

Chapter LXXVIII

RENAISSANCE IN IRAN (Continued)

HĀJĪ MULLA HĀDĪ SABZIWĀRĪ

A

LIFE AND WORKS

After the death of Mulla Ṣadra, the school established by him found its most famous interpreter and expositor in Hāji Mulla Hādi Sabziwāri who was the greatest of the Ḥakims of the Qājār period in Persia. After a period of turmoil caused by the Afghān invasion, in which the spiritual as well as the political life of Persia was temporarily disturbed, traditional learning became once again established under the Qājārs, and in the hands of Hāji Mulla Hādi and his students the wisdom of Mulla Ṣadra began once again to flourish through the Shī'ah world. This sage from Sabziwār gained so much fame that soon he became endowed with the simple title of Hāji by which he is still known in the traditional *madrāsahs*,<sup>1</sup> and his *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah* became the most widely used book on *Hikmat* in Persia and has remained so until today.

Hāji Mulla Hādi was born in 1212/1797-98 at Sabziwār in Khurāsān, a city well known for its Sufis and also for Shī'ah tendencies even before the Ṣafawid period, where he completed his early education in Arabic grammar and language.<sup>2</sup> At the age of ten he went to Meshed where he continued his studies in jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), logic, mathematics, and *Hikmat* for another ten years. By now, his love for the intellectual sciences had become so great

<sup>1</sup> Only the most eminent figures in the intellectual life of Islam have come to receive such simple designations. In Persia one can name only a few such luminaries, ibn Sina being called *Shāikh*; Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, *Khawājah*; Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, *Mulla*; ibn 'Arabi, *Shāikh al-Akbar*; and Mulla Ṣadra, *Ākhūnd*. In view of these designations it is easy to see what an exalted position has been accorded to Hāji in Persia.

<sup>2</sup> There is an account of the life of Hāji by himself on which we have drawn much for our information. See M. Mudarrisi Chahārdīhi, *Tārīkh-i Falāsifah-i Islam*, 'Ilmi Press, Teheran, 1336-37 Solar, Vol. II, pp. 131ff.; and also by the same author *Life and Philosophy of Hāji Mulla Hādi Sabziwāri*, Tahūri Bookshop, Teheran, 1955. The story of the life of Hāji as related by his son as well as a summary of some of Hāji's doctrines not all of which, however, can be considered to be authentic is given by E. G. Browne, in his *A Year Amongst the Persians*, Adam & Charles Black, London, 1950, pp. 143-58. Accounts of his life are also found in the usual sources like the *Qīṣaṣ al-'Ulamā'*, *Maṭla' al-Shams*, and *Riḡād al-'Ārifīn*. When Gobineau visited Persia, Hāji was alive and at the height of his fame; he is mentioned with great respect in Gobineau's writings; see Comte de Gobineau, *Les religions et les philosophies dans l'Asie centrale*, G. Gres et Cie, Paris, 1923, pp. 113-16. There are also references to Hāji in A. M. A. Shushtry, *Outlines of Islamic Culture*, Bangalore, 1938, Vol. II, pp. 452-54; and in M. Iqbal, *The Development of Metaphysics in Persia*, Luzac & Co., London, 1908, pp. 175ff.

that the Hāji left Meshed as well and journeyed to Ispahān, as Mulla Ṣadra had done two hundred and fifty years before him, to meet the greatest authorities of the day in *Hikmat*. Ispahān in that period was still the major centre of learning, especially in *Hikmat*. Hāji spent eight years in this city studying under Mulla Ismā'il Ispahāni and Mulla 'Alī Nūri both of whom were the leading authorities in the school of Ākhūnd.

Hāji Mulla Hādi, having completed his formal education, left Ispahān once again for Khurāsān from where after five years of teaching he went on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Upon returning to Persia after three years of absence, he spent a year in Kirmān where he married and then settled down in Sabziwār where he established a school of his own. His fame had by then become so great that disciples from all over Persia as well as from India and the Arab countries came to the small city of Sabziwār to benefit from his personal contact and to attend his classes. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh in his visit to Meshed in 1274/1857-58 came specially to the city of Hāji in order to meet him in person. In Sabziwār, away from the turmoil of the capital, Hāji spent forty years in teaching, writing, and training disciples, of whom over a thousand completed the course on *Hikmat* under his direction.

Hāji's life was extremely simple and his spirituality resembled more that of a Sufi master than just of a learned Ḥakīm. It is said that along with regular students whom he instructed in the *madrasah* he had also special disciples whom he taught the mysteries of Sufism and initiated into the Path.<sup>3</sup> He was not only called the "Plato of his time" and the "seal of the Ḥukamā'" (*khatam al-Ḥukamā'*), but was also considered by his contemporaries to possess the power of performing miracles of which many have been attributed to him in the various traditional sources. By the time he passed away in 1289/1878, Hāji had become the most famous and exalted spiritual and intellectual figure in Persia and has ever since been considered one of the dominant figures in the intellectual life of the Shī'ah world.

Unlike Mulla Ṣadra all of whose writings with one exception were in Arabic, Hāji wrote in Persian as well as in Arabic. Moreover, he composed a great deal of poetry collected in his *Diwān* which consists of poems in Persian of gnostic inspiration and poems in Arabic on *Hikmat* and logic. The writings of Hāji, of which a complete list is available, are as follows: *Al-La'ālī*, Arabic poem on logic; *Ghurur al-Farā'id* or the *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, Arabic poem with commentary on *Hikmat*; *Diwān* in Persian written under the pen name Asrār; commentary upon the prayer *Du'ā-i Kabīr*;<sup>4</sup> commentary

<sup>3</sup> Among his special disciples one may name Sultān 'Alī Shāh Gunābādi who later became the founder of the Gunābādi brotherhood of Sufis which is one of the most widely expanded brotherhoods in Persia today. For the stages through which Hāji's students had to pass before being able to participate in his courses on *Hikmat*, see E. G. Browne, *op. cit.*, pp. 147-48.

<sup>4</sup> There are many prayers composed by the various Shī'ah Imāms, especially the fourth Imām Zayn al-'Abidin, like the *Du'ā-i Kubra*, *Misbāh*, and the *Ṣaḥīfih-i*

upon the prayer *Du'ā-i Sabāḥ*; *Asrār al-Hikam*, written at the request of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, on *Hikmat*; commentaries upon the *Asfār*, the *Maḥāṭib al-Ghaib*, *al-Mabdhā' w-al-Ma'ād*, and *al-Shawāhid al-Rubūbiyyah* of Mulla Ṣadra; glosses upon the commentary of Suyūṭī upon the *Alfiyyah* of ibn Mālik, on grammar; commentary upon the *Mathnawī* of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī; commentary upon the *Nibrās*, on the mysteries of worship; commentary upon the divine names; glosses upon the *Sharḥ-i Tajrid* of Lāhijī; *Rāḥ Qarāḥ* and *Rahīq* in rhetoric; *Hidāyat al-Tālibin*, as yet an unpublished treatise in Persian on prophethood and the imāmate; questions and answers regarding gnosis; and a treatise on the debate between Mulla Muḥsin Faḍl and Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsā'i.<sup>5</sup>

Of these writings the most famous is the *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, which, along with the *Asfār* of Mulla Ṣadra, the *Shifā'* of ibn Sina, and the *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* of Nāṣir al-Dīn Ṭūsī, is the basic text on *Hikmat*. This work consists of a series of poems on the essential questions of *Hikmat* composed in 1239/1823 on which Hāji himself wrote a commentary along with glosses in 1260/1844. The book contains a complete summary of *Hikmat* in precise and orderly form. This work has been so popular that during the hundred years that have passed since its composition many commentaries have been written upon it including those of Muḥammad Hidaḡi and the late Mirza Mehdi Āshṭiyāni as well as that of Muḥammad Taqī Āmulī whose commentary called the *Durar al-Fawā'id* is perhaps the most comprehensive of all. The other writings of Hāji, especially the *Asrār al-Hikam* which is of special interest because, as Hāji himself writes in the introduction, it is a book concerned with the *Hikmat* derived from the Islamic revelation (*ḥikmat-i imāni*) and not just with Greek philosophy (*ḥikmat-i yūnāni*), and the commentary upon the *Mathnawī* are also of much importance, but the fame of Hāji is due primarily to his *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*.

## B

## SOURCES OF HĀJĪ'S DOCTRINES AND THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS APPROACH

Hāji cannot be considered to be the founder of a new school; rather, he expanded and clarified the teachings of Mulla Ṣadra without departing from the basic features of Ākhūnd's doctrines. The sources of Hāji's writings are, therefore, the same as those enumerated in our study of Mulla Ṣadra, viz., gnostic doctrines drawn mostly from the teachings of ibn 'Arabi, the teachings of the Shī'ah Imāms, *ishrāqī* theosophy, and Peripatetic philosophy.

*Sajjādiyyah* (Sajjād being the title of the fourth Imām) which are read and chanted throughout the year, especially during Ramaḡān, as devotional prayers. Many of them, however, are not simply prayers of devotion but are replete with gnostic and metaphysical doctrines of highest inspiration and have been, therefore, commented upon by many of the Ḥukamā' and gnostics, who, like Hāji, have drawn out their inner meaning by the light of their own inspiration.

<sup>5</sup> See M. Mudarrisi Chahārdiḡi, *op. cit.*, pp. 63 ff.

In his writings the sage from Sabziwār drew mostly on the *Asfār* of Mulla Ṣadra, the *Qabasūt* of Mir Dāmād, the commentary upon the *Hikmat al-Ishrāq* of Suhrawardi by Qutb al-Dīn Shīrāzi, the *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt* of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, and the *Shawāriq* of Lāhijī. In general, Ḥāji did not rely so much upon reading various texts as he did upon meditating and contemplating on the essential aspects of metaphysics. The major source of his knowledge, as with Mulla Ṣadra, was his inner *imām* or the guardian angel through whom he was illuminated with the knowledge of the intelligible world. As to the formal sources of his doctrines, one must first of all mention *Ākhūnd* and, secondly, *Ākhūnd*'s teachers and students some of whom have already been mentioned.<sup>6</sup>

Ḥāji, following the path trod by Mulla Ṣadra, sought to combine gnosis, philosophy, and formal revelation; throughout his writings these three are present in a harmonious blend. He differed from *Ākhūnd* in that he was able to expound the gnostic elements of his doctrines much more explicitly than *Ākhūnd* and that he was not as much molested by the critics as the latter was. It was due to this fact that he was highly respected by the Qājārs and the '*ulamā*'; the Qājārs were indeed not so opposed to Sufism and *Hikmat* as the Ṣafawids were. Possessed with the gift for poetry and eloquence and great intellectual intuition which sometimes even in the middle of a treatise on logic would draw him towards metaphysical expositions, Ḥāji wrote openly on Sufism and appears more as a Sufi well versed in philosophy and theosophy than a Ḥakīm interested in gnostic doctrines. He was, like Mulla Ṣadra, among the few sages who were masters of both esoteric and exoteric doctrines, and of philosophy and gnosis.<sup>7</sup>

## C

## TEACHINGS

As already mentioned, Ḥāji's doctrines are in reality those of Mulla Ṣadrā's condensed and systematized into a more orderly form. Ḥāji follows his master in all the essential elements of his teaching such as the unity and gradation of Being, substantial motion, the union of the knower and the known. There are only two points on which Ḥāji criticizes his master: first, on the nature of knowledge which in some of his writings *Ākhūnd* considers a quality of the

<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to understand Iqbāl's statement made in his *Development of Metaphysics in Persia* that with Sabziwāri Persian thought went back to pure Platonism and abandoned the Neo-Platonic theory of emanation. Actually, Ḥāji, like other Muslim Ḥakīms before him, accepts the multiple states of Being each of which has issued forth from the state above through effusion or theophany. It is true that Plato was a definite source of Ḥāji's doctrines as he himself was for nearly all the later Persian Ḥakīms after Suhrawardi, but this is not to deny Ḥāji's affinity to the doctrines of Plotinus and his commentators, especially concerning the hierarchy of the intelligences.

<sup>7</sup> See the chapter on Suhrawardi Maqtūl.

human soul while Ḥāji considers it to belong to its essence, like Being itself, above all the Aristotelian categories such as quality, quantity, etc.; and secondly, on Mulla Ṣadrā's doctrine of the union of the intellect and the intelligible which Ḥāji accepts, criticizing, however, his method of demonstrating its validity. Otherwise, the principles of the teachings of Ḥāji in *Hikmat* are already to be found in the writings of *Ākhūnd*.

It must not be thought, however, that Ḥāji Mulla Hādī simply repeated the teachings of his predecessor verbatim. It is enough to glance at the voluminous writings of Mulla Ṣadra, in which one would surely be lost without a capable guide, and compare them with the precise form of *Sharḥ-i Manẓūmah* to see what service Ḥāji rendered to *Hikmat* in general and to Mulla Ṣadrā's school in particular. Ḥāji prepared the way for the study of Mulla Ṣadra, and his writings may be considered to be an excellent introduction to the doctrines of his master.

The *Sharḥ-i Manẓūmah* depicts a complete cycle of *Hikmat*, containing in summary form all the basic elements of Mulla Ṣadrā's teachings on the subject. In discussing its contents, therefore, one becomes better acquainted with Mulla Ṣadra as well as with Ḥāji himself, and one gains a glimpse of traditional philosophy as it is taught in the *Shi'ah madrasahs* today.

The *Sharḥ-i Manẓūmah*, excluding the part on logic, is divided into seven books each of which is divided into several chapters, and each chapter in turn into several sections. The seven books deal with Being and Non-Being, substance and accidents, theodicy, natural philosophy, prophecy and dreams, eschatology, and ethics respectively.

The first book which is in a sense the basis of the whole work and is on general principles (*al-umūr al-'āmmah*) treats of the various aspects of Being, its positive and negative qualities, its unity and gradation, necessity and possibility, time and eternity, actuality and potentiality, quiddities, unity and multiplicity, and causality. The second book treats of the definition of substance and accidents, and the third, which is called *al-ilāhiyāt bi al-ma'āni al-akḥaṣṣ*, of the divine essence, the divine qualities and attributes, and the divine acts. The fourth book contains a summary discussion of natural philosophy (*ṭabī'iyāt*)—including the meaning of body (*jism*), motion, time and space—astronomy, physics (in the Aristotelian sense), psychology, and the science of heavenly souls. The fifth book treats of the cause of the truth and falsehood of dreams, the principles of miracles, the cause for strange happenings, and prophecy; and the sixth book of the resurrection of the soul and the body and questions pertaining to the Last Day. Finally, the last book treats of faith and infidelity and the various spiritual virtues such as repentance, truthfulness, surrender to the divine will, etc., which are usually discussed in the books on Sufi ethics such as the *Kitāb al-Luma'* of abu Naṣr al-Sarrāj.

Ḥāji divides reality into three categories: the divine essence which is at once above all determinations including Being and is also the principle of all manifestations of Being Itself; extended being (*wujūd al-munbasaṭ*) which is

the first act or word or determination of the divine essence and is identified with light; and particular beings which are the degrees and grades of extended being and from which the quiddities are abstracted.<sup>8</sup> All these stages of reality are unified so that one can say that reality is an absolute unity with gradations, of which the most intelligible symbol is light.

The first feature of Being which Ḥāji discusses is that it is self-evident and undefinable. There is no concept more evident than Being, because all things, by virtue of their existence, are drowned in the ocean of Being.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, the definition of a species in logic involves its genus and specific difference, but there is no genus of which Being is the species. Therefore, from a logical point of view there is no definition of Being; Being is the most universal concept since the divine ipseity of which It is the first determination is, strictly speaking, above all conception. Though the concept of Being is the most obvious of all concepts, yet the knowledge of the root or truth of Being, i.e., as It is in Itself and not in Its manifestation, is the most difficult to attain.

Existence, which is the extension or manifestation of Being, is principal with respect to the quiddities. This view, which we have already mentioned in previous chapters, is one of the major points of contention among Muslim Ḥakims. The Peripatetics gave priority to existence or Being over the quiddities, considering each being to be in essence different and distinct from other beings. Although Suhrawardī Maqtūl never speaks of the principality of the quiddities as understood by the later Ḥakims, he can be interpreted to consider existence to have no reality independent of the quiddities. It was Mīr Dāmād who re-examined this whole question and reached the conclusion that either the quiddities or existence would have to be principal, and divided the philosophers before him into the followers either of the principality of existence or Being (*iṣālat-i wujūd*), or of the principality of the quiddities (*iṣālat-i māhiyyah*) while he himself sided with the latter group.<sup>10</sup> Mulla Ṣadra in turn accepted his teacher's classification but sided with the followers of the principality of existence. Ḥāji, likewise, follows Ākhūnd in accepting the principality of Being which he considers to be the source of all effects partaking of gradations.

Another question which arises concerning the concept of Being is whether It is just a verbal expression shared by particular beings or a reality which particular beings have in common. It is known that the Ash'arites considered

<sup>8</sup> The relation of particular beings to extended being is like that of knots to the chord in which they are tied. See *Sharḥ-i Manẓūmah*, Teheran, lithographed edition, 1298/1880, section on *Ilāhiyāt*, pp. 1ff.; and M. R. Ṣāliḥi Kirmāni, *Wujūd az Nazar-i Falāsifah-i Islām*, Pirūz Press, Qum, 1336/1917, pp. 55ff.

<sup>9</sup> See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Polarisation of Being," *Pakistan Philosophical Journal*, Vol. III, No. 2, Oct. 1959, pp. 8-13.

<sup>10</sup> We can, therefore, justly say that this issue as understood by the later Ḥakims is one of the distinguishing features of *Hikmat* in the Ṣafawid period and that the earlier schools, the Peripatetics as well as the Illuminationists, did not interpret this question in the same manner as the later Ḥakims.

the term "being" to be merely a verbal expression used for both the Creator and the creatures; otherwise, according to them, there would be an aspect common to both which is opposed to the idea of divine transcendence. Ḥāji, like the other Ḥakims, rejects this reasoning and argues that in the statement "God is," by "is" we mean either non-being in which case we have denied God or something other than what we mean in the statement "man is" in which case we have denied our intelligence the ability to attain a knowledge of God. Since both of these conclusions are untenable, "is" in the case of God must share a meaning in common with "is" in the case of this or that creature.<sup>11</sup> The truth is that Being is one reality with degrees of intensity and not many realities from which the mind abstracts the concept of Being.<sup>12</sup>

Another point on which Ḥāji criticizes the Ash'arites is that of the existence of the images of things in the mind which is one of the important aspects of his doctrines. The Ash'arites believe that in the mind the quiddity and existence of an object are one and the same; when we think of man, the quiddity of the conception of man in our mind is the same as its existence in our mind. Ḥāji opposes this view and distinguishes between quiddity and existence even in the mind. The world of the mind is the same as the external world with the same quiddity in each case. The difference between the two comes in their existence; each has an existence proper to itself. If external existence becomes mental existence, then the object as it exists externally becomes the image of that object in the mind. For example, when we think of fire, the concept of fire exists in our mind. It is the same quiddity as the objective fire that burns but its mode of existence differs. It has a mental existence which, although deprived of the power which makes fire burn and give off heat, is nevertheless a being.<sup>13</sup>

Reality, then, is a unity comprising stages or grades of intensity<sup>14</sup> the

<sup>11</sup> The whole discussion concerning Being occupies the first section of the *Ilāhiyāt* of *Sharḥ-i Manẓūmah*, pp. 1-131.

<sup>12</sup> The theologians (*Mutikallimūn*) believed that each creature in the objective world is a quiddity including the divine essence which is an unknowable quiddity. Although this view is diametrically opposed to the view of the Ḥakims, in certain passages Ḥāji interprets the view of the theologians symbolically to mean the same as the view of the Illuminationists and, therefore, defends them even though attacking them for their literalism.

<sup>13</sup> For this view Ḥāji is indebted partly to Mulla Ṣadra and partly to Jalāl al-Dīn Dawwānī.

<sup>14</sup> In his commentary upon the *Mathnawī*, Teheran, lithographed edition, 1285/1868, p. 8, Ḥāji names these stages as the divine essence or ipseity; its first determination; the archetypes (*al-a'yān al-thābitah*); the world of the spirits (*arwāḥ*); the world of inverted forms or similitudes (*amthāl*); the world of bodies (*ajsām*); and, finally, the stage which is the summation of all those before it, i.e., the stage of the perfect man (*al-insān al-kāmil*). In other places Ḥāji considers the seven stages of universal existence to be the divine essence which is the Principle, the world of divinity, of the intelligences, of the angels, of the archetypes, of forms, and of matter. This descending hierarchy is also mentioned in E. G. Browne, *op. cit.*, p. 150; A. M. A. Shushtery, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

source of which is the divine essence that we may consider to be Pure Being without quiddity if by quiddity we mean the answer to the question *quid est*—"what is it?"—or identical with its quiddity if by quiddity we understand that by which a thing is what it is. Being has certain negative and positive qualities, the first such as the qualities of being neither substance nor accident, having no opposite, having no like, not being a compound and having no genus, species, and specific difference, etc.; and the second, the attributes of power, will, knowledge, and the like.

The quiddities, which accompany all stages of universal existence below Pure Being Itself, are abstracted by the mind from particular beings and are in fact the limitations of Being in each state of manifestation in all the vertical (*ʿālī*) and horizontal (*ʿarḍī*) stages in which Being manifests Itself. It is, therefore, by the quiddities that we can distinguish between various beings and different levels of existence. Ḥāji divides the quiddities according to their association with matter or potentiality. Quiddities are either free from matter in which case they are called the world of the spirits, or combined with matter and are then called the world of bodies. In the world of spirits, if the quiddities are by essence and in actuality free from all matter, they are the intelligences (*ʿuqūl*), and if they are free but have need of matter to become actualized, they are the souls (*nufūs*). And in the world of bodies, if the quiddities possess a subtle form of matter, they belong to the world of inverted forms (*ʿālam al-mithāl*), which is the same as that of cosmic imagination, and if they possess a gross form of matter, they belong to the world of nature. All of these worlds are distinguished in this manner by their quiddities, but all of them are in reality stages of the same Being which manifests Itself in different manners according to the conditions at each stage of manifestation.

After a discussion of the various aspects of Being and the quiddities, Ḥāji turns to a study of substance and accidents.<sup>15</sup> There are three substances, the intelligences, souls, and bodies, and the nine categories of accidents as outlined by Aristotle and Porphyry. Of special interest in this discussion is the category of quality (*kaif*) which is closely connected with that of knowledge. Dawwānī, the ninth/fifteenth-century philosopher and jurist, had considered knowledge (*ʿilm*) to be in essence of the category of the known (*maʿlūm*) and in accident of the category of the quality of the soul. Mulla Ṣadra, on the contrary, believed that knowledge belongs in essence to the category of quality and in accident to the that of the known. Ḥāji adds and modifies these views, considering knowledge to be an accident of the category of the known as well as that of quality but in essence beyond all categories like Being Itself.<sup>16</sup>

The third chapter of the *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah* concerns theodicy, i.e., what

<sup>15</sup> *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, pp. 131-40.

<sup>16</sup> Mulla ʿAlī Zunūzī, a contemporary of the sage of Sabziwār, in his *Badāyīʾ al-Ḥikam* criticizes Ḥāji's view and defends Mulla Ṣadra against his criticism. The view of Mulla Ṣadra as mentioned above appears in some of his works, while in others he also considers knowledge to be, like Being, above the categories.

pertains to the Divine Being, His names, attributes, and acts.<sup>17</sup> Ḥāji, after emphasizing the transcendence, unity, and simplicity of the divine essence, begins his discussion about the divine qualities and attributes, which are mentioned in the Qurʾān, and interprets each following the tradition of the Ḥakims and Sufis before him. Of special interest is his account of the epithet "Knower" (*al-ʿAlīm*) in which Ḥāji discusses divine knowledge mentioning that knowledge is in the essence of God and God is in essence the Knower of all things. He knows all things by knowing His own essence.<sup>18</sup>

The knowledge of God consists of knowledge of beings at several stages which Ḥāji enumerates as follows:<sup>19</sup> *ʿilm-i ʿanānī*, the heavenly science, which is the knowledge of God that creatures have no being of their own; *ʿilm-i qalamī*, the science of the Pen, the knowledge that God has of all beings in the world of multiplicity before their manifestation;<sup>20</sup> *ʿilm-i lanūhī*, the science of the Tablet, which consists of the knowledge of the universals as they are issued forth from the first intellect or the Pen; *ʿilm-i qadāʾī*, the science of predestination, which is the knowledge of the archetypes or masters of species of the realities of this world; and, finally, *ʿilm-i qadari*, the science of fate which consists of the knowledge of particulars whether they be of the world of cosmic imagination or the psyche or of the world of the elements which is the physical world. God, therefore, has knowledge of all things, and all degrees of existence are included in His knowledge.

Following the study of God's essence and His attributes, Ḥāji turns to His acts<sup>21</sup> which in reality mean the stages of Being in which God's signs are made manifest. God's acts are of many kinds and from them the hierarchy of creatures comes into being. This hierarchy consists of seven stages: the longitudinal intelligences, horizontal intelligences which are the same as the celestial archetypes,<sup>22</sup> the universal soul and the soul of the heavenly spheres, the inverted forms of the world of imagination, nature, form, and matter. These stages, although distinct from one another, do not destroy the unity of God's acts. God's essence, attributes, and acts all possess unity, each in its own degree. The lowest stage of unity is the unity of the acts and the highest that of the essence, the realization of which comes at the end of the spiritual journey.

<sup>17</sup> *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, pp. 140-51.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157. M. T. Amuli, *Durar al-Fawā'id*, Mustafawi Press, Teheran, Vol. I, pp. 480ff. It is in this discussion that Ḥāji criticizes Mulla Ṣadra for having proved the identity of the knower and the known in the *Mashāʾir* through the argument of relation (*tadāyuf*) which Ḥāji considers to be insufficient.

<sup>19</sup> *Aṣrār al-Ḥikam*, Teheran, lithographed edition, 1286/1869, pp. 83ff.

<sup>20</sup> This knowledge, Ḥāji compares to the point of the Pen before writing which contains all the letters of the alphabet before they become distinct on paper. The Pen is the same as the reality of Muḥammad (*al-ḥaqīqat al-Muḥammadiyyah*) and the first victorial light (*nūr al-qāhīr*) of the Illuminationists.

<sup>21</sup> *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, pp. 183-84.

<sup>22</sup> Refer to the chapter on Suhrawardi Maqtūl. This seven-fold hierarchy is essentially the same as mentioned above with only a change in terminology which occurs often among the Ḥakims.

In the chapter on natural philosophy, Hāji briefly outlines the physics of the Muslim Peripatetics as contained in detail in the *Shifā'* of ibn Sina and other similar texts, and the Ptolemaic astronomy of epicycles as perfected by Muslim astronomers with the modifications made in it by Mulla Ṣadra and the other later Hākims. The most important of these modifications is the introduction of the idea of substantial motion according to which the whole of the cosmic substance is in a state of becoming and the quantity of change is comprised in the measure of time. Hāji also displays the tendency to interpret various aspects of the natural and mathematical sciences symbolically; for instance, the water of Thales which he, like Mulla Ṣadra, identifies with the breath of the Compassionate (*naḥas al-Rahmān*) or the *tetractys* of Pythagoras which he regards as the symbol for the four principal stages of Being, intellect, soul, and nature.

After the discussion of natural philosophy, Hāji turns to the soul and its faculties and stages of development. There are three types of souls: vegetative, animal, and rational, the last of which comprises the human soul as well as the soul of the heavenly spheres. The vegetative soul has the three faculties of feeding, growth, and reproduction; and the animal soul, the five external senses, the five internal senses, and the power of motion.<sup>23</sup> In man all of these faculties are developed to their fullness, but they are no more than the tools and instruments of the human soul which Hāji calls the *ispahbad* light<sup>24</sup> and which is of the family of the lights of heaven.

The perfection of the soul is attained by treading the stages of the intellect and finally unifying itself with God. The soul is given essentially two powers, theoretical and practical, for each of which there are four degrees of perfection. The theoretical intellect is comprised of the potential intellect which has the capacity merely of receiving knowledge, the habitual intellect by which acquaintance is made with simple truth, the active intellect by which knowledge is gained without the aid of the senses, and finally the acquired intellect by which the spiritual essences can be contemplated directly.<sup>25</sup>

As for the practical intellect, it too consists of four stages: *tajliyyah*, which consists in following the divine Laws revealed through the prophets; *takhlīyyah*, purifying the soul of evil traits; *taḥliyyah*, embellishing the soul with spiritual virtues, and, finally, *fanā'* or annihilation, which has the three degrees: annihilation in the divine acts, in the divine attributes, and finally in the divine essence.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, pp. 284ff.; *Asrār al-Hikam*, pp. 152ff. These faculties are also outlined in Iqbal, *op. cit.*, and Brovne, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

<sup>24</sup> For the meaning of this expression which is taken from the terminology of the Illuminationists, see the chapter on Suhrawardi Maqtūl.

<sup>25</sup> See Iqbal, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-86.

<sup>26</sup> These stages have already been discussed in the chapter on Mulla Ṣadra whose terminology Hāji has adopted directly. See also A. M. A., Shushtary, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

In the chapter on prophecy<sup>27</sup> Hāji discusses the qualifications and characteristics which distinguish a prophet from ordinary men. The prophet is the intermediary between this world and the next, between the world of the senses and the spiritual essences, so that his being is necessary to maintain the hierarchy of Being. The prophet is distinguished by the fact that he has knowledge of all things which he has acquired by the grace of God and not through human instruction, by his power of action which is such that the matter of this world obeys him as if it were his body, and by his senses which are such that he sees and hears through them what is hidden to others. He is also marked by his immunity from sin and error (*'iṣmah*) in all his acts and deeds.

Sainthood (*wilāyah*) is in one aspect similar to prophecy in that the saint, like the prophet, has knowledge of the spiritual world. Yet every prophet is a saint while every saint is not a prophet. The prophet, in addition to his aspect of sainthood, has the duty of establishing laws in society and guiding the social, moral, and religious life of the people to whom he is sent. Among the prophets themselves, a distinction is to be made between the *nabi* and the *rasūl*, the latter being distinguished by the fact that he possesses a divine Book in addition to his prophetic mission. Among those who are called *rasūl* there is a further distinction to be made between the *ulu al-'azm*, i.e., those whose *Shari'ah* abrogates the *Shari'ah* before theirs, and those with whom this is not the case.<sup>28</sup> Finally, there is the Seal of the Prophets (*khatam al-anbiyā'*) the Prophet who envelops all these stages within himself.<sup>29</sup>

The mission of the Prophet Muḥammad—upon whom be peace—by virtue of his being the Seal of Prophets is the summation of all previous prophetic missions; his spirit is the universal intellect which is the first theophany of the divine essence and which made the body of the Prophet so subtle that he was able to make the Nocturnal Ascent (*mi'rāj*) to the highest heaven. That is why his light filled all directions and also that to whatever direction he turned he had no shadow. The direction of prayer (*qiblah*) of Moses was in the west or in the world of multiplicity and that of Jesus in the east or the world of unity. The *qiblah* of the Prophet Muḥammad, on the other hand, is

<sup>27</sup> *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, pp. 318-29; also *Asrār al-Hikam*, pp. 307ff.

<sup>28</sup> Regarding the question of the relation of Islam to previous religions and abrogation of older religions, see F. Schuon, *Transcendent Unity of Religions*, Pantheon Co., New York, 1953, Chaps. V to VII.

<sup>29</sup> Hāji considers the greatest miracle of the Prophet Muḥammad, who is the Seal of Prophecy, to be the Qur'ān, which in the beauty of language has no match in Arabic literature. He adds that in each period God gives those miracles to His prophets which conform to the mentality of the people of that age. That is why the miracle of the Qur'ān lies in its language as the Arabs considered eloquence to be of such great importance; likewise, in the case of Moses his miracle was in magic which was at his time one of the basic arts, and in the case of Christ raising the dead to life because medicine occupied at that time an exalted position among the sciences.

neither in the east nor in the west,<sup>30</sup> but between them because, being the centre as well as the totality of existence, he brought a prophetic message based upon unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity.<sup>31</sup>

As a *Shi'ah*, Hāji was greatly concerned with the question of the Imāmate in addition to that of prophecy and, therefore, discusses the political and religious differences which distinguish the *Shi'ah* conception of the Imāmate from that of the Sunnis'. For the *Shi'ahs*, as Hāji writes, the spirit of 'Ali is in essence one with that of the Prophet. It is the universal soul as the spirit of the Prophet is the universal intellect. Moreover, the light of 'Ali is passed on to his descendants until the last and twelfth Imām who is the invisible guardian and protector of the world and without whom all religion and social as well as cosmic order will be disturbed. Just as there are twelve signs of the Zodiac, so are there twelve Imāms of whom the last is like *Pisces* for all the stars of the Imāmate and sainthood.<sup>32</sup> The Last Day which means the end of the longitudinal hierarchy of existence is also the day of the manifestation of the twelfth Imām who is himself the last stage of the hierarchy which extends upwards to the divine essence or Light of lights (*nūr al-anwār*).

On the question of eschatology,<sup>33</sup> Hāji follows closely the teachings of Mulla Ṣadra in considering the soul to have come into being with the body but to have a life independent of the body after death. He also rejects the argument of earlier philosophers against bodily resurrection and defends the idea of the resurrection of the soul and the body together on the Last Day. There are two resurrections, the first at death which is the minor and the other on the Last Day which is the major resurrection. In the first case all the faculties of the soul are absorbed in the *ispahbad* light and in the second all the lights of the universe are absorbed in the divine source of all being or the Light of all lights. Hāji discusses also the traditional belief about the events which are to take place at the time of resurrection and discusses the symbolic as well as the literal meaning of the Scale (*mīzān*), the Bridge (*ṣirāṭ*), and the Account-taking (*ḥisāb*) of good and evil. The physical *ṣirāṭ* is that which, as the Qur'ān mentions, covers the chasm over the inferno, but the spiritual *ṣirāṭ* is the path which the universal man treads towards the Truth (*Ḥaqq*) and which connects him with the Truth.

In the final chapter on ethics Hāji outlines the degrees of faith (*īmān*) from simple acceptance to demonstration and from that to spiritual vision. This last degree can be reached only through the purification of the soul

<sup>30</sup> This is with reference to the verse of Light in the Qur'ān (xxiv, 35), in which the olive tree, from the oil of which the divine light emanates, is said to be neither of the east nor of the west.

<sup>31</sup> By this symbolism Hāji implies that the message of Moses was essentially the exoteric aspect of the Abrahamic tradition, and the message of Jesus its esoteric aspect, while Islam, being a totality, is the summation of the two, at once esoteric and exoteric. See also F. Schuon, *op. cit.*, Chap. VI.

<sup>32</sup> *Asrār al-Ḥikam*, p. 369.

<sup>33</sup> *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*, pp. 329ff.; *Asrār al-Ḥikam*, pp. 261ff.

and the acquisition of spiritual virtues such as purity, truthfulness, reliance upon God, surrender to the divine will, etc. When man acquires all of these virtues his soul becomes simple and pure; he then becomes the receptor of the divine theophanies which illuminate his being and finally unify him with the centre which is at once his own source of being and the origin of cosmic existence.

## D

## POST-SABZIWARIAN ḤIKMAT

The doctrines of Hāji which we have outlined and his influence are still very much alive in Persia. The school of those whose teachers learnt the mysteries of *Ḥikmat* from Hāji Sabziwārī himself and narrated stories about his life to them has been able to preserve itself in Persia, despite the anti-contemplative attitude encouraged by the spirit of excessive modernism, chiefly because of the life which Hāji and to a certain extent some of the other Qājār Ḥakīms infused into it.<sup>34</sup>

Of the famous masters of *Ḥikmat* in Persia during the last century, we may name abu al-Ḥasan Jilwah, Muḥammad Riḍā' Qumshī'i, Jahāngīr Khān Qashqā'i, Mulla 'Alī Zunūzi, the author of *Badāyi' al-Ḥikam*, and Mirza Tāhir Tunikābuni, all of whom were contemporaries of Hāji, and those of a later date like the late Mirza Mehdi Aštīyāni, the author of *Asās al-Tauḥīd*, who passed away only recently. Of the masters living today there are several who are worthy of special attention like Sayyid Muḥammad Kāzīm 'Aṣṣār,<sup>35</sup> Hāji Muḥammad Ḥusain Ṭabāṭabā'i, the most prolific writer among the present Ḥakīms of Persia,<sup>36</sup> and Sayyid abu al-Ḥasan Rafī'i Qazwīni, a man who is a true master of all the traditional sciences and perhaps the greatest living authority on *Ḥikmat* and who lives in Qazwīn in meditation and training of a few disciples away from the turmoils of modern life. One should also mention Muḥyi al-Dīn Qumshī'i, the author of *Ḥikmat-i Ilāhi* and a large *Dīwān* of Sufi poetry and the holder of the chair of Mulla Ṣadra in the Theological

<sup>34</sup> A list of some of these Ḥakīms is given by Gobineau, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-20. See also I'timād al-Saltāniḥ Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān, *Kitāb al-Ma'āthir w-al-Āthār*, Teheran, lithographed edition, 1306/1888, pp. 131-226.

<sup>35</sup> This great authority on *Ḥikmat* and gnosis has trained a generation of students in Teheran University and the Sepahsālār *madrasah* but has not written extensively on these subjects.

<sup>36</sup> This sage whom we mentioned in the chapter on Mulla Ṣadra is the author of many important works in Arabic and Persian including the commentary *al-Mizān*, *Uṣūl-i Falsafih wa Rawish-i Realism* with commentary by Murtiḍa Muṭahhari, a book on the principles of *Shi'ism* which came as answers to a set of questions posed by Henri Corbin and published as the *Salānih-i Maktab-i Tashayyū'*, No. 2; commentary upon the *Asfār*, etc. Ṭabāṭabā'i has revived the study of *Ḥikmat* in Qum which is the most important centre of *Shi'ah* studies today and has produced many scholars who have themselves become authorities on the intellectual sciences.

Faculty of Teheran University; Mirza Raḥim Arbāb who lives in Iṣpahān, the old centre of *Ḥikmat* in Persia; Ḥā'iri Māzandarāni, now residing in Simnān, the author of *Ḥikmat-i bu 'Alī* and one of the most erudite of the living Ḥakims; Jawād Muṣliḥ, the author of a commentary upon the *Asfār* and its translator into Persian; Murtida Muṭahhari, Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥakīm, Ḥusain 'Alī Rāshid, and Maḥmūd Shibāhi, all with the exception of Mirza Raḥim Arbāb and Ḥā'iri Māzandarāni being Professors at the Theological Faculty of Teheran University; Aḥmad Aṣṭiyyāni, the author of several works on *Ḥikmat* and gnosis; Fāḍil-i Tūni, the commentator of the *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* of ibn 'Arabi and many other treatises and a Professor at the Faculty of Letters of Teheran University; and Muḥammad Taqī Āmuli, the author of the commentary *Durar al-Fawā'id* upon the *Sharḥ-i Manzūmah*.

One cannot discuss the intellectual history of Islam justly without taking into account this long tradition the roots of which go back to the early civilizations of the Middle East and which has been preserved in Persia and in the bosom of *Shi'ism* to this day.<sup>37</sup> The outstanding figure of Ḥāji Mulla Ḥādī was able to revive and strengthen this tradition in the Qājār period as Mulla Ṣadra had done two centuries before him, and to make this wisdom to continue as a living spiritual and intellectual tradition till today.

<sup>37</sup> It is for this reason that with great obstinacy and despite some awkwardness we have refused to translate *Ḥikmat* and *Ḥakīm* simply as philosophy and philosopher even if in Persia too *Ḥikmat* is often called *falsafah*. Philosophy in Western languages is almost synonymous with one form or another of rationalism, and recently irrationalism has been divorced from *sapientia* which *Ḥikmat* and even *falsafah* imply in Arabic and Persian.

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