī's second treatise in his correspondence with al-Ṭūsī (see my article, "Mysticism vs. Philosophy").

²² The reader can acquire an idea of the type of subjects al-Qūnawī discusses in W. CHITTICK, "Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī on the Oneness of Being",

— must be read in a certain way. In your interpretation, when he says “مقدرا أو غير مقدر”, the word *مقدرا* must be read with the *tashdād*.

As for me, although it is incumbent upon me to accept this from you in the manner you have stated it without any objection, since you have preceded me in entering this science — rather you are one with it in flesh and blood — my long occupation with the exoteric sciences (*al-‘ulūm al-rasmiyyah*), my habit of not submitting to anything until I verify it for myself, and the fact that the passage itself does not support your contention except after one ignores the literal meaning to an extent which seems farfetched to me, have all prevented me from accepting your words. Then early this morning I was thinking about this problem when there came to my mind from the World of the Unseen through meditation, careful consideration and attentiveness, an indication of the fact that within the Presence of the Supreme Pen what becomes manifest is only that which is meant to come into outward existence. And although the words of the Shaykh point to this where he says, “So the thing which is meant to come into existence becomes manifest within the Supreme Pen,”²⁴ I do not employ them in my argument because I know that you also find your interpretation within them.

So here I communicate to you what has come to my mind and I present to you what was related to me (from the World of the Unseen). If you find it in harmony with the correct view and in accordance with the findings of the People of Unveiling and Hearts, then something in you has received its image from the mirror of my heart. But if you find it in opposition to that, and you know where its source lies within the

intermediate stage between God Himself and the first level of creation — since it is the locus-of-theophany for God's Inward —, the first of the entifications of His Being in the first of its possible (i. e., contingent and created, not Necessary and Eternal) loci-of-theophany. So He contemplates within that first possible-existent everything that will become manifest from the Mist, i. e., the entifications of His Knowledge within the ontological forms of the two worlds of the Spirits and the Corporeal-Bodies. In other words (He contemplates there) everything that demands outward-manifestation because of the necessity imposed by His Knowledge of it and (its) fundamental eternality (in His Knowledge), whether (it is) definitely predestined or not predestined' (the translation of this last phrase is problematic; the whole discussion of the correspondence hinges upon its exact meaning).²⁴

²⁴ *Misbāḥ al-ins*, p. 295.

other points which corroborates his own view. This is the longest letter of the series.

In the fourth and final letter of the correspondence, the shortest of the series, ‘Alī admits that the sultan's interpretation is better than his own and submits to his mastery of the text. One suspects, however, that if Burhān al-Dīn were not a sultan, ‘Alī would not have surrendered so easily — even though without doubt the sultan's arguments do appear much stronger than ‘Alī's.

In order to give a better idea of the style and content of the correspondence, I translate below Burhān al-Dīn's first letter. It has the added virtue of indicating more than the others something of the sultan's personality and the extent of his involvement with Sufism.

Sultan Burhān al-Dīn's First Letter to ‘Alī

In the Name of God, the Merciful,
the Compassionate

Praise belongs to God, who guides upon the path of true faith; and blessings and peace be upon the best of all who are hidden and visible, and upon his companions, their followers, the poles, and the saints.

Now to come to the subject: My brother in God! You mentioned that a possible-existent (*mumkin*) which becomes entified (*ta‘ayyun*) within the Supreme Pen may be such that its existence (in the world) is predestined, or not predestined. Basing yourself upon that, you said that the words of the Shaykh (al-Qūnawī) in his book known as *Miftāḥ al-ghayb* — where he says that in the Supreme Pen God contemplates all of the possible objects-of-Knowledge which will become outwardly manifest in a state of entification by outwardly existent forms, etc.²³

²³ *International Philosophical Quarterly*, vol. XXI, 1981, pp. 171—184; also “The Five Divine Presences.” cf. fn. 6.

²⁴ The passage reads as follows (*Misbāḥ al-ins*, pp. 166—7): “So through Knowledge of His own Self and through the fact that the level of possible existence is the eternal object of this very Knowledge, God knows everything which must become manifest within the first level of the bestowal of existence, such as the Supreme Pen. So He makes it all manifest. The situation here on God's part is that He views directly, within the ‘Mist’ (*al-ammā*), signifying the

parts of my own (existential) plane, it is incumbent upon you to remedy my shortcomings and save me from slipping.

So these are my words: Without doubt God knows all realities in that respect where He is free of all conditions (*shart*), but in that respect no reality is differentiated from any other within His Knowledge. Within His Unseen Knowledge in that respect even Oneness is not differentiated from manyness. On the contrary, His Knowledge of all realities is His Knowledge of His own Self within His own Self.

The entification possessed by God at the level of His Exclusive-Unity (*al-ahadiyyah*): where nothing is differentiated from any other thing) is an entification none other than Nonentification²⁵, since it consists of God on condition that He possess no entification. The entification within Inclusive-Unity (*al-wahidiyyah*) is near to this entification, although it is different from Nonentification, since it consists of God on condition that He possess only this amount of entification: that "one" is one-half of "two". Without doubt, the possible realities are not differentiated from one another within these two levels.

In addition, since the entification possessed by the Level of Divinity (*martabat al-ūlah*): the next level after Inclusive-Unity comprises Being and Knowledge, within this level and in keeping with it Oneness and manyness are brought together, both inwardly and outwardly (that "Being is One" is the basic axiom of this school of Sufism; and God's Knowledge embraces multiplicity since He knows all things). Hence at the Level of Divinity the realities become differentiated from one another; and the Divine Knowledge comprises all the realities, both those whose (outward) existence is predestined, and those whose existence is not predestined.

Then if those realities which become transferred to the Pen were not those whose existence was desired and predestined and which became entified expressly for outward manifestation in the world; rather, if they were all of the possible realities, both those which were predestined (for existence) and those which were not, this transferal

(from God's Knowledge to the Pen) would have no purpose. On the contrary, it would be a repetition. But it has been established among the Sufis that God does not bring about anything repetitious (*amr mukarrar*), since this entails a certain kind of folly (*abath*).

Therefore what becomes transferred must be those things whose existence is desired, but in the manner of "summated-unity" (*ijmāl*). Then these things become deployed in particularized fashion (*tafsīl*) within the Tablet, and so on to the last level of existence, just as the Sufis have mentioned.

The Prophet said, "Verily God said to the Pen, 'Write!' It answered, 'What shall I write?' God said, 'Write My Knowledge of My creatures, that which is and that which shall be until eternity-without-end.'" In these words is an indication that what becomes entified within the Pen is creation, not the uncreated.

In the Sufi saying, "Verily possible-existence is the inkwell of the All-Merciful", there is also an indication that one dip of the pen into the ink, which is the pen's share from the inkwell, does not include all the ink within the inkwell, rather only the amount which becomes written and manifest upon the paper.

All of this with my admission of incapacity and of the fact that what I possess is the result of following others. Peace upon the saints of God, upon the best of His servants, and upon you and us. Amen.

²⁵ Here Burhān al-Dīn seems to diverge from the views of al-Qūnawī, and 'Alī protests strongly. But in his second letter Burhān al-Dīn makes one of his most interesting interpretations of al-Qūnawī's writings and maintains that in fact this is precisely what al-Qūnawī is saying.