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TOUR CONTENT

BOOK ORGANIZATION AND LAYOUT

Facing Pages of Arabic and English

Dual Language Features

Page

Section

Line Numbers

Note Numbers

Subject Index

Custom Font

SCHOLARLY TRANSLATION

About the Translator

Translator's Introduction with Historical Background

English Translation Editorial Brackets

Glossary

SCHOLARLY DOCUMENTATION

Notes to the English text

Notes to the Arabic text

Bibliography



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Suhrawardī

The Philosophy
of Illumination

حكمة الاشراف

*A New Critical Edition of the Text of Ḥikmat al-ishrāq
with English Translation, Notes, Commentary, and Introduction by*

John Walbridge & Hossein Ziai

Contents

Foreword to the Series	xi
Acknowledgments	xiii
Translators' Introduction	xv
Shahrazūri's Introduction	xxxviii
Suhrawardi's Introduction	1

Part One

The Rules of Thought, in Three Discourses

The First Discourse <i>Knowledge and definition [comprising seven rules]</i>	5
The Second Discourse <i>On proofs and their principles, comprising [seven] rules</i>	12
The Third Discourse <i>On sophistical refutations and some judgments between the Illuminationists and the Peripatetic doctrine, in [several] sections</i>	31

Part Two

*On the Divine Lights, the Light of Lights,
and the Bases and Order of Existence,
in Five Discourses*

The First Discourse	
<i>On light and its reality, the Light of Lights, and that which first was generated from It, in nine sections and rules</i>	76
The Second Discourse	
<i>On the order of existence, in [fourteen] sections</i>	90
The Third Discourse	
<i>Explaining the activity of the Light of Lights and the dominating lights and the rest of the discussion of the celestial movements, in four sections</i>	115
The Fourth Discourse	
<i>On the classification of barriers, their states, their combinations, and some of their powers, in [eight] sections</i>	124
The Fifth Discourse	
<i>On the resurrection, prophecy, and dreams, in [nine] sections</i>	141
♦ ♦ ♦	
Notes to the English Text	165
Notes to the Arabic Text	187
Glossary	195
Bibliography	203
Index	207

Foreword to the Series

The Islamic Translation Series: Philosophy, Theology, and Mysticism (hereafter ITS) is designed not only to further scholarship in Islamic studies but, by encouraging the translation of Islamic texts into the technical language of contemporary Western scholarship, to assist in the integration of Islamic studies into Western academia and to promote global perspectives in the disciplines to which it is devoted. If this goal is achieved, it will not be for the first time: Historians well know that, during the so-called Middle Ages, a portion of the philosophical, scientific, and mathematical wealth of the Islamic tradition entered into and greatly enriched the West. Even Christian theology was affected, as is brilliantly evidenced in the works of St. Thomas Aquinas and other scholastics.

Manuscripts submitted to ITS for consideration are, of course, evaluated without regard to the religious, methodological, or political preferences of the translators or to their gender or national origins. The translator of each text, not the editors of the series nor the members of the advisory board, is solely responsible for the volume in question.

On behalf of Daniel C. Peterson, the managing editor, and members of the advisory board, I wish to express deep appreciation to the cosponsoring institutions for their gracious support of this project. Special thanks are due to the Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts of Brigham Young University and to the Institute of Global Cultural Studies of Binghamton University and its director, Ali A. Mazrui.

—PARVIZ MOREWEDGE

Editor-in-Chief

Binghamton, New York



Brigham Young University and its Center for the Preservation of Ancient Religious Texts are pleased to sponsor and publish the Islamic Translation Series: Philosophy, Theology, and Mysticism (ITS). We wish to express our appreciation to the editor-in-chief of ITS, Parviz Morewedge, for joining us in this important project. We are especially grateful to James L. and Beverley Sorenson of Salt Lake City for their generous support, which made ITS possible, and to the Ashton Family Foundation of Orem, Utah, which kindly provided additional funding so that we might continue.

Islamic civilization represents nearly fourteen centuries of intense intellectual activity, and believers in Islam number in the hundreds of millions. The texts that will appear in the ITS are among the treasures of this great culture. But they are more than that. They are properly the inheritance of all the peoples of the world. As an institution of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brigham Young University is honored to assist in making these texts available to many for the first time. In doing so, we hope to serve our fellow human beings, of all creeds and cultures. We also follow the admonition of our own tradition, to “seek . . . out of the best books words of wisdom,” believing, indeed, that “the glory of God is intelligence.”

—DANIEL C. PETERSON
Managing Editor
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A NOTE ON SPELLING

In this work, terms of Arabic derivation found in *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* generally follow the first spelling given therein and are treated as regular English words. Otherwise, Arabic or Persian words and proper names have been transliterated following, with few exceptions, the standard recommended by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our thanks to the Tehran University Central Library, the Beinecke Rare Books and Manuscripts Library at Yale University, and the Special Collections of the library of the University of California at Los Angeles for copies of manuscripts in their collections.

Ed Macierowski, Parviz Morewedge, and Paul Vincent Spade read the manuscript at various times and gave us advice and encouragement. We are most grateful for the exceptional care given to a difficult manuscript by the editorial staff of the Islamic Translation Series at Brigham Young University and by its managing editor, Daniel C. Peterson.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the encouragement and forbearance of our families and especially our wives, Linda Walbridge and Mahasti Ziai.

—JOHN WALBRIDGE
HOSSEIN ZIAI

The introduction provides a scholarly essay in which the translators situate the book in its historical and philosophical context, provide biographical information on the author, and discuss the significance of the work itself.

<<Previous Menu Next>>

Translators' Introduction

Suhrawardī: The Master of Illumination

In the year 579 A.H./1183 C.E. a ragged young man dressed in the garb of a dervish (an Islamic mystic) came wandering into the city of Aleppo.¹ So unprepossessing was his appearance that he was at first mistaken for a donkey driver.² He was Shihāb al-Dīn Abū al-Futūḥ Yaḥyā ibn Ḥabash ibn Amīrak al-Suhrawardī.³ He was born around 549 A.H./1154 C.E., perhaps in the village of Suhraward, near Zanjān in northwestern Iran.⁴ Nothing is known of his family background, but he evidently went first to Marāgha, a nearby city, where he studied philosophy and theology with Majd al-Dīn al-Jilī, who also taught philosophy to the famous theologian Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī (b. 543 or 544 A.H./1148–50 C.E., d. 606 A.H./1209 C.E.).⁵ He next studied in either Isfāhan or Mārdīn with Fakhr al-Dīn al-Mārdīnī (d. 594 A.H./1198 C.E.), who is said to have predicted Suhrawardī's death. He studied logic with Zahir al-Fārisī, who taught him the *Baṣā'ir* (Insights) of 'Umar ibn Sahlān al-Ṣāwī (fl. 540 A.H./1145 C.E.). Al-Ṣāwī's logic differed significantly from Aristotelian logic, particularly in its abandonment of the nine-part division of the organon in favor of a simpler two-part division into semantics and proof theory, which is later reflected in Suhrawardī's reorganization of the logical corpus.

Suhrawardī seems to have spent his twenties traveling in northern Syria and Anatolia, where he is mentioned as having been in Diyarbakr and Miyaḥāriqīn, presumably with the intention of attaching himself to courts. He seems to have already developed a reputation as a Sufi mystic and rising philosopher. A few anecdotes survive from this period, picturing him as an eccentric but brilliant ascetic.

Sometime before coming to Aleppo, he made his fundamental philosophical shift, rejecting the Avicennan Peripatetic philosophy he had

studied in his youth and setting himself the task of reviving the earlier philosophical tradition of the Ancients. This change was, he said, occasioned by a dream in which Aristotle appeared to him, revealing the doctrine later known as “knowledge by presence” and asserting the superiority of the Ancients and certain of the Sufis over the Peripatetics. It was also through mystical experience that Suhrawardī claimed to have become convinced of the existence of Platonic Forms.⁶

By the time Suhrawardī arrived in Aleppo in 1183, he was already formulating his new philosophical system. His largest philosophical work, *Al-mashārīʿ wa al-mu ārahāt*, was completed that year. The work presented here, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, was completed two years later, on 15 September 1186. That evening at sunset the sun, the dark moon, and the five visible planets came together in the western sky in a magnificent conjunction in the constellation of Libra. But soon the stars turned against Suhrawardī.

These were dramatic years in Syria. Nine years earlier the death of the Amīr Nūr al-Dīn, the ruler of Syria, had opened the way for Saladin, already ruler of Egypt, to add Muslim Syria to his empire. Saladin, a pious Sunni Muslim, had absorbed something of the crusading spirit of his Christian enemies. Saladin saw orthodox Islam as under threat from two directions. Outside, of course, were the Christian Crusaders, who held the holy city of Jerusalem and its shrines. But Islam was also menaced internally by the esoteric Ismaʿīli Shiʿa. Saladin had already destroyed the Shiʿite Fatimid state in Egypt, restoring the dominance of Sunni Islam there. Now, as master of Syria, he neutralized another branch of Ismaʿīli Shiʿism—the “Assassin” order in its almost impregnable castles. He forced their leader, the “Old Man of the Mountain,” to sign a treaty with him. Aleppo fell to Saladin with the fall of northern Mesopotamia in 1183, and he put it into the hands of the prince al-Malik al-Zāhir, one of his teenaged sons, to give the young man some experience of government.

Suhrawardī had come to Aleppo in the year of its fall to Saladin, and the young philosopher soon attracted attention there. He was reportedly a charismatic teacher and gathered a circle of students fascinated to hear his novel philosophical views and to share in his mystical exercises and experiences. He was reportedly adept in the magical crafts, and a gem that he miraculously produced won him access to the prince-governor. Soon the prince was Suhrawardī’s devoted disciple. His ascendancy over the prince soon aroused the jealousy of the Muslim jurists of the city, especially the brothers Jahbal, resident faqihs at the Nūriya Madrasa.

The complaints reached the ears of the grim Saladin, who was facing his own problems. In 1187, four years after Suhrawardī's arrival in Aleppo, Saladin had destroyed the Kingdom of Jerusalem at the Battle of the Horns of Hattin. The disaster, with the attendant loss of Jerusalem, roused Christendom. The counterattack came four years later, in 1191, in the form of the Third Crusade, led by the two kings Richard the Lion-hearted of England and Philip Augustus of France. That same year Saladin ordered Suhrawardī put to death. The events are probably related. Though the sources are confused, it seems that Saladin became alarmed at the influence Suhrawardī had acquired over his son—an alarm that was fanned by the more orthodox clergy of Aleppo. Suhrawardī, a Platonist, evidently sought to train the young prince to be a philosopher-king—and he was accused of claiming to be a prophet himself. Even before he came to Aleppo, he had had dealings with several rulers in Anatolia; these contacts may have been attempts to carry out the implicit political program of his Illuminationist philosophy. Saladin had met philosopher-kings before—the Fatimid caliphs in Egypt and the Old Man of the Mountain with his murderous followers—and he did not like them. He could not take the chance that Aleppo, with its location strategic for both Saladin and the Crusaders, might revolt or even make common cause with the Crusaders. Saladin sent repeated orders that the troublesome philosopher be executed. Eventually, the reluctant prince obeyed, some said by leaving Suhrawardī to die of hunger.⁷

The Illuminationist Philosophy

The nature of the "Illuminationist philosophy" has long been a matter of controversy. As early as the thirteenth century, Shams al-Dīn Shahrazūri (d. after 1288) could write, "The philosophy of illumination (*ḥikmat al-ishrāq*) is the philosophy based upon illumination (*ishrāq*), which is unveiling (*kashf*), or the philosophy of the easterners, which is to say, the Persians." He adds, helpfully,

It amounts to the same thing since their philosophy is based on unveiling and intuition (*al-kashf wa al-dhawq*) and so is related to the illumination that is the manifestation of the intelligible lights, of their first principles, and their emanation of illuminations upon the perfected souls when they are abstracted from bodily matter. The Persians relied in their philosophy upon intuition and unveiling. The ancient philosophers of Greece did the same, with the exception of Aristotle and his school, who relied only upon reasoning and syllogism.⁸

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[Suhrawardi's Introduction]

[المقدمة للسهروردي]

(1) O God, glorious is Thy mention and mighty Thy holiness. Great is Thy friend, exalted Thy majesty, and lofty Thy station. Blessings and salutation be upon all Thy chosen ones and Thy messengers, and specifically upon Muḥammad, the chosen one, the lord of mankind, he whose intercession will be heeded on Judgment Day. Enable us, then, by Thy light to be among those who have attained and who remember Thy blessings and are thankful for Thy bounty.

(2) Know, my brethren, that your frequent demands that I record the philosophy of illumination¹ have finally overcome my reluctance. Were it not for an incumbent obligation, a prior word, and a command given from a place, disobedience to which will lead to straying from the path, I would not have felt obliged to step forward and openly reveal it, for the difficulty therein is known to you. But you went on, my friends—may God direct you toward what He loves and approves of—begging me to write you a book in which I would tell what I have obtained through my intuition² during my retreats and visions. In every seeking soul there is a portion, be it small or great, of the light of God. Every one who strives has intuition, be it perfect or imperfect. Knowledge did not end with one people, so that the doors of heaven are shut behind them and the rest of the world is denied the possibility of obtaining more. Rather, the Giver of knowledge,³ who stands at the “clear horizon, is not stingy with the unseen” [Qurʾān 81:23–24]. The most evil age is the one in which the carpet of striving has been rolled up, in which the movement of thought is interrupted, the door of revelations bolted, the path of visions blocked.

Sections of the text are given the same numbers in English and Arabic, making it easier to locate corresponding passages.

These **line numbers** facilitate the referencing of specific passages in the English text.

These numbers refer to **notes** at the end of the sections.

In the English translation, **brackets** contain either references to the Qurʾan or information that the translator has added to make the text easier to understand.

Page numbers in the main part of the book are matched on the Arabic and English sides so that the numbering of the pages remains consistent with the dual-language format. Thus, page two of the English translation faces page two of the Arabic text.

(١) جلّ ذكرك اللهمّ وعظم قدسك وعزّ جارك وعلت سُبْحَاتك وتعالى جدّك! صلّ على مصطفيك واهل رسالاتك عموماً، وخصوصاً على محمد المصطفى سيد البشر والشفيع المشفّع في المحشر، عليه وعليهم السلام. واجعلنا بنورك من الفائزين ولائلك من الذاكرين ولنعمائك من الشاكرين.

(٢) وبعد، اعلموا اخواني ان كثرة اقتراحكم في تحرير «حكمة الاشراق» او هنّ عزمي في الامتناع وازال^٢ ميلي الى الاضراب عن الاسعاف. ولولا حق لزم وكلمة سبقت وأمر ورد من محل يُفضى عصيانه الى الخروج عن السبيل لما كان لي داعية الاقدام على اظهاره، فان فيه من الصعوبة ما تعلمون؛ وما زلت يا معشر صحبتي، وفقكم الله لما يحبّ ويرضى، تلتمسون منّي ان اكتب لكم كتاباً اذكر فيه ما حصل لي بالذوق في خلواتي ومنازلاتي. ولكل نفس طالبة قسط من نور الله قلّ او كثر، ولكل مجتهد ذوق نقص او كمل؛ وليس العلم وقفا على قوم ليغلق بعدهم باب الملكوت ويمنع المزيد عن العالمين، بل واهب العلم الذي هو «بالافق المبين، وما هو على الغيب بضنين»^٣؛ وشر القرون ما طوى فيه بساط الاجتهاد وانقطع فيه سير الافكار وانحسم باب المكاشفات وانسدت طرق المشاهدات.

(3) Before I wrote this book and during the times when interruptions prevented me from working on it, I wrote other books in which I have summarized for you the principles of the Peripatetics according to their method. Among these books is the short work known as *Intimations of the Tablet and the Throne*. Many principles are summarized in it, despite its brevity. Then there is my book *The Flashes of Light*.⁴ I have also composed other works, some in my youth. But the present work has another method and provides a shorter path to knowledge than their method does. It is more orderly and precise, less painful to study. I did not first arrive at it through cogitation; rather, it was acquired through something else. Subsequently I sought proof for it, so that, should I cease contemplating the proof, nothing would make me fall into doubt.

(4) In all that I have said about the science of lights and that which is and is not based upon it,⁵ I have been assisted by those who have traveled the path of God. This science is the very intuition of the inspired and illumined Plato, the guide and master of philosophy, and of those who came before him from the time of Hermes, “the father of philosophers,” up to Plato’s time, including such mighty pillars of philosophy as Empedocles, Pythagoras, and others.⁶ The words of the Ancients are symbolic⁷ and not open to refutation. The criticisms made of the literal sense of their words fail to address their real intentions, for a symbol cannot be refuted. This is also the basis of the Eastern⁸ doctrine of light and darkness, which was the teaching of Persian philosophers such as Jamasp, Frashostar, Bozorgmehr,⁹ and others before them. It is not the doctrine of the infidel Magi, nor the heresy of Mani, nor that which leads to associating other gods with God—be He exalted above any such anthropomorphism!¹⁰

Do not imagine that philosophy has existed only in these recent times. The world has never been without philosophy or without a person possessing proofs and clear evidences to champion it. He is God’s vicegerent on His earth. Thus shall it be so long as the heavens and the earth endure. The ancient and modern philosophers differ only in their use of language and their divergent habits of openness and allusiveness. All speak of three worlds,¹¹ agreeing on the unity of God. There is no dispute among them on fundamental questions. Even though the First

(٣) وقد رتبت لكم قبل هذا الكتاب وفي اثنائه عند معاودة القواطع عنه كتباً على طريقة المشائين ولخصت فيها قواعدهم ومن جملتها المختصر المرسوم بـ«التلويحات اللوحية والعرشية» المشتمل على قواعد كثيرة ولخصت فيه القواعد مع صغر حجمه، ودونه «اللمحات». وصنفت غيرهما، ومنها ما رتبته في أيام الصبي. وهذا سياق آخر وطريق اقرب من تلك الطريقة واضبط وانظم؛ وقلّ اتعاباً في التحصيل. ولم يحصل لي اولا بالفكر، بل كان حصوله بأمر آخر؛ ثم طلبت الحجة حتى لو قطعت النظر عن الحجة مثلاً، ما كان يشككني فيه مشكك.

(٤) وما ذكرته من علم الانوار وجميع ما بيتنى عليه وغيره يساعدي عليه كل من سلك سبيل الله عزّ وجلّ وهو ذوق امام الحكمة ورئيسها افلاطون صاحب الايد والنور؛ وكذا من قبله من زمان والد الحكماء هرمس الى زمانه من عظماء الحكماء واساطين الحكمة، مثل انبازقلس وفيثاغورس وغيرهما. وكلمات الاولين مرموزة وما ردّ عليهم وان كان يتوجه على ظاهر اقاويلهم لم يتوجه على مقاصدهم، فلا ردّ على الرمز. وعلى هذا تبنتى قاعدة الشرف في النور والظلمة التي كانت طريقة حكماء الفرس، مثل جامسف وفرشاوشير^٩ ويزرجمهر^٨ ومن قبلهم. وهي ليست قاعدة كفرة المجوس والحاد ماني وما يفضى الى الشرك بالله تعالى وتنزهه. ولا تظنّ ان الحكمة في هذه المدة القريية كانت لا غير، بل العالم ما خلا قطّ من الحكمة وعن شخص قائم بها عند الحجج والبيّنات، وهو خليفة الله في ارضه، وهكذا تكون ما دامت السموات والارض. والاختلاف بين متقدمي الحكماء ومتأخريهم إنّما هو في الالفاظ واختلاف عاداتهم في التصريح والتعريض. والكل قائلون بالعوالم الثلاثة متفقون على التوحيد لا نزاع بينهم في اصول المسائل.

In the English translation, brackets contain either references to the Qur'an or information that the translator has added to make the text easier to understand.

3

Suhrawardī's Introduction

Teacher [Aristotle] was very great, profound, and insightful, one ought not exaggerate about him so as to disparage his master. Among them are the messengers and lawgivers such as Agathadæmon, Hermes, Asclepius, and others.

5 (5) The ranks of philosophers are many, and they fall into these classes: a divine philosopher proficient in intuitive philosophy¹² but lacking discursive philosophy; a discursive philosopher lacking intuitive philosophy; a divine philosopher proficient in both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy; a divine philosopher proficient in intuitive philosophy but of middle ability or weak in discursive philosophy; a philosopher proficient in discursive philosophy but of middle ability or weak in intuitive philosophy; a student of both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy; a student of only intuitive philosophy; and a student of only discursive philosophy. Should it happen that in some period there be
10 a philosopher proficient in both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy, he will be the ruler by right and the vicegerent of God. Should it happen that this not be the case, then rulership will belong to a philosopher proficient in intuitive philosophy but of middle ability in discursive philosophy. Should these qualities not coincide, rulership belongs to a
15 philosopher who is proficient in intuitive philosophy but who lacks discursive philosophy.¹³ The world will never be without a philosopher proficient in intuitive philosophy. Authority on God's earth will never belong to the proficient discursive philosopher who has not become proficient in intuitive philosophy, for the world will never be without one
20 proficient in intuitive philosophy—one more worthy than he who is only a discursive philosopher—for the vicegerency requires direct knowledge. By this authority I do not mean political power. The leader with intuitive philosophy may indeed rule openly,¹⁴ or he may be hidden—the one whom the multitude call “the Pole.”¹⁵ He will have authority even if he is
25 in the deepest obscurity. When the government is in his hands, the age will be enlightened; but if the age is without divine rule, darkness will be triumphant. The best student is the student of both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy. Next is the student of intuitive philosophy, and then the student of discursive philosophy.

حكمة الاشراف

٣

والمعلم الأول، وان كان كبير القدر عظيم الشأن بعيد الغور تام النظر، لا يجوز المبالغة فيه على وجه يفضي الى الازدراء^٩ باستاذة^٩. ومن جملتهم جماعة من ارباب^{١٠} السفارة والشارعين مثل اغاثاذيمون وهرمس واسقلينوس وغيرهم.

٥ (٥) والمراتب كثيرة وهم على طبقات، وهى هذه: حكيم الهى متوغّل فى التأله عديم البحث؛ حكيم بَحّاث عديم التأله؛ حكيم الهى متوغّل فى التأله والبحث؛ حكيم الهى متوغّل فى التأله متوسط فى البحث او ضعيفه؛ طالب للتأله او ضعيفه؛ طالب للتأله والبحث؛ طالب للتأله فحسب؛ طالب للبحث فحسب. فان اتفق فى الوقت متوغّل فى التأله والبحث، فله الرئاسة وهو خليفة الله، وان لم يتفق فالتوغّل فى التأله المتوسط فى البحث. وان لم يتفق فالحكيم المتوغّل فى التأله عديم البحث.^{١٢} ولا تخلوا الارض من^{١٣} متوغّل فى التأله ابدا. ولا رئاسة فى ارض الله للباحث المتوغّل فى البحث الذى لم يتوغّل فى التأله، فان المتوغّل فى التأله لا يخلوا عنه العالم^{١٤} وهو أحق من الباحث فحسب، اذ لا بد للخلافة من التلقى ولست اعنى بهذه الرئاسة التغلب، بل قد يكون الامام المتأله مستوليا ظاهرا،^{١٥} وقد يكون خفيا، وهو الذى سمّاه الكافة «القطب»، فله الرئاسة وان كان فى غاية الخمول. واذا كانت السياسة بيده، فيكون^{١٦} الزمان نوريا؛ واذا خلا الزمان عن تدبير الهى، كانت الظلمات غالبية. واجود الطلبة طالب التأله والبحث، ثم طالب التأله
١٠ ثم طالب البحث.

(6) This book of ours is for the student of both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy. There is nothing in it for the discursive philosopher not given to, and not in search of, intuitive philosophy. We only discuss this book and its symbols with the one who has mastered intuitive philosophy or who seeks it. The reader of this book must have reached at least the stage in which the divine light has descended upon him—not just once, but regularly. No one else will find any profit in it. So, whoever wishes to learn only discursive philosophy, let him follow the method of the Peripatetics, which is fine and sound for discursive philosophy by itself. We have nothing to say to such a person, nor do we discuss Illuminationist principles with him.¹⁶ Indeed, the system of the Illuminationists cannot be constructed without recourse to luminous inspirations, for some of their principles are based upon such lights. Should Illuminationists fall into doubt about these principles, they will overcome it by climbing the ladder of the soul.¹⁷ Just as by beholding sensible things we attain certain knowledge about some of their states and are thereby able to construct valid sciences like astronomy, likewise we observe certain spiritual things and subsequently base divine sciences upon them. He who does not follow this way knows nothing of philosophy and will be a plaything in the hands of doubts.

We have reduced the famous “tool”¹⁸ that guards thought from error to a small number of very useful rules. These are sufficient for the intelligent and for those who seek illumination. Whoever wishes to learn the details of this science—which is merely a tool—should consult the more detailed books.¹⁹

The present work is divided into only two parts.²⁰

(٦) وكتابنا هذا لطالبي التأله والبحث، وليس للباحث الذي لم يتأله او لم يطلب التأله فيه نصيب. ولا نباحث في هذا الكتاب ورموزه إلا مع المجتهد المتأله او الطالب للتأله واقل درجات القارى^{١٦} لهذا الكتاب ان يكون قد ورد عليه البارق الالهى وصار وروده ملكة له، وغيره لا ينتفع به اصلا. فمن اراد البحث وما فيه^{١٨} فعليه بطريقة المشائين، فانها حسنة للبحث وحده محكمة، وليس لنا معه كلام ومباحثة فى القواعد الاشرافية؛ بل الاشراقيون لا ينتظم امرهم دون سوانح نورانية^{١٩} فان من هذه القواعد ما تتبنى عليه هذه^{٢٠} لانوار حتى ان وقع لهم فى الاصول شك يزول عنهم بالسلم الخلعة. وكما أننا شاهدنا المحسوسات وتيقنا بعض احوالها ثم بنينا عليها علوما صحيحة، كالهئية وغيرها، فكذا نشاهد من الروحانيات اشياء ثم بنى عليها العلوم الالهية.^{٢١} ومن ليس هذا سبيله فليس من الحكمة فى شىء وستلعب به الشكوك.

والآلة المشهورة الواقية للفكر جعلناها ههنا مختصرة مضبوطة بضوابط قليلة العدد كثيرة الفائدة^{٢٢} وهى كافية للذكى ولطالب الاشراف. ومن اراد التفصيل فى العلم الذى هو الآلة فليرجع الى الكتب المفصلة. ومقصودنا فى هذا الكتاب ينحصر فى قسمين.

These notes provide additional scholarly discussion of the work, alternative translations of difficult passages, bibliographical information, and suggestions for further reading.

<<Previous Menu Next>>

Notes to the English Text

Translators' Introduction

1. The major biographical sources on Suhrawardī which include references to Illuminationist philosophy are: Ibn Abī Uṣaybi^ʿa, *ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ*, ed. A. Müller (Köningsberg, Ger.: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Wahbiya, 1884), 1:168; the edition of the same by N. Riḍā (Beirut: Dār Maktabat al-Ḥayāt, 1968), 641–46, which differs in part from Müller's; Ibn Yāqūt, *Irshād al-arīb*, ed. D. S. Margoliouth, 6:269–72 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1924); al-Qifṭī, *Tārīkh al-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. Bahman Dārāʾī (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1347 A.H./1967 C.E.), 345; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafāyāt al-aʿyān*, ed. I. ʿAbbās (Beirut: Dār al-Thaqāfa, [1965]), 6:268–74; Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār*, ed. F. Sezgin, Publications of the Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, Series C, 46, no. 9 (Frankfurt: Institute for the History of Arabic-Islamic Science, 1988), 86–93; and Shahrāzūrī, *Nuzhat al-arwāḥ wa rawḍat al-afrah fī tāriḥ al-ḥukamāʾ wa al-falāsifa*, ed. S. Khurshid Aḥmed (Hyderabad, India: Dāʾirat al-Maʿārif al-ʿUthmāniya, 1976), 2:119–43.

There are two other editions of the Shahrāzūrī text just mentioned: *Nuzhat al-arwāḥ wa rawḍat al-afrah: Tārīkh al-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. ʿAbd al-Karīm Abū Shuwayrib ([Tripoli]: Jamʿiyat al-Daʿwa al-Islāmiya al-ʿĀlamiya, 1988); and *Kitab nuzhat al-arwāḥ wa rawḍat al-afrah: Tārīkh al-ḥukamaʾ*, ed. Muḥammad-ʿAli Abū Rayyān (Alexandria: Dār al-Maʿrifat al-Jāmiʿa, 1414 A.H./1993 C.E.), 600–622. The Abū Shuwayrib edition was done on the basis of two Istanbul manuscripts but is sharply criticized by Abū Rayyān (pp. 44–50). The seventeenth-century Persian translation of *Nuzhat al-arwāḥ* by Maqṣūd-ʿAli Tabrizī has recently been edited by M.-T. Dānish-Pazhūh and M. S. Mawlāʾī and published under the same title (Tehran: Shirkat-i Intishār-i ʿIlmī va Farhangī, 1986), and it differs—considerably, at times—from the Arabic text. Part of the notice on Suhrawardī in the Persian text just mentioned has been translated into English by W. M. Thackston, Jr., in *The Mystical and Visionary Treatises of Shihabuddin Yahya Suhrawardi* (London: The Octagon Press, 1982), 1–4. Thackston's translation is based on the partial edition of S. H. Nasr in Suhrawardī, *Opera Metaphysica et Mystica*, vol. 3, ed. Seyyid Hossain Nasr (Tehran: Institut Franco-Iranien, 1970). The Nasr edition includes the Arabic text as well as the Persian translation of Tabrizī.

Often the original text exists in more than one manuscript form or has been previously published with numerous variations to the text. The critical apparatus here, based on a comparison of the extant copies of the original work, allows scholars to identify where the text has been differently composed or interpreted and in which manuscripts or editions the differences occur.

<<Previous Menu Next>>

Notes to the Arabic Text

المقدمة

(١) ط: اوهنت (٢) ط: ازالـت (٣) القرآن المجيد، سورة التكوير [٨١]، آية ٢٣،
 ٢٤ (٤) يش، ش، يو، ط: انظم واضبط (٥) ط: فرشـا وشتر. يو: فرشـاوشر. يش، ش:
 فرشـاوشير، + وفي بعض النسخ: فرشـادشير. (٦) يش، ش، يو: بزرجمهر. ط:
 بوزرجمهر. (٧) ط: عن (٨) ط: ازراء باستاديه. يش، ش، يو: الازدراء باستاديه (٩)
 ط: استاذيه (١٠) يش، ط: اهل (١١) ط: + في (١٢) ط: + وهو خليفة الله. يو، س:
 - وهو خليفة الله (١٣) ط: عن. س: من (١٤) يش، ش، ط: العالم عنه (١٥) ط: +
 مكشوفـا. يش، ش، س: - مكشوفـا (١٦) ط: كان. س: فيكون (١٧) يش، ش، ط:
 قارى هذا (١٨) ط: - ما فيه، + وحده (١٩) يش، ش، ط: نورية (٢٠) ط: بيتنى على
 هذه (٢١) يش، ش، ط: - العلوم الالهية (٢٢) يش، ش، ط: الفوايد

القسم الأول، المقالة الأولى

(١) يش، ش، ط، ل، يو، س: فيه (٢) يش، ش، ط: يخلو (٣) س: حيطة (٤)
 ط، يو: الى المثلث. يش، ش: الثلث (٥) س، ط: العرضى (٦) ل، تح: - بها (٧) يش،
 ش، ط: ولا يتصور الشركة فيها (٨) ل: المتساوى. يو: تمسم للتساوى. يش، ش:
 المتساوى، + وفي اكثر النسخ المتساوق (٩) ط: فيه (١٠) ل: الى (١١) ط: لتخصص
 (١٢) ط: وبما (١٣) يش، ش، ط: - الشئ (١٤) ط: - معنى (١٥) ط: -
 بالعوارض. يش، ش: تعريف الحقيقة بالعوارض

GLOSSARY

The glossary helps to clarify the meaning of significant or unfamiliar terms. It also provides information on how a given Arabic term has typically been rendered in

<<Previous Menu Next>>

Glossary

*The glossary deals with technical philosophical terms, particularly those used frequently, whose meaning or nuance is not obvious from the context. Most proper names and terms used only once or twice are omitted, as are many conventional philosophical terms. Terms in **bold italics** are defined elsewhere in the glossary.*

accidental light (*nūr ʿarīḍ*). (1) A physical **light**; (2) a luminous **accident** in an **immaterial light**.

accidents (adj. **accidental**) (*aʿrāḍ, ʿawāriḍ*). Attributes of a **thing** that are not **constituents** of it.

antecedent (*muqaddam*). The first **term** in a **conditional proposition**: “If Socrates is a man, then . . .”

apprehension [perception] (*idrāk*). The direct knowledge of something, whether through sensation or **intuition**.

archetypes (*arbāb al-aṣnām, aṣḥāb al-aṣnām*). Literally, “lords of **idols**,” referring to the **Platonic Forms**, so called because they possess copies or **images** in the material world that are like statues of them.

assent (*taṣḍīq*). The acceptance of the truth of a **proposition**.

barrier (*barzakh*). A physical body.

bearer (*ḥāmil*). The **substance** in which a **state** inheres. The term is equivalent to **barrier**, **locus**, and **matter**.

beholding (*mushāhada*). Direct **intuition** of an entity, whether through sensation or mystical experience; also translated as **contemplation**.

beings of reason (*iʿtibārāt ʿaqliyya*). **Conceptions**, such as **existence** and **necessity**, abstracted from **conceptions** rather than **concrete things** and thus not necessarily corresponding to external entities.

Book, he who arises with the (*al-qāʾim* [or *al-qayyim*] *biʾl-kitāb*). The mystical successor of Suhrawardī as head of his order.

caliph (*khalīfa*). Literally, “successor”; also translated as **vicegerent**. Suhrawardī uses it not in its usual sense of the political leader of Islam but in the mystical sense of the spiritual **vicegerent** of God on earth. “The lesser and greater caliphates” are fire and man.

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Significant works on related topics by both Western and Islamic scholars are provided here. Additional works by the same author are also listed.

<<Previous Menu Next>>

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SUBJECT INDEX

Depending on the work, there may be several indices in addition to the topical index. Such indices may be of references to the Qur'an, references to hadith literature (giving the sayings of Muhammad and his companions and successors), of proper names, and so forth.

<<Previous Menu Next>>

Index

- absence, 49, 60. *See also* nonbeing; privation
absent thing, in analogy, 29
abstraction, from darknesses, 145
absurdity, under a particular condition, 58
accidentality, 46
accidents, xxv, 6, 7, 46, 49, 52, 53, 58–60, 61–62, 171, 195; dark, xxvii; and light, 85, 87, 88
activity, and light, 83–84, 88, 114–15
actual and potential, 33, 36–37, 45–46
Ādhar Kaywān, xxiii
adhkār (Sufi mystical prayer), use of term, 186
affirmation, 18, 35
“after,” in time, 120
afterlife, xxxix–xli, 145–50, 157
Agathadæmon, xl, 3, 107
agent, 59
Ahura Mazda, 181
air, 61, 125–27, 135, 184; and sound, 73–74
ajzāʿ (parts), use of term, 173. *See also* parts
ʿālam al-mithāl (world of image), use of term, 186
Aleppo, xvi, xxi
“all,” as used in syllogisms, 16–17, 32. *See also* quantification
alteration, of dimensions, 53
“always,” 173
ambiguity, 31, 32, 60
ameša spentas. *See* archangels
analogy, 28–29, 175
Anatolia, xv, xvii
Ancients, xxi, 63, 109, 118, 144, 162; intuitive philosophy of, xvi, xvii, xxiii, xl, 169; and Suhrawardi, xviii, xlii, 2–3
angels, 150, 155, 158–59, 176; Zoroastrian, 181, 184
anger, 130, 134, 146; as veil, xxxix, 122
animality, 47, 109
animals, xxxviii, 62, 111, 131, 133, 134, 136, 148; and reincarnation, xxviii, 142–44
antecedent, 13, 26, 41
apprehension, 6, 80–83, 97, 180, 195
arbāb aṣnām (lords of idols), use of term, 180, 200. *See also* lords
archangels, 159, 181, 184
archetype, xxvii, 101–2, 106, 107, 108, 182, 183, 195
Aristotle, 3, 11, 180; and intuitive philosophy, xvii, xl–xli, 169; Suhrawardi’s dream of, xviii
Aša Vahišta (Ardwahišt), 184
aṣālat al-māhīya (primacy of quiddity), use of term, xxi. *See also* quiddity, quiddities, primacy of
aṣālat al-wujūd (primacy of existence), use of term, xxi. *See also* existence, primacy of
asceticism, 148, 161
Asclepius, 3
Ashʿarites, 116, 183
aspects, of incorporeal lights, 99
assent, 6, 15, 29, 39, 171, 195
association, fallacies involving, 32
astrology, 101
astronomical observations, and intuition, 4, 108
atomism, refutation of, xxvi, 63, 172, 180

TRANSLATION EXPERTISE

The translators of each work are experienced and respected scholars of the languages and subjects involved.

<<Previous Menu Next>>

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<<Previous Menu Next>>

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