

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:

'Abú Sa'íd Ibn Abi 'l-Khayr- Forgotten Islamic Mystic'

Issue Twenty Two

Compiled by Marilyn Hughes

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation!

www.outofbodytravel.org



Islamic Mystics

(To have your Questions, Articles, Poetry or Art included in future editions, submit to: MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org!)

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Having worked primarily in radio broadcasting, Marilynn Hughes spent several years as a news reporter, producer and anchor before deciding to stay at home with her three children. She's experienced, researched, written, and taught about out-of-body travel since 1987.

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The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:

'Abú Sa'íd Ibn Abi 'l-Khayr- Forgotten Islamic Mystic'

Issue Twenty Two

By Marilyn Hughes

This issue's forgotten mystic, Abú Sa'íd Ibn Abi 'l-Khayr, is associated with a more famous mystic, Omar Khayyam because of the similarities in their work.

According to Reynold A. Nicholson:

ABÚ SA'ÍD and Omar Khayyam are associated in the history of Persian literature by the circumstance that each of them is the reputed author of a famous collection of *rubá'íyyát* in which his individuality has almost disappeared. That these collections are wholly, or even mainly, the work of Abú Sa'íd and Omar no one who examines the evidence is likely to assert: they should rather be regarded as anthologies—of which the nucleus, perhaps, was formed by the two authors in question—containing poems of a particular type composed at various periods by many different hands. It is possible, no doubt, that Omar's view of life and his general cast of thought are more or less reflected in the quatrains attributed to him, but we can learn from them nothing definite and distinctive. The same considerations apply with equal force to the mystical *rubá'ís* passing under the name of Abú Sa'íd. In his case, however, we possess excellent and copious biographical materials which make us intimately acquainted with him and throw a welcome light on many aspects of contemporary Persian mysticism.

The oldest of these documents is a short treatise on his life and sayings, which is preserved in a manuscript of the British Museum (Or. 249). It bears neither title nor

indication of authorship, but Zhukovski in his edition of the text (Petrograd, 1899) identifies it with the *Hálát ú Sukhunán-i Shaykh Abú Sa'íd ibn Abi 'l-Khayr*, a work composed about a century after Abú Sa'íd's death by one of his descendants whose name is unknown. He was a cousin of Muḥammad ibnu 'l-Munawwar, the great-great-grandson of Abú Sa'íd.

Using the *Hálát ú Sukhunán* as a foundation, Muḥammad ibnu 'l-Munawwar compiled a much larger biography of his ancestor which he entitled *Asráru 'l-tawḥíd fí maqámáti 'l-Shaykh Abí Sa'íd* (ed. by Zhukovski, Petrograd, 1899) and dedicated to the Ghúrid prince, Ghiyáthu'ddín Muḥammad ibn Sám (*ob.* A.D. 1203). The author, like Abú Sa'íd himself, was a native of Mayhana or Míhna in Khurásán. From his earliest youth it had been a labour of love for him to gather the sayings of the Saint and to verify the records and traditions which were handed down in his family and were still fresh in the minds of his fellow-townsmen. The task was undertaken not a moment too soon. In A.D. 1154 the Turcoman tribe of the Ghuzz swept over the borders of Khurásán and carried fire and sword through that flourishing province. Everywhere the population was massacred; the author tells us that 115 descendants of Abú Sa'íd, young and old, were tortured to death in Mayhana alone, and that no memorial of him was left except his tomb. Religion, he says, fell into utter ruin; the search after Truth ceased, unbelief became rampant; of Islam only the name, and of Šúfisim only the form survived. Impelled by divine grace, he complied with the request of some novices that he should write an account of the spiritual experiences and memorable sayings of Shaykh Abú Sa'íd, for the encouragement of those who desired to enter upon the Path (*taríqa*) and for the guidance of those who were travelling on the road of the Truth

(*ḥaqíqa*). Abú Sa'íd died in A.D. 1049, and the *Asráru 'l-tawḥíd* was probably completed not less than 120 or more than 150 years later. As Zhukovski points out, it is almost the first example in Persian of a separate work having for its subject the life of an individual mystic. The portrait of Abú Sa'íd amidst the circle of Şúfis and dervishes in which he lived is drawn with extraordinary richness of detail, and gains in vividness as well as in value from the fact that a great part of the story is told by himself. Although the Mohammedan system of oral tradition by which these autobiographical passages have been preserved forbids us to suppose that we have before us an exact transcript of Abú Sa'íd's words as they were spoken to the original reporter, there is no reason to doubt that in most cases the substance of them is given correctly. His own veracity is not incontestable, but this question, which leads at once into the darkest abysses of psychology, I must leave in suspense.

The *Hálát ú Sukhunán* and the *Asráru 'l-tawḥíd* render the more recent biographies of Abú Sa'íd all but superfluous. A certain amount of new material is found in the Supplement to Farídu'ddín 'Aṭṭár's *Tadhkiratu 'l-Awliyá* (vol. II of my edition, pp. 322-337) and Jámí's *Nafahátu 'l-Uns* (ed. by Nassau Lees, No. 366).

Studies in Islamic Mysticism, by Reynold A. Nicholson,
[1921], at sacred-texts.com

The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:
Question and Answer Forum!

Please Send Your Questions to:

MarilynnHughes1@outofbodytravel.org

For Future Inclusion in this Section!

Question from Patricia Jordan, Tennessee, USA:

Recently, I've been working on vanquishing lust and vanity and seem to be working on anger. I feel that cleansing myself of anger is key to my healing. Edgar Cayce says you can only do so much with medicine, the rest has to come from the mind and spirit and from your own body.

I've been studying how to improve my immune system, and had a lot of dreams. It seems to me that so much of my physical healing process is stalled because of my spiritual log jam.

So, I decided to make a list of everybody I was still angry at and why. I began it mentally, but had to stop there because it was just too upsetting. Then I had an insight. (I think). It goes like this: I thought lust and vanity were separate from anger? I now feel that my anger is revenge for being profoundly disappointed by the people I love. I didn't get the love I felt I needed from a lot of individuals and that's why I am angry? The lust comes directly from this? I targeted people whom I thought could give me the love I wasn't getting. The vanity also comes from this because I was using appearances to try to attract that. So, out of three deadly sins, looks like I'm down to one mother of all sins, my disappointment.

That said, how do you handle the disappointment? Marilyn, I'm doing what you say, trying to look at them all as little children and that helps. I am also trying to look at all the times I've required forgiveness, too, but that makes me feel worse because I realize I haven't been the person I should have been. How do you deal with disappointment? Do you say to yourself, 'they didn't act the way I would have acted towards them if the shoe had been on the other foot?' So do I just have to walk around and accept how mean everybody is and how flawed they are? Is that what love means? And if it is, where does re-establishing my relationships on a healthy foundation come in to play?

I have a lineup of people who were actually abusive, physically and mentally. So do I

- 1.) Write them off, forgive them, but just end my friendships, or
- 2.) Do I write to them and say, 'This is the problem I have with what you did and if you want to still be friends or whatever, I need to know that this won't happen again?

How do you DO this? This is a dangerous place for me because I have a female friend who has been particularly vicious to me and has hurt me more than anybody else in the world. She went so far as to tell co-workers that I was psychiatrically ill when she knew that I had a genuine physical disease and was not psychiatrically ill. She just took advantage of my illness to damage my professional reputation.

I miss her and I'd like to be friends again, but I see no indication that she has changed. I am worried that in my

rush to forgive everyone and get rid of my anger, I will make some big mistakes and let people back in to hurt me.

Also, how the hell do you toughen up?

Marilynn: Hi Patricia. I think you've hit the nail on the head in that the vanity does come from a continuing desire to get the love we want and to fulfill the disappointment we all experience when those we love and others who are supposed to be our friends either let us down, or just choose (as in the case of that one woman you're talking about) to do evil to you.

Forgiveness is not an abdication of our intelligence. But it IS forgiveness. This means that you can truly forgive someone like this woman who did harm to you, but I don't think there is any indication that she has earned your trust back. Forgiveness doesn't require you to walk into something you already know is bad. Ironically, I have a great example that is almost identical to yours, except in that I think the person involved has probably made a little more progress than the woman you describe.

But in order to be able to forgive such a thing you have to go beyond what people do to us, and care more about what we can do for them by example, by word, by deed - even by forgiveness. But that doesn't mean you give blind trust to someone who has not earned it. You protect yourself and your family, but you don't jump in and become what they are to battle it. You become what Christ was. He battled evil and injustice merely by forgiveness, mercy and submission.

Sin is very rarely personal. This woman didn't do what she did to hurt you, but rather, to help herself. It's about selfishness. But it's not really helping her. So, pray for her,

but at the same time, pray for forgiveness for whatever you may have done to hurt her, even though it may seem to pale in comparison - or may even be non-existent. But in her mind, you may have hurt her somehow.

In her mind, you may have made her look bad. It's ridiculous in our minds, because you probably just did a good job and had no interest in harming her. But in her mind, you may have hurt her by making her look bad even though you didn't really do that, and if you're excellence made her look bad, it was her own issue. But in her mind . . . she felt hurt by that. In her mind, that's legitimate.

But that's selfish thinking, a kind of thinking which does not allow us to acknowledge the gifts of others because we feel that somehow it diminishes our own. But in reality, it is when we acknowledge and truly treasure the gifts of all those around us that we see God in every little thing.

Sometimes we don't see our own gifts because it is always something which comes to us very naturally and we don't realize that others cannot do what we do without great effort because their gift is different. Likewise, we don't acknowledge the obvious gifts of others in observing the things which come so easily to them which might come with great difficulty for us because it is not our gift.

So YES, we do have to walk around and accept how flawed everybody is. And this becomes very easy, as you pointed out, when we contemplate how flawed we are ourselves.. Because we realize how often we have not been the person we should have been. When we embrace this within ourselves, and forgive ourselves for being human and fallen, we are more able to accept that fallenness in everyone else. We realize, for one, we don't have to fix it. By accepting and loving others, they actually become more

capable of recognizing their stuff and making change. As do we about ourselves.

Sometimes Buddhism is a very good path to follow when we go through this because they describe sin as cankers. In Buddhism, the guilt and shame of sin is not associated with flaws. Sin becomes a canker, a sore, something we recognize within ourselves, a craving, which must be purified. It is a purification rather than a self recrimination. It becomes an act of disciplining the mind, rather than focusing on feeling bad about it. By bypassing the lengthy guilt and shame stage, we can go directly to removing the canker - removing the tendency, vice, flaw. It becomes detached, unemotional - an intellectual pursuit of perfecting the way we think and act - moving from selfishness to selflessness. Selflessness requires us to forgive and to try to understand.

Early on in my spiritual life, I was told, 'It is not your job to be understood, but to be understanding.' I have never forgotten this. It isn't important to seek the understanding of others, but rather, that I understand them - and in this understanding, what they do makes sense to me - whether it be wrong or right - and I am able to accept them as they are and allow them to be just like me - imperfect, sinful, fallen. And in doing so, I don't love them despite their flaws, but because they are enough as they are.

When I was close to death after my first surgery, I had a profound moment wherein I realized that I might be dying. In that moment, I panicked because I realized that I had so much to be forgiven for and I wondered if I had truly given forgiveness myself. Because I wasn't sure, I prayed and asked God to supply for my unforgiveness. I asked Him to forgive where I had not forgiven enough, and to supply me with the grace to forgive everyone for everything even if in

my own heart I didn't yet feel it myself. I told God that I was offering Him my desire and intention to forgive, even though I was sure I was lacking in the spirit of forgiveness. I asked Him to supply what was lacking in my spirit of forgiveness. And I felt profound humility in that moment because I was just overcome with that profound realization of how much I myself needed forgiveness. In that moment, I could only think of the biblical connotation that we will be forgiven in the measure in which we forgive. Because I knew I had so much to be forgiven for, I panicked. I wanted that forgiveness so bad, I couldn't even put it into words. And it helped me realize that this is what we ALL want. We all want mercy, we all want to be loved for who we are - flaws and all, we all want those we have hurt to understand it was our own brokenness or false or imperfect motives that caused us to hurt them, not our true desire to cause them harm. We all want it, and in order to have it ourselves, we must first give it. So in that moment, although I had done this many times before, I gave the remainder of it over to God because I knew that only He could supply for what was lacking within me.

I've often wondered how I would deal with it if I was ever given something truly beyond my scope of forgiveness. It scares me. I once saw a woman who's son was murdered who came to a point of forgiving his murderer and actually went so far as to 'adopt' him in jail. She'd realized that he'd never been mothered, and that he didn't understand what he'd done because he'd never known love. They showed the scene of her with him in prison telling him, "If you'd known how much I loved my son, you would never have killed him." She was bawling her eyes out, holding this man's hand. He was bawling more than her, and in another interview separately, he said that he was so moved by her love for her son, he had been

abandoned as a child and had never seen anything like it. He couldn't forgive himself, because now he knew. And he was overwhelmed by her forgiveness and desire to be a mother to him. He truly had grown to love this woman as a mother, and she had taught him what love truly was. He spoke about what had happened and how lost he was, and you could see in his eyes that this woman and her son had shown him the light of God that he had never known before. They wrote each other and she visited him in prison. She truly took him on as her son, and it was amazing beyond belief. I don't know that I could do that. I was blown away by her.

But on another hand, I saw something similar in another case wherein a woman had been almost killed and her father had died in an attack. She, too, offered forgiveness to the killer. But he was pure evil. She was trying to get him off of death row, and the prosecutors thought she was crazy. She even tried to have his sentence shortened. This is a case of a misplaced understanding of forgiveness. In the previous case, she never tried to get him out of prison. He's going to serve his life term and she's going to let him pay for his crime. She has no illusions that she has no way of knowing what type of real transformation has occurred in this man, and whether or not he's truly capable of killing again. But she forgives. In the second case, this woman thinks forgiveness is pretending it never happened and ignoring the obvious danger this man presents to society. He didn't care about her forgiving him. He just thought it was great she was trying to get him out. But you see, she could have chosen to forgive him for what he had done, but not negate the obvious consequences of his actions. And in his case, there was no reason to think he had earned any trust from anybody. He was still evil. Evil can be forgiven, but it doesn't require you to negate what you know. She was forgiving him primarily for her sake,

but she wasn't thinking about the fact that this guy will kill again without question if he's ever released. What she was doing was not merciful, but stupid and irresponsible. Do you see the difference? In one case, a hand was reached out. Never was it offered that the perpetrator not pay for what he had done. But the hand of forgiveness was reached out without the perp asking for any favors. And it was received. In case two, a hand was reached out to a person hard and fast in evil who had no use for forgiveness except in what it might do for him and his sentence. She could have chosen to retain her forgiveness but accept what was and leave him there to do his time. But she wanted to prove something to herself, not do the right thing. By doing so, she was acting irresponsible to other innocents who could easily be his future victims. There's a huge difference in both cases, both between the person offering forgiveness and the perpetrator who was receiving it.

So I guess the short answer is that forgiveness does not require you to allow them back into your life unless you so choose or feel it is truly okay. For those you really want in your life, and who have EARNED your trust, you may try talking to them about what happened. But for those you know are capable of repeating the same stuff, NO, don't let them back into your life.

Forgiveness is absolutely essential. If we don't forgive, we don't make it possible for others to save face and turn a new leaf. We almost force them to prove themselves right by not allowing them the room to admit to themselves and others that what they did might've been wrong. If we make it possible by offering forgiveness for them to save face and acknowledge, we open the door to miracles.

The same applies to us. We are also creatures who would hope that when we really screw up, those we have wronged will make it easy for us to admit our mistakes rather than really hard.

There are people in my past that I've forgiven for some fairly big things. Some of them, I wish I could see again and be friends and others I have no desire. But among those I wish to see, they are the ones who cannot handle rethinking the friendship because they can't do it. I think that's sad, but I accept it. They have choice here, too. There are also people in my past who I wronged, and I've apologized and sought forgiveness. Some have denied me forgiveness, some have forgiven, but will never forget. I also accept this. I have to accept the natural results of my actions, too. And I've lost a few friends over the years because of stupid things I've done. But I have never left anything unspoken or unaddressed. For those I needed to apologize to, I have done so with great sincerity. And for those who needed my forgiveness, I have given it to them - those who have asked AND those who don't have the awareness to know they need it. It's given freely.

Forgiveness does not require me to subject myself or others to the destruction of those who are not yet aware of the damage they do. But forgiveness does require me to do my best to understand . . .

Most of the time that understanding will be about the mistakes we all make due to our own selfishness, but not our desire to hurt others. But sometimes, that understanding requires an acknowledgement of evil and the fact that evil DOES desire to cause harm. That understanding also requires us to exercise due diligence in the knowledge that we have.

A priest once told me that it was arrogant for me to think I shouldn't sin, even though that was the common state of mankind, as if I could somehow be above others. And that really helped me. We are not above mistakes, just like everyone else, and we need to anticipate that we will mess up and that it is okay that we do. But when we do, it is important that we identify and correct what we've done to the best of our ability.

There is a great quote that I used in my books from St. Augustine about forgiveness. He says that if we sincerely ask for forgiveness but another denies it to us, that refusal to forgive falls back on that person, not us. But it goes both ways. If we refuse to forgive, that unforgiveness falls back on us, too.

I would never presume to know anything about forgiving really serious things. There are a lot of things that I don't know if I could forgive. You may have some very serious things to forgive. In such a case, I would probably ask God to forgive where I am unable. And I would ask God to forgive me for my unforgiveness. But I would also know without any doubt that God would understand my human inability to forgive something very serious, and He would credit me with the desire to forgive and the humility to ask for that grace - my intention - and would pardon my inability to really enter the spirit of forgiveness for something heinous. He would understand my anger and despair, and He would help me. He would understand it.

In prayer, I have also often asked the Lord to help me to understand His profound love for all His creatures. Because in some of my deepest moments of reflection, it has occurred to me that God wishes not a single soul to be lost. And as I've thought about some unforgiveable things, like Hitler, the Croatian Genocide, Darfur, and other

similar atrocities that occur around us every day, I've felt the sorrow of God at the loss of the souls who have participated in such evil. And in feeling that sorrow, I have been compelled to pray for the redemption of them all. In my prayer times, I have said to God while praying for the victims of such atrocities, to give me the spirit to wish to pray for those who are responsible for them, too, because in my own weakness, I have trouble even generating the ability to pray for them. But God has repeatedly made it known to me that He wishes me to. Because even those who have perpetrated the greatest evil, are lost children to God. And in seeking to understand, rather than be understood, I also try to understand the sorrow of God the Father in the loss of so many of His beloved children to evil - both those who perpetrate and those who become their victims. But it's hard for me to do.

But we do know that the victims of evil are under the veil of the great mercy of God. As the bible tells us "Do not fear those who deprive the body of life but cannot destroy the soul. Rather, fear him who can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna." Matthew 10:28

Perpetrators of such evils would do well to know "Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not become known. What I tell you in darkness, speak in the light." Matthew 10:26-27

But in my deepest moments of prayer, I realize that if we don't pray for those who perpetrate evil, our prayers for their victims become weakened. Because we must wish to change the hearts of those who embrace evil, if we are to help those who become the victims. We must realize that none of it has anything to do with us, that's what Christ knew. Forgive them, for they know not what they do. I want you to watch these videos about Immaculee of

Rwanda, who'se entire family was killed in the Rwandan genocide. It is a miraculous story of forgiveness, wherein she forgave the killers of her entire family. By doing so, she gave those who had participated in such evil a chance to redeem themselves, to rise above what they had once been, and to become something different.

If you look at many places around the world, like Medjugorje in Croatia, you will see that even as evil takes hold, God becomes ever more present. He can't prevent all things, and does not, but He is always there in the midst of suffering and He is aware.

*Blessings,
MarilynnHughes@outofbodytravel.org
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The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal:

Different Voices!

This is our section devoted to the writings and opinions of others, which may not reflect the views of author, Marilyn Hughes. Inclusion of any author's writings or work does not denote an endorsement or recommendation in regards to their writings.

Some of these will be individual writings of others on subjects of spiritual interest, other people's out-of-body experiences - some which may agree with and/or contradict the experiences of the author, poems, journals of spiritual transformation, and critiques - both positive and negative opinions and/or analysis, of the author's work.

We choose to include ALL of these because we feel that the ability to discuss our similarities and differences openly is 'ALL GOOD' as GANDHI used to say.

We welcome and encourage your submissions for possible future inclusion in this section, although we stress that we are a non-profit organization and payment is not available:

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We have found that some of the best critiques, analysis, writings and experiences come from people all over the world in different walks of life who are pursuing their spiritual path with passion and are completely unknown.

THANK YOU ALL, whether you agree or disagree with our work, FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO SEEK THE TRUTH IN WHATEVER WAY THAT TRUTH MAY COME TO SEEK YOU!

Excerpts from Studies in Islamic Mysticism

By Reynold A. Nicholson, [1921] at sacred-texts.com

III. THE ESSENCE AS GOD.

In the *Insánu 'l-kámil* we find the same contrast as in the Vedanta system between Being with attributes, *i.e.*, God, and Being which would not be absolute unless it were stripped of all qualities. The essence of God is Pure Being, but Divinity (*Iláhiyya*)—the domain of Allah, regarded as He who necessarily exists—is the highest manifestation of the Essence, embracing all that is manifested: "it is a name for the sum of the individualisations of Being, *i.e.*, Being in the relation of Creator (*al-Haqq*) to created things (*al-khalq*), and for their maintenance in their respective order in that sum." Here the full ideal content of every individualisation, existent or non-existent, is manifested according to its proper place in the series, and all opposites exhibit their relativity in the greatest possible perfection; thus, the Creator (*al-Haqq*) appears in the form of the creature (*al-khalq*), and conversely the creature in the form of the Creator. Since Divinity represents the sum of the attributes, it is invisible to the eye, though visible everywhere in its effects, *i.e.*, in the sensible world; the Essence, on the other hand, is visible, though its where is unknown. Similarly, when you see a man, you know or believe that he has certain qualities, but you do not see them; his essence (*dhát*), however, you see as a whole, even if many of his qualities are unknown to you. Only the effects of his qualities are visible, the qualities themselves you cannot see, because the attribute must always remain

hidden in the Essence; otherwise, it could be separated from the Essence, and that is impossible. In a scale of existence where each lower individualisation marks a loss of simplicity, the difference-in-identity (*Iláhiyya*) in which the sunken riches of the Absolute are completely realised, might be expected to succeed the identity-in-difference which belongs to the stage of *Wáhidiyya*. Jílí, as a mystical theologian, does not take this view. He enthrones Allah in the seat of the Absolute and gives the following line of descent:

1. Divinity (*Iláhiyya*).
2. Abstract Oneness (*Ahadiyya*).
3. Unity in plurality (*Wáhidiyya*).
4. Mercifulness (*Rahmáníyya*).
5. Lordship (*Rubúbiyya*).

Mercifulness and Lordship are specialised aspects of Divinity. *Rahmáníyya* manifests the creative attributes (*al-ṣifātu 'l-ḥaqqiyya*) exclusively, whereas *Iláhiyya* comprehends both the creative and the creaturely (*khalqí*). The first mercy (*rahmat*) of God was His bringing the universe into existence from Himself. His manifestation pervaded all that exists, and His perfection was displayed in every particle and atom of the whole, yet He remains One (*wáhid*) in the Many which mirror Him and Single (*aḥad*) according to the necessity of His nature, for He is indivisible and He created the world from Himself. It is wrong to say that God "lends" His attributes to things; the things are really His attributes, to which He lends the name of creatureliness (*khalqiyya*), in order that the

mysteries of Divinity and the antithesis inherent in it may be revealed. God is the substance (*hayúlá*) of the universe. The universe is like ice, and God is the water of which it is made: the name "ice" is "lent" to the congealed mass, but its true name is "water." Jílí pursues this analogy in four verses which he quotes from an ode of his own composition. He says in the second verse that although Religion declares the ice and the water to be different, "we mystics know that they are the same." He asks how this doctrine—the permeation of existence by the Essence—can be confounded with *hulúl* (incarnation), which affirms contact, *i.e.*, non-identity. In virtue of the name *al-Rahmán*, God exists in all the things that He brought into being. His mercy towards His creatures was shown by His manifesting Himself in them and by causing them to appear in Himself. "In every idea that you form God is present as its Creator, and you are God in respect of its existence in you, for you must needs form ideas in God and find (feel the presence of) God in forming them."

Lordship (*Rubúbiyya*) establishes a necessary relation between God and His creatures, since it typifies the class of attributes which involve a complementary term or require an object; *e.g.*, "lord" implies "slave," and "knower" refers to something "known."

It will be understood that "comparison" (*tashbíh*), *i.e.*, the bringing of God into relation with created things, is "a judgment about Him" and does not affect His absolute transcendence (*tanzíh*) as He is in Himself, which He alone can conceive and know. This fact is known intuitively by Perfect Men; for other mystics it is a truth apprehended by faith. While the Essential *tanzíh* has no opposite, the antithesis of *tanzíh* and *tashbíh* is associated with God in His creative and creaturely aspects by those who perceive

that He is One and that the form of all existent things is the form of, Divine excellence (*husn*). Considered absolutely, the Divine nature does not admit of change. Change consists in the relations of God, *i.e.*, in the diverse aspects wherein He manifests Himself to us. His manifestation of Himself to Himself, and His occultation of Himself in Himself, is eternally one and the same. The notion of eternity, without beginning and without end, when it is applied to God, involves no time-relation with His creatures, but only a judgment that His nature is necessarily timeless.

Jílí makes a fourfold division of the Divine attributes: (1) attributes of the Essence, *e.g.*, One, Eternal, Real; (2) attributes of Beauty (*jamál*), *e.g.*, Forgiving, Knowing, Guiding aright; (3) attributes of Majesty (*jalál*), *e.g.*, Almighty, Avenging, Leading astray; (4) attributes of Perfection (*kamál*), *e.g.*, Exalted, Wise, First and Last, Outward and Inward.

Every attribute has an effect (*athar*), in which its *jamál* or *jalál* or *kamál* is manifested. Thus, objects of knowledge are the "effect" of the Name *al-'Alím*, the Knower. All attributes of *jamál*, and some of *jalál*, are displayed by everything that exists. Paradise is the mirror of absolute *jamál*, Hell of absolute *jalál*, and the universe is the form of these Divine attributes. Evil, as such, does not exist, although it has its appointed place in the world of opposites. What we call evil is really the relation of some parts and aspects of the whole to other parts and aspects; in a word, all imperfection arises from our not looking at things *sub specie unitatis*. Sin is not evil except in so far as we judge it to be forbidden by God. The author's treatment of the seven principal attributes—*i.e.*, Knowledge, Will, Power, Speech, Hearing, and Sight—is marked by great subtlety,

but the discussion is somewhat arid. I will give a few specimens.

Life. The existence of a thing for itself is its complete life; its existence for another is its relative life. God exists for Himself. He is the Living One (*al-Hayy*), and His life is the life complete and immortal. Created beings in general exist for God: their life is relative and linked with death. While the Divine life in created beings is one and complete, some manifest it in a complete form, *e.g.*, the Perfect Man and the Cherubim; others incompletely, *e.g.*, the animal man (*al-insánu 'l-ḥayawáni*), the inferior angels, the *jinn* (genies), animals, plants, and minerals. Yet, in a certain sense, the life of all created beings is complete in the measure suitable to their degree and necessary for the preservation of the order of the universe. Life is a single essence, incapable of diminution or division, existent for itself in everything; and that which constitutes a thing is its life, that is to say, the life of God whereby all things subsist: they all glorify Him in respect of all His names, and their glorification of Him in respect of His name "the Living" is identical with their existence through His life. The author states, as a fact known to few but revealed to him by mystical illumination, that everything exists in and for itself, and that its life is entirely free and self-determined. This—which, as he admits, does not tally with what has been said above—is confirmed by the Divine information that on the Day of Resurrection each of a man's deeds will appear in visible shape and will address him and say, "I am thy deed."

Knowledge. Although every attribute is independent and uncompounded, knowledge is most nearly connected with life: whatever lives knows. Jílí controverts the doctrine of Ibnu 'l-'Arabí that God's knowledge is given Him by the

objects which He knows. God certainly decreed that every individual thing should be what its nature required it to be, but the consequence drawn by Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, namely, that His knowledge of things is derived from the necessity of their natures, is false: on the contrary, their natures were necessitated by His knowledge of them before they were created and brought into existence—it was His knowing them, not the necessity inherent in them of being what they are, that caused them to become objects of His knowledge. Afterwards (*i.e.*, when they were created), their natures required other than that which He knew of them at first, and He then for the second time decreed that they should be what their natures required, according to that which He knew of them.

Will. The will of God is "His particularisation of the objects of His knowledge by existence, according to the requirements of His knowledge." Our will is identical with the Divine eternal will, but in relation to us it partakes of our temporality (*hudúth*), and we call it "created." Nothing but this (unreal) attribution prevents us from actualising whatever we propose: if we refer our will to God, all things become subject to it. Jílí enumerates nine phases of will, beginning with inclination (*mayl*) and ending with the highest and purest love (*'ishq*), in which there is no lover or beloved, since both have passed away in the love that is God's very essence. The Divine will is uncaused and absolutely free, not, as Ibnu 'l-'Arabí holds, determined by the obligation of the Knower to act as His nature demands.

Power. This is defined by Jílí as "the bringing of the nonexistent into existence." Here again he disagrees with Ibnu 'l-'Arabí, who asserts that God did not create the world from not-being, but only brought it from being in His knowledge into actual being. But in that case, Jílí

argues, the world would be co-eternal with God. It is not so: the judgment that God exists in Himself is logically prior to the judgment that things exist in His knowledge; and the former judgment involves the non-existence of things and the existence of God alone. God brought things from not-being into being and caused them to exist in His knowledge, *i.e.*, He knew them as brought into existence from not-being; *then* He brought them forth from His knowledge and caused them to exist externally. Does it follow, because they were produced from not-being, that they were unknown to Him before He caused them to exist in His knowledge? No; the priority is of logic, not of time. There is no interval between the not-being of things and their existence in His knowledge. He knows them as He knows Himself, but they are not eternal as He is eternal.

IV. THE HEAVENLY MAN.

Like Jacob Böhme, Jílí sets out from the principle that "in order that the truth may be manifested as a Something, there must be a contrary therein." He finds the ground of existence in a Being which, though essentially One, is of threefold nature, since it knows itself as the Creator (*al-Haqq*) and the creatures (*al-khalq*).

"The Essence," he says, "is 'Thou' and 'I' — 'Thou' in respect of thy deepest self (*huwiyya*, He-ness), not in respect of the human attributes which the notion 'Thou' admits; and 'I' in respect of my individual self, not in respect of the Divine attributes which the notion 'I' admits. That is what is signified by the Essence (*al-Dhát*). 'I,' in respect of my 'I-ness' (*aniyya*), viewed in relation to the judgments which the notion 'I' is capable of, is God; and 'Thou,' in the creaturely aspect, is Man. Therefore consider your essence,

if you will, as 'I,' or if you will, as 'Thou,' for there is nothing besides the universal reality....

If you say, that it (the Essence) is One, you are right; or if you say that it is Two, it is in fact Two. Or if you say, No, it is Three,' you are right, for that is the real nature of Man.

Regard the Oneness (*aḥadiyya*) which is his essence: say, 'He is One relatively (*wáḥid*), One absolutely (*aḥad*), unique in glory.'

But if the two essences are considered, you will say that he is Two, because he is a slave (*'abd*) and a Lord (*rabb*).

And if you examine his real nature and what is united therein, namely, two things deemed to be contrary,

You will contemplate him with amazement: his lowness is such that you will not call him lofty, and his loftiness is such that you will not call him low. Nay, name that (Man) a Third, because of a reality having two attributes inherent in the realities of its essence.

It (that reality) is he named Aḥmad as being that (Man), and Mohammed as being the true idea (*ḥaqíqa*) of all things that exist."

As an introduction to the Logos doctrine foreshadowed here, which is interwoven with a mystical scheme of cosmology, I will translate part of the 60th chapter, "Of the Perfect Man: showing that he is our Lord Mohammed, and

that he stands over against the Creator (*al-Ḥaqq*) and the creatures (*al-khalq*)."

The Perfect Man is the *Qutb* (axis) on which the spheres of existence revolve from first to last, and since things came into being he is one (*wáḥid*) for ever and ever. He hath various guises and appears in diverse bodily tabernacles (*kaná'is*): in respect of some of these his name is given to him, while in respect of others it is not given to him. His own original name is Mohammed, his name of honour Abú 'l-Qásim, his description 'Abdullah, and his title Shamsu'ddín. In every age he bears a name suitable to his guise (*libás*) in that age. I once met him in the form of my Shaykh, Sharafu'ddín Ismá'íl al-Jabartí, but I did not know that he (the Shaykh) was the Prophet, although I knew that he (the Prophet) was the Shaykh. This was one of the visions in which I beheld him at Zabíd in A.H. 796. The real meaning of this matter is that the Prophet has the power of assuming every form. When the adept (*adīb*) sees him in the form of Mohammed which he wore during his life, he names him by that name, but when he sees him in another form and knows him to be Mohammed, he names him by the name of the form in which he appears. The name Mohammed is not applied except to the Idea of Mohammed (*al-Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*). Thus, when he appeared in the form of Shiblí, Shiblí said to his disciple, "Bear witness that I am the Apostle of God"; and the disciple, being one of the illuminated, recognised the Prophet and said, "I bear witness that thou art the Apostle of God." No objection can be taken to this: it is like what happens when a dreamer sees some one in the form of another; but there is a difference between dreaming and mystical revelation, *viz.*, that the name of the form in which Mohammed appears to the dreamer is not bestowed in hours of waking upon the *Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*,

because interpretation is applicable to the World of Similitudes: accordingly, when the dreamer wakes he interprets the *ḥaqíqa* of Mohammed as being the *ḥaqíqa* of the dream-form. In mystical revelation it is otherwise, for if you perceive mystically that the *ḥaqíqa* of Mohammed is displayed in any human form, you must bestow upon the *ḥaqíqa* of Mohammed the name of that form and regard its owner with no less reverence than you would show to our Lord Mohammed, and after having seen him therein you may not behave towards it in the same manner as before. Do not imagine that my words contain any tincture of the doctrine of metempsychosis. God forbid! I mean that the Prophet is able to assume whatever form he wishes, and the Sunna declares that in every age he assumes the form of the most perfect men, in order to exalt their dignity and correct their deviation (from the truth): they are his vicegerents outwardly, and he is their spiritual essence (*ḥaqíqa*) inwardly.

The Perfect Man in himself stands over against all the individualisations of existence. With his spirituality he stands over against the higher individualisations, with his corporeality over against the lower. His heart stands over against the Throne of God (*al-'Arsh*), his mind over against the Pen (*al-Qalam*), his soul over against the Guarded Tablet (*al-Lawḥu 'l-mahfúz*), his nature over against the elements, his capability (of receiving forms) over against matter (*ḥayúlá*)....He stands over against the angels with his good thoughts, over against the genies and devils with the doubts which beset him, over against the beasts with his animality. ...To every type of existence he furnishes from himself an anti-type. We have already explained that every one of the Cherubim is created from an analogous faculty of the Perfect Man. It only remains to speak of his correspondence with the Divine names and attributes.

You must know that the Perfect Man is a copy (*nuskha*) of God, according to the saying of the Prophet, "God created Adam in the image of the Merciful," and in another *ḥadīth*, "God created Adam in His own image." That is so, because God is Living, Knowing, Mighty, Willing, Hearing, Seeing, and Speaking, and Man too is all these. Then he confronts the Divine *ḥuwiyya* with his *ḥuwiyya*, the Divine *aniyya* with his *aniyya*, and the Divine *dhāt* (essence) with his *dhāt*—he is the whole against the whole, the universal against the universal, the particular against the particular.... Further, you must know that the Essential names and the Divine attributes belong to the Perfect Man by fundamental and sovereign right in virtue of a necessity inherent in his essence, for it is he whose "truth" (*ḥaqīqa*) is signified by those expressions and whose spirituality (*latīfa*) is indicated by those symbols: they have no subject in existence (whereto they should be attached) except the Perfect Man. As a mirror in which a person sees the form of himself and cannot see it without the mirror, such is the relation of God to the Perfect Man, who cannot possibly see his own form but in the mirror of the name Allah; and he is also a mirror to God, for God laid upon Himself the necessity that His names and attributes should not be seen save in the Perfect Man. This obligation to display the Divine attributes is the "trust" (*amāna*) which God offered to the heavens and the earth: they were afraid to accept it, "but Man accepted it; verily he is unjust and ignorant" (Kor. 33, 72), *i.e.*, unjust to his own soul in letting it suffer degradation (from the things of this world) and ignorant of his real worth, because he is unaware of that with which he has been entrusted....Beyond the plane of the Names and Attributes, which are ranged on the right and left of him according to their kind, the Perfect Man feels through his whole being "a pervasive delight, which is named the delight of the Godhead" (*ladhdhatu 'l-ilāhiyya*)....Here he is

independent of his modes, *i.e.*, the Names and Attributes, and regards them not at all. He knows nothing in existence save his own nature (*huwiyya*), contemplates the emanation (*şudúr*) from himself of all that exists, and beholds the Many in his essence, even as ordinary men are conscious of their own thoughts and qualities; but the Perfect Man is able to keep every thought, great or small, far from himself: his power over things does not proceed from any secondary cause but is exercised freely, like other men's power of speaking, eating, and drinking.

These extracts bring out the germinal idea which is developed by Jílí into a psychological and cosmological system. The Perfect Man, as the copy of God and the archetype of Nature, unites the creative and creaturely aspects of the Essence and manifests the oneness of Thought with things. "He is the heaven and the earth and the length and the breadth."

Mine is the kingdom in both worlds: I saw therein none but myself, that I should hope for his favour or fear him.

Before me is no "before," that I should follow its condition, and after me is no "after," that I should precede its notion.

I have made all kinds of perfection mine own, and lo, I am the beauty of the majesty of the Whole: I am naught but It.

Whatsoever thou seest of minerals and plants and animals, together with Man and his qualities, And whatsoever thou seest of elements and nature

and original atoms (*haba'*) whereof the substance is
(ethereal as) a perfume,

And whatsoever thou seest of seas and deserts and
trees and high-topped mountains,

And whatsoever thou seest of spiritual forms and
of things visible whose countenance is goodly to
behold,

And whatsoever thou seest of thought and
imagination and intelligence and soul, and heart
with its inwards,

And whatsoever thou seest of angelic aspect, or of
phenomena whereof Satan is the spirit,

* * * * *

Lo, I am that whole, and that whole is my theatre:
'tis I, not it, that is displayed in its reality.
Verily, I am a Providence and Prince to mankind:
the entire creation is a name, and my essence is the
object named.

The sensible world is mine and the angel-world is
of my weaving and fashioning; the unseen world is
mine and the world of omnipotence springs from
me.

And mark! In all that I have mentioned I am a slave
returning from the Essence to his Lord—
Poor, despised, lowly, self-abasing, sin's captive, in
the bonds of his trespasses.

The concluding verses only say what Jílí repeats in many places, that while at supreme moments a man may lose himself in God, he can never be identified with God absolutely.

In the second part of his work the author treats of the Perfect Man as the Spirit whence all things have their origin. Accordingly he devotes successive chapters to the organs and faculties which make up the psychological and intellectual constitution of the Perfect Man—spirit, heart, intelligence, reflection, etc., with the corresponding celestial beings which are said to be "created" from them e. The highest hypostases of his psychology are the Holy Spirit (*Rúhu 'l-Quds*) and the Spirit (*al-Rúh*); the latter is also described as "the angel named al-Rúh" and, in the technical language of the Šúfís, as "the *haqq* by means of which the world is created" (*al-haqqu 'l-makhlúq bihi*) and "the Idea of Mohammed" (*al-Haqqíqatu 'l-Muhammadiyah*). How these two Spirits are related to each other is indicated in the following passage:

You must know that every sensible object has a created spirit which constitutes its form, and the spirit is to the form as the meaning to the word. The created spirit has a Divine spirit which constitutes it, and that Divine spirit is the *Rúhu 'l-Quds*. Those who regard the *Rúhu 'l-Quds* in man deem it created, because two eternal substances cannot exist: eternity belongs to God alone, whose names and attributes inhere in His essence because of the impossibility of their being detached; all else is created and originated. Man, for example, has a body, which is his form, and a spirit, which is his meaning, and a consciousness (*sirr*), which is *al-Rúh*, and an essential aspect (*wajh*), which is denoted by the terms *Rúhu 'l-Quds*

(the Holy Spirit), *al-sirru 'l-iláhí* (the Divine consciousness) and *al-wujúdu 'l-sárí* (the all-pervading Being).

The *Rúhu 'l-Quds* and the *Rúh* are one Spirit viewed as eternal in relation to God and non-eternal in relation to Man; as the inmost essence of things or as their form of existence. The uncreated Spirit of God, sanctified above all phenomenal imperfections, is referred to in the verse, "I breathed of My Spirit into Adam" (Kor. 15, 29; 38, 72), and in the verse, "Wheresoever ye turn, there is the face (*wajh*) of Allah" (Kor. 2, 109), *i.e.*, the *Rúhu 'l-Quds* exists, "individualised by its perfection," in every object of sense or thought. Jílí adds that inasmuch as the spirit of a thing is its self (*nafs*), existence is constituted by the "self" of God; and His "self" is His essence. Union with the *Rúhu 'l-Quds* comes only as the crown and consummation of the mystical life to "the holy one" (*qudsí*) who unceasingly contemplates the Divine consciousness (*sirr*) which is his origin, so that its laws are made manifest in him and God becomes his ear, eye, hand and tongue: he touches the sick and they are healed, he bids a thing be and it is, for he has been strengthened with the Holy Spirit, even as Jesus was (Kor. 2, 81).

It will now be seen that Jílí considers the created *Rúh* or the archetypal Spirit of Mohammed as a mode of the uncreated Holy Divine Spirit and as the medium through which God becomes conscious of Himself in creation.

God created the angel named *Rúh* from His own light, and from him He created the world and made him His organ of vision in the world. One of his names is the Word of Allah (*Amr* Allah). He is the noblest and most exalted of existent beings: there is no angel above him, and he is the chief of the Cherubim. God caused the mill-stone of

existent beings to turn on him, and made him the axis (*quṭb*) of the sphere of created things. Towards every thing that God created he has a special aspect (*wajh*), in virtue of which he regards it and preserves it in its appointed place in the order of existence. He has eight forms, which are the bearers of the Divine Throne (*al-'Arsh*). From him were created all the angels, both the sublime and the elemental. The angels stand to him in the relation of drops of water to the sea, and the eight bearers of the 'Arsh stand in the same relation to him as the eight faculties which constitute human existence to the spirit of man. These faculties are intelligence (*'aql*), judgment (*wahm*), reflection (*fikr*), phantasy (*khayál*), imagination (*al-muṣawwira*), memory (*al-háfiza*), perception (*al-mudrika*), and the soul (*nafs*). The *Rúḥ* exercises a Divine guardianship, created in him by God, over the whole universe. He manifests himself in his perfection in the *Haqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*: therefore the Prophet is the most excellent of mankind. While God manifests Himself in His attributes to all other created beings, He manifests Himself in His essence to this angel alone. Accordingly the *Rúḥ* is the *Quṭb* of the present world and of the world to come. He does not make himself known to any creature of God but to the Perfect Man. When the saint (*walí*) knows him and truly understands the things which the *Rúḥ* teaches him, he becomes a pole (*quṭb*) on which the entire universe revolves; but the Poleship (*Quṭbiyya*) belongs fundamentally to the *Rúḥ*, and if others hold it, they are only his delegates. He is the first to receive the Divine command, which he then delivers to the angels; and whenever a command is to be executed in the universe, God creates from him an angel suitable to that command, and the *Rúḥ* sends him to carry it out. All the Cherubim are created from him, *e.g.*, Seraphiel, Gabriel, Michael, and Azrael, and those above them, such as the angel named al-Nún, who is stationed beneath the

Guarded Tablet, and the angel named the Pen (*al-Qalam*), and the angel named al-Mudabbir, whose station is beneath the *Kursí*, and the angel named al-Mufaṣṣil, who stands beneath the Imámu 'l-Mubín: these are the Sublime Angels, who were not commanded to worship Adam. God in His wisdom did not command them, for had they been commanded to worship, every one of Adam's descendants would have known them. Consider how, inasmuch as the angels were commanded to worship Adam, they appear to men in the forms of the Divine similitudes whereby God reveals Himself to the dreamer. All those forms are angels, who descend in diverse shapes by command of the angel entrusted with the making of similitudes. For this reason a man dreams that lifeless things speak to him: unless they were really spirits assuming the form of lifelessness, they would not have spoken. The Prophet said that a true dream is an inspiration from God—because an angel brings it—and also that a true dream is one of the forty-six parts of prophecy. Since Iblís, though he did not worship Adam, was amongst those commanded to worship, the devils who are his offspring were commanded to appear to the dreamer in the same forms as the angels: hence false dreams. According to this argument, the Sublime Angels are unknowable except by "the divine men" (*al-iláhiyyún*), on whom God bestows such knowledge as a gift after their release from the limitations of humanity.

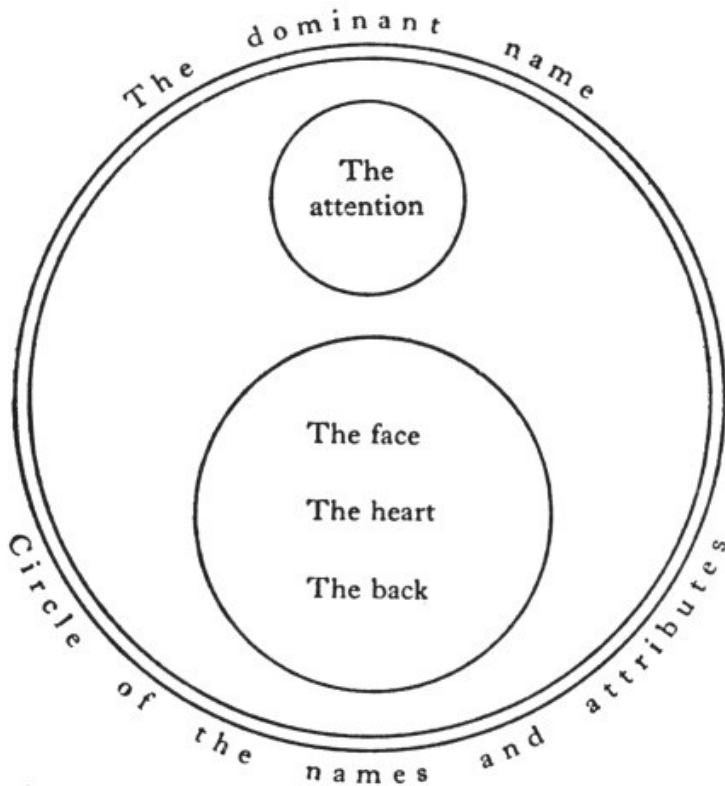
The *Rúh* has many names according to the number of his aspects. He is named "The Most Exalted Pen" and "The Spirit of Mohammed" and "The First Intelligence" and "The Divine Spirit," on the principle of naming the original by the derivative, but in the presence of God he has only one name, which is "The Spirit" (*al-Rúh*).

Jílí gives a long account of a vision in which the *Rúh* conversed with him and spoke darkly concerning the mystery of his nature, saying, "I am the child whose father is his son and the wine whose vine is its jar....I met the mothers who bore me, and I asked them in marriage, and they let me marry them." In the course of this colloquy the Idea of Mohammed (*al-Ḥaqíqatu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*) says:

God created Adam in His own image—this is not doubted or disputed—and Adam was one of the theatres (*mazáhir*) in which I displayed myself: he was appointed as a vicegerent (*khalifa*) over my externality. I knew that God made me the object and goal of all His creatures, and lo, I heard the most gracious allocution from the Most Great Presence: "Thou art the *Qutb* whereon the spheres of beauty revolve, and thou art the Sun by whose radiance the full-moon of perfection is replenished; thou art he for whom We set up the pattern and for whose sake We made fast the door-ring; thou art the reality symbolised by Hind and Salmá, and 'Azza and Asmá. O thou who art endued with lofty attributes and pure qualities, Beauty doth not dumbfound thee nor Majesty cause thee to quake, nor dost thou deem Perfection unattainable: thou art the centre and these the circumference, thou art the clothed and these the splendid garments."

In some aspects the spiritual organ which Ṣúfís call "the heart" (*qalb*) is hardly distinguished from the spirit (*rúh*): indeed Jílí says that when the Koran mentions the Divine spirit breathed into Adam, it is the heart that is signified. He describes it as "the eternal light and the sublime consciousness (*sirr*) revealed in the quintessence (*'ayn*) of created beings (Mohammed), that God may behold Man thereby"; as "the Throne of God (*al-'Arsh*) and His Temple in Man...the centre of Divine consciousness and the

circumference of the circle of all that exists actually or ideally." It reflects all the Divine names and attributes at once, yet quickly changes under the influence of particular names. Like a mirror, it has a face and a back. The face is always turned towards a light called the attention (*al-hamm*), which is the eye of the heart, so that whenever a name becomes opposite to, or as we should say, strikes the attention, the heart sees it and receives the impression of it; then this name disappears and is succeeded by others. The "back" of the heart is the place from which the attention is absent. Jílí illustrates his meaning by the diagram reproduced here:



The Divine names and attributes are the heart's true nature, in which it was created. Some men are so blessed that they have little trouble to keep it pure, but most of us must needs undergo painful self-mortifications in order to wash out the stains of the flesh. Recompense for good works depends on the merit imputed by God to His creatures according to the original individualisations in which He created them: it is a necessary right, not an arbitrary gift. The heart reflects the world of attributes, or rather, as Jílí holds, is itself reflected by the universe. "Earth and heaven do not contain Me, but the heart of My believing servant containeth Me": if the universe were primary and the heart secondary, *i.e.*, if the heart were only a mirror, then the power of containing and comprehending would have been ascribed to the universe, not to the heart; but in fact, it is the heart alone that comprehends God – by knowledge, by contemplation, and finally by transubstantiation.

When God created the whole world from the Light of Mohammed, He created from the heart of Mohammed the angel Isráfíl (Seraphiel), the mightiest of the angels and the nearest to God.

The faculty of Reason has three modes, *viz.*, the First Intelligence (*al-'aqlu 'l-awwal*), Universal Reason (*al-'aqlu 'l-kullí*), and ordinary reason (*'aqlu 'l-ma'úsh*). Jílí identifies the First Intelligence, as the faithful treasurer of Divine Knowledge, with Gabriel, "the trusted Spirit" (*al-Rúhu 'l-amín*), and as a locus for the form of Divine Knowledge in existence – the first objective analysis of the Divine synthesis – with the Pen (*al-Qalam*) which transmits the particulars contained as a whole in God's consciousness to the Guarded Tablet (*al-Lawḥu 'l-mahfúz*). Universal Reason is "the percipient luminous medium whereby the forms of

knowledge deposited in the First Intelligence are made manifest"; not the sum of individual intelligences, for in this case Reason would be plural, while in reality it is a single substance, the common element, so to speak, of human, angelic, and demonic spirits. Ordinary reason is "the light (of Universal Reason) measured by the rule of reflection (*fikr*), and does not apprehend save by means of reflection": therefore it cannot reach the unconditioned First Intelligence, often misses its mark, and fails to perceive many things. Universal Reason, on the other hand, is infallible, since it weighs all with the twin scales of Wisdom and Power, but it never penetrates beyond the sphere of creation. Neither universal (intuitive) nor ordinary (discursive) reason can attain to knowledge of God. The contrary doctrine has only a demonstrative and controversial value. True gnosis (*ma'rifa*) is given by faith, which does not depend on proofs and effects (*áthár*) but on the Divine attributes themselves.

The judgment (*wahm*) of Mohammed was created from the light of the Divine Name *al-Kámil* (the Perfect), and God created from the light of Mohammed's judgment Azrael, the Angel of Death. *Wahm* is the strongest of the human faculties: it overpowers the understanding, the reflection, and the imagination...nothing in the world apprehends more quickly; it is what enables men to walk on the water and fly in the air; it is the light of certainty (*yaqín*) and the basis of dominion; he that has it at his command exercises sway over all things high and low, while he that is ruled by its might becomes stupefied and bewildered. The spirit, on entering the body, either acquires angelic dispositions and ascends to Paradise, or assumes bestial dispositions and sinks to Hell: it ascends when it judges the limitations of its human form, *e.g.*, grossness and weakness, to be merely negative and capable of being thrown off, since the

spirit always retains its original qualities potentially. At death Azrael appears to the spirit in a form determined by its beliefs, actions, and dispositions during life. Or, again, he appears disembodied and invisible, so that a man may "die of a rose in aromatic pain" or of a stench. When the spirit sees Azrael, it becomes enamoured of him, and its gaze is entirely withdrawn from the body, whereupon the body dies. The spirit does not quit its bodily form at once but abides in it for a while, like one who sleeps without seeing any vision. After this dreamless sleep, which is its death (*mawtu 'l-arwáh*), the spirit passes into the intermediate state (*al-barzakh*).

Meditation (*himmá*) is the noblest of the spiritual lights (faculties), for it has no object but God. Yet one must beware of resting in it in order to enjoy its fruits: the master-mystic will leave it before it has yielded all its secrets to him, lest it become a barrier to his further advance. Michael, the angel created from it, is charged with the duty of dispensing the portions of fate allotted by eternal necessity to each recipient.

From the reflection (*fikr*) of Mohammed God created the spirits of the celestial and terrestrial angels, and appointed them to guard the higher and lower spheres of existence until the Last Day, when they shall be translated to the intelligible world. One of the keys to that world is reflection, leading to true knowledge of the nature of Man, which is set with all its aspects over against the aspects of the Merciful (*al-Rahmán*). But the pure region of filer lies open to mystics alone: the path of speculative philosophy ends in a mirage.

As we have already seen, thought (*khayál*), *i.e.*, the faculty that retains what the fancy perceives of the forms of

sensible objects after their substance has disappeared, is declared by Jílí to be the stuff of the universe. In Hegelian language "the things that we know about are appropriately described when we say that their being is established not on themselves, but on the Divine Idea." Nothing exists otherwise than as a dream in the perception of the dreamer, and the cosmos is "a thought within a thought within a thought" (*khayál^{un} fí khayálⁱⁿ fí khayál*). It must be added, however, that while every thing, *i.e.*, every thought, expresses some reality, the Perfect Man (though he is not Reality itself) is the complete self-expression of Reality.

Imagination, memory, and perception, which the author enumerated amongst the eight spiritual faculties, find no place in this discussion.

After a preliminary chapter on the Form of Mohammed (*al šúratu 'l-Muḥammadiyya*), which I will omit for the present, he concludes his psychology with an account of the nature of the soul.

Ascetic and devotional Şúfism, in agreement with orthodox Islam, distinguishes sharply between the spirit (*rúḥ*) and the soul (*nafs*). The latter term may, indeed, be used to denote a man's spiritual "self"—"he that knows himself (*nafsahu*) knows his Lord"—but as a rule when Şúfís refer to the *nafs* they mean the appetitive soul, the sensual "self" which, from their point of view, is wholly evil and can never become one with God. Jílí makes short work of this dualistic doctrine. The heading of his 59th chapter promises to show that the *nafs* is the origin of Iblís and all the devils, and he begins as follows:

The *nafs* is the consciousness (*sirr*) of the Lord, and the essence (of God): through that Essence it hath in its essence manifold delights. It is created from the light of the attribute of Lordship: many, therefore, are its lordly qualities.... God created the *nafs* of Mohammed from His own *nafs* (and the *nafs* of a thing is its essence); then He created the *nafs* of Adam as a copy of the *nafs* of Mohammed.

With great boldness Jílí argues that the Fall of Man is the necessary consequence of his Divine nature. Adam ate the forbidden fruit because his soul manifests a certain aspect of Deity, *viz.*, Lordship (*rubúbiyya*); for it is not in the nature of Lordship to submit to a prohibition. The soul knew that, if it ate the fruit, it would inevitably descend into the material world and would suffer misery, but on the other hand it was aware of the blessedness of its inherent sovereignty. Thus it became perplexed, and its perplexity (*iltibás*) brought about its fall. The choice of the soul is at once determined and free: determined, because in the last resort its act proceeds from a fundamental difference in the nature of God; free, because the soul acts in accordance with its knowledge of itself and, had it not been blinded by pride, would have perceived that its true nature requires obedience to the Divine command, inasmuch as disobedience renders the spirit miserable, and misery is inconsistent with Lordship.

When God created the soul of Mohammed from His own Essence, which comprises all contraries, He created from the soul of Mohammed (1) the Sublime Angels in respect of His attributes of Beauty, Light, and Leading, and (2) Iblís and his followers in respect of His attributes of Majesty, Darkness, and Misleading. Now, the name of Iblís was 'Azázíl: he had worshipped God for thousands of

years before the creation of the world, and God had forbidden him to worship aught else. Therefore, when God created Adam and commanded the angels to bow down before him, Iblís refused, for he did not know that to worship by God's command is equivalent to worshipping God. Instead of justifying his disobedience or repenting of it and asking God to forgive him, he silently acknowledged that God wills and acts in conformity with the eternal and unchangeable principles of His nature. Iblís was banished from the Divine presence and a curse was laid upon him "until the Day of Judgment" (Kor. 15, 35), *i.e.*, for a finite period. After the Day of Judgment the creatureliness which hinders the spirit from knowing God as He really is will be counted amongst its perfection, and Iblís will then be restored to his place beside God.

Jílí mentions five phases of the soul, or ascending grades of spiritual life: (1) the animal soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as governing the body; (2) the commanding (evil-prompting) soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as subject to the passions; (3) the inspired soul, *i.e.*, the spirit which God inspires to do good; (4) the self-reproaching soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as turning penitently towards God; (5) the tranquil soul, *i.e.*, the spirit regarded as at rest with God.

VI. THE RETURN TO THE ESSENCE.

The gist of Jílí's philosophy, as I understand it, is the notion of One Being, which is One Thought, going forth from itself in all the forms of the universe, knowing itself as Nature and yet, amidst the multiformity of Nature, reasserting its unity in Man—in Man whom self-knowledge has enlightened and made perfect, so that ceasing to know himself as an individual he sinks into his Divine element, like a wave into the sea. This language,

apart from its inadequacy, conveys a wrong impression by translating in terms of time and space what does not belong to these categories. All interpretations of ideal and mystical experience are more or less fictitious.

The word commonly used to denote the self-manifestation of God in His essence, attributes, and names is *tajallí*, which implies that something hidden before is now clearly seen, as the splendour of the sun emerging from eclipse or the beauty of a bride when she unveils. The Divine *tajallí*, in respect of the person to whom it is made, may be called an illumination, for it is the light whereby the mystic's heart has vision of God. Accordingly, the ontological descent from the Absolute and the mystical ascent or return to the Absolute are really the same process looked at from different points of view. The self-revelation of God necessarily involves the manifestation of His nature by those who possess an inborn capacity for realising it in themselves. Jílí divides the ascending movement of this consciousness into four stages—the Illumination of the Actions, the Illumination of the Names, the Illumination of the Attributes, and the Illumination of the Essence—which correspond in reverse order to the devolution of Pure Being from its primal simplicity to the manifestation of its effects in the sensible world.

(a) The Illumination of the Divine actions.

To one thus illumined it becomes plain that human agency is naught, that he has no power or will of his own, and that all things are done by the power of God who moves them and brings them to rest. Sometimes the Divine will is made known to him before the act: consequently, he may disobey the command of God in order to comply with His will; in which case his disobedience is essentially

obedience and lies between him and God, though "it remains for us to exact from him the penalty which God has imposed in the Koran and the Sunna upon those who break His commandment."

(b) The Illumination of the Divine names.

The mystic to whom God reveals Himself in one of His Names vanishes (from consciousness of individuality) under the radiance of the Name; and if you invoke God by that Name, the man will answer you, because the Name is applicable to him...If God reveal Himself in His Name Allah, the man will disappear and God will call to him, saying, "Lo, I am Allah"; and if you cry "O Allah!" the man will answer you with the words "At thy service (*labbayka*)!" Then, if he mount higher and God strengthen him and let him abide in consciousness after his passing-away (*fanâ*), God will answer any one who calls the man, so that if you say, for instance, "O Muḥammad!" God will respond to you, saying, "At thy service!" In proportion as he is strengthened to ascend, God will reveal Himself to him in His subordinate Names, *viz.*, the Merciful (*al-Raḥmân*), the Lord (*al-Rabb*), the King (*al-Malik*), the Omniscient (*al-'Alím*), the Omnipotent (*al-Qádir*), etc. The self-revelation of God in each of these Names is superior to His self-revelation in the Name preceding it, because as regards the Illumination of the Names analysis is superior to synthesis, and the manifestation of each lower Name is an analysis of the synthesis which is manifested by the one immediately above it.

As regards illuminations of the Essence, it is otherwise; here the more general is above the more particular: *al-Raḥmân* is superior to *al-Rabb*, and *Allah* to either. Finally, all the Divine Names seek to apply themselves to the

illuminated man, even as the name seeks the object named, and then he sings:

One calls Her by Her name and I answer him, and when I am called (by my own name) 'tis Laylá (the Beloved) that answers for me.

That is because we are the spirit of One, though we dwell by turns in two bodies—a marvellous thing! Like a single person with two names: thou canst not miss by whichever name thou callest him.

Jílí only speaks of what he himself has experienced, since every Name is revealed in different ways to different individuals. From his account of these illuminations I take a passage which exhibits his characteristic blend of logic and mysticism:

The way to the illumination of the Name *al-Qadím* (the Eternal) is through a Divine revelation whereby it is shown to any one that he existed in the knowledge of God before the Creation, inasmuch as he existed in God's knowledge through the existence of that knowledge, and that knowledge existed through the existence of God: the existence of God is eternal and the knowledge is eternal and the object of knowledge is inseparable from the knowledge and is also eternal, inasmuch as knowledge is not knowledge unless it has an object which gives to the subject the name of Knower. The eternity of existent beings in the knowledge of God necessarily follows from this induction, and the (illuminated) man returns to God in respect of His Name, the Eternal. At the moment when the Divine eternity is revealed to him from his essence, his temporality vanishes and he remains eternal through God,

having passed away from (consciousness of) his temporality.

(c) The Illumination of the Divine Attributes.

When God desires to reveal Himself to a man by means of any Name or Attribute, He causes the man to pass away (*fanâ*) and makes him naught and deprives him of his (individual) existence; and when the human light is extinguished and the creaturely spirit passes away, God puts in the man's body, without incarnation (*hulûl*), a spiritual substance, which is of God's essence and is neither separate from God nor joined to the man, in exchange for what He deprived him of; which substance is named the Holy Spirit (*rûhu 'l-quds*). And when God puts instead of the man a spirit of His own essence, the revelation is made to that spirit. God is never revealed except to Himself, but we call that Divine spirit "a man" in respect of its being instead of the man. In reality there is neither "slave" nor "Lord," since these are correlated terms. When the "slave" is annulled, the "Lord" is necessarily annulled, and nothing remains but God alone.

Mystics receive these illuminations in proportion to their capacities, the abundance of their knowledge, and the strength of their resolution. Taking each of the seven chief attributes in turn, the author describes the effects of the illumination on himself or on others, and the different forms which it may assume. Concerning Life and Knowledge something has been said above. Those endowed with Hearing hear the language of angels, animals, plants, and minerals. As for the *mukallamûn*, who receive the illumination of Speech, the Word (*kalâm*) comes to them sometimes audibly and from a certain direction, sometimes from no direction and not through the ear,

sometimes as an inner light having a definite shape; and in oneness with God they realise that all existent beings are their Word and that their words are without end. According to Jílí, the illumination of Power is marked in its initial stages by a phenomenon characteristic of prophetic inspiration—the ringing of a bell (*ṣalṣalatu 'l-jaras*), which is produced, as he quaintly writes, by "the dashing of realities one against another in order that men's hearts may not dare to enter the presence of Divine Majesty." "In this illumination," he says, "I heard the ringing of bells. My frame dissolved and my trace vanished and my name was rased out. By reason of the violence of what I experienced I became like a worn-out garment which hangs on a high tree, and the fierce blast carries it away piece by piece. I beheld naught but lightnings and thunders, and clouds raining lights, and seas surging with fire."

(d) The Illumination of the Divine essence.

While every illumination of a Name or Attribute reveals the Essence in a particular relation, the Illumination of the absolute Essence is not identical with any or all of these illuminations. Jílí refers the difference to the Divine substance, which, as we have seen, God " puts instead of the man' so that the subject and object of illumination are really one. This substance may be either attributal (*ṣifâtí*) or essential (*dhátí*). Only in the latter case does "the man" become the God-man. Such a one is the Perfect Unit (*al farḍu 'l-kámil*) and the Microcosmic Pole (*al-ghawthu 'l-jámi'*) on whom the whole order of existence revolves; to him genuflection and prostration in prayer are due, and by means of him God keeps the universe in being. He is denoted by the terms *al-Mahdí* and *al-Khátam* (the Seal), and he is the Vicegerent (*khalífa*) indicated in the story of Adam. The essences of all things that exist are drawn to

obey his command, as iron is drawn to the magnet. He subdues the sensible world by his might and does what he will by his power. Nothing is barred from him, for when the Divine substance is in this *walí* as a simple essence, unconditioned by any degree appertaining to the Creator or to the creature, he bestows on every degree of existent things its *ḥaqq*, *i.e.* what it requires and is capable of receiving, and nothing can hinder him from doing so. That which hinders the Essence is merely its limitation by a degree or name or quality; but the simple Essence has nothing to hinder it: therefore with it all things are actual, not potential, while in other essences things are sometimes potential and sometimes actual.

It would seem, then, that the Illumination of the Absolute is given to the Heavenly Man (Mohammed) alone and transmitted through him to the Perfect Men who are his representatives on earth.

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In the twenty second issue of the 'The Out-of-Body Travel Foundation Journal' we continue a series of issues covering forgotten mystics from different religious traditions, this issue following Abú Sa'íd Ibn Abi 'l-Khayr - Forgotten Islamic Mystic.

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