JERUSALEM STUDIES IN ARABIC AND ISLAM


The Max Schloessinger Memorial Foundation Board:

Director of Publications: Judith Loebenstein-Wiztum

The Editorial Board gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the U. Heyd Foundation and the Isaac Hofman Foundation

Manuscripts for JSAI should be double-spaced throughout (text and notes) and include full and consistent transliteration.
Send hard copy and diskette (preferably in Microsoft Word for PC or ASCII format) to:
The Editor, JSAI, Institute of Asian and African Studies, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem 91905, Israel
CONTENTS

R. Milstein and B. Moor

Wonders of a changing world: late illustrated ‘ajā‘ib manuscripts (part 1) 1

M. Rosen-Ayalon

A contribution to Khurāsān metalwork 49

A. Arazi

La littérature de confession dans la culture arabe médiévale 80

S. Günther

Praise to the book! Al-Jāḥiz and Ibn Qutayba on the excellence of the written word in medieval Islam 125

C.W. Ernst

Fragmentary versions of the apocryphal ‘Hymn of the pearl’ in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Urdu 144

A. Háromi

Shameful and injurious: an idea of Ibn al-Muqaffa‘s in Kahila wa-Dinna and al-Adab al-kabir 189

J. Sadan and N. Basal

Some fragments of Judaeo-Arabic poetry (munağāt Mūsâ?) 213

J. Rubanovich

Aspects of medieval intertextuality: verse insertions in Persian prose dāštāns 247

Li Guo

Self-mockery as a genre in Manlūk satiric poetry: Ibn Dāniyāl on his estranged wife and midlife crisis 269

C. Adang

The chronology of the Israelites according to Hamza al-Iṣfahānī 286

R.G. Hoyland

Polemon’s encounter with Hippocrates and the status of Islamic physiognomy 311

B. Chiesa and S. Schmidtke

The Jewish reception of Samaw’al al-Maghribi’s (d. 570/1175) Iḥām al-yahud. Some evidence from the Abrahim Firkovitch collection I 327

J.L. Kraemer

How (not) to read The Guide of the Perplexed 350

D.J. Wasserstein

The date and authorship of the letter of consolation attributed to Maymūn b. Yūsuf 410
FRAGMENTARY VERSIONS OF THE APOCRYPHAL “HYMN OF THE PEARL” IN ARABIC, TURKISH, PERSIAN, AND URDU

Carl W. Ernst
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Introduction

Of all the religious literature of the ancient world, there are a number of texts that continue to attract interest in many unexpected quarters. One of these is the “Hymn of the Pearl” or “Hymn of the Soul” from the apocryphal Acts of Thomas, which, despite the rarity of its survival in a single Syriac manuscript and a unique Greek version, since its rediscovery in the 19th century still casts a spell over many readers. Interpretations of this text vary widely, ranging from the view that it represents the core spiritual teachings of Eastern Christianity to the notion that it is primarily a Manichean treatise about the descent of the soul into the body.1

It is striking to notice some of the contemporary uses to which the “Hymn of the Pearl” has been put. It was cited by William Butler Yeats in his poem “A Vision,” and a collection of poems by Polish author Czeslaw Milosz bears its title. The text has been the subject of recent workshops on spiritual development offered by the Gnostic Society of Los Angeles, the New Veda Ashram of Queensland, Australia, and by a leader of an Iranian Sufi order in Europe, and it has also been investigated as a model for psychological processes.2 The celebrated passage about the garment of the soul that occurs in the “Hymn of the Pearl” has been considered as evidence supporting the identification of the Shroud of Turin as the garment used to wrap the body of Jesus Christ, and the Hymn has also been seen as a parallel to an important Mormon liturgical text.3 Artists and musicians have been fascinated with the text, which has been re-created as a deluxe “artist’s book,” as the inspiration for avant-garde classical music, and as a song text in cabaret and jazz fusion performances.4 It has even been depicted in an illustrated children’s book published by a press devoted to the works of G.I. Gurdjieff.5

With a text capable of eliciting so many responses from different readers, it would not be surprising to learn that the “Hymn of the Pearl” also found attentive audiences in the languages of Asia, although up to now there has not been any evidence for the text circulating in those milieus.6 I offer below brief and fragmentary versions of the Hymn in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Urdu, accompanied by English translations of each version. These different versions have all been extracted

---


2 These examples include an online version of William Wright’s 1871 translation with a 75-minute audio commentary by Dr. Stephen Hoeller of the Gnostic Society of Los Angeles (http://www.gnosis.org/library/hymnpearl.htm); a workshop by Les Dyer of the New Veda Ashram in Queensland, Australia (http://www.lesdyer.com/); the International Workshop on Spiritual Evolution offered by Dr. Seyed Mostafa Azmayesh, London, August 2003 (http://archhome.org/events/london/082903.pdf). See also D’Rozario.

3 Dresbach, Thomas et le Hymne de la Perle; Welch and Garrison, “The Hymn of the Pearl.”

4 See the “Unique Artist’s Book,” hand painted and lettered by Douglas Shafer, offered for sale by Priscilla Juvelis Rare Books for $6500 (http://juvelisbooks.com/catalog27-51%20and%20above.html).

5 États de perle (2002), by Canadian composer Gilles Gobeil, on Mélachromatæes 2002; 3° concours biennal de composition acoustique (http://www.electrocor.com/cat/e/mr/2002-pis.html); the New World Performance Lab’s “Stairway to Paradise: a Cabaret Soul Journey,” a 2004 musical and dramatic production in Cleveland, Ohio, featuring Megan Elk singing popular American songs juxtaposed to the ancient tale “The Hymn of the Pearl” (http://www.buchelite.com/2004/10/19/arts_01.shtml); and the performance of the Los Angeles jazz fusion group Beth the Sybil, using the text of “The Hymn of the Pearl” as translated by Barnstone, The Other Bible, pp. 309-313 (http://beththesybil.com/reviews/reviews.html); email from Beth the Sybil dated August 1, 2005.

6 Hogrogian.

7 The ever elusive Šēh maintained that a version of the “Hymn of the Pearl” appeared as a Sufi teaching story entitled “The King’s Son,” which he attributed to Amir Sultan of Bukhara, who taught in Istanbul and died in Bursa in 1129; see his Tales of the Dervishes, pp. 217-218. As usual, Šēh provided no source for his version of the story. Kruse (in “The Return of the Prodigal”) sees the “Hymn of the Pearl” as an Eastern Christian variation on the “prodigal son” theme of the NT, and argues for its influence on the Lotus Sutra of Mahayana Buddhism.
from a remarkably eclectic source, the multiple translations of a work on hatha yoga known as the Amrtakunda or The Pool of Nectar.\footnote{See Ernst, “The Islamization of Yoga in the Amrtakunda Translations.”}

What was the “Hymn of the Pearl” doing in Islamicate versions of a work on yoga, and how was it understood by readers? In an effort to supply an interpretive framework for readers of The Pool of Nectar, the anonymous Arabic translator inserted two symbolic narratives into the introduction as a frame story for the text. The first of these two stories (numbered in my unpublished edition and translation of The Pool of Nectar as Int. 7-8, Int. 13-14, X.11) is, as I will argue, a fragmentary version of the “Hymn of the Pearl.” The second story (Int. 9-12), drawn from a Persian narrative written by the Illuminationist philosopher Suhrawardi (d. 1191), is a philosophical allegory about the psycho-physical faculties, inserted in the middle of the first story.\footnote{This extract is the sixth chapter of Suhrawardi’s Treatise on the Reality of Love (Risala ft hadqat al-ishq), found in Oeuvres, 3:273-281; trans. Thackston, pp. 62-75, esp. pp. 66-69.} It is possible that the translator chose these tales to replace a Hindi frame story featuring the deities Shiva and Parvati, or the yogi Gorakhnath, as is common in hatha yoga texts, but that cannot be determined, since there is no trace of the original Amrtakunda surviving independently in any Indic language. In any case, these two intertwined tales were evidently designed to provide interpretative avenues to the yoga text, suggesting how the Arabic translator wished the reader to come to grips with these Indian practices.

The original “Hymn of the Soul” or “Hymn of the Pearl” is a brief and charming story, set in Parthian Iran, allegorically depicting the journey of the soul from its transcendent home to the exile of the material world. To summarize the story very briefly, a prince of the East is sent by his royal parents to Egypt to rescue the pearl of knowledge from the great dragon that guards it. While in Egypt, the prince eats of the local food and forgets his identity, but is awakened by a message sent to him in the form of a bird. He subsequently returns to his homeland, where he is united with his heavenly self in the form of a jeweled garment. Despite its fame in recent times, the “Hymn” occurs as an interpolation in only two manuscripts of the Acts of Thomas, part of the apocryphal New Testament; the Syriac version is in verse (in a unique manuscript from Baghdad dated 936), and the Greek is in prose (in a single eleventh-century manuscript). It has been suggested that the “Hymn” was composed in Gnostic, possibly Manichean, circles, and that it was subsequently adopted by Christians in the Mesopotamian city of Edessa in the early third century. According to that scenario, it was then introduced into the Syriac Acts of Thomas, where it is described as a hymn sung by the Apostle Thomas during his imprisonment in India.

The different Islamicate versions of the “Hymn of the Pearl”

The primary version of the “Hymn of the Pearl” known in Islamicate circles is found in the introduction to the anonymous Arabic text known variously as The Mirror of Meanings on the Understanding of the Microcosm, The Pool of the Water of Life, or Do-it-yourself Medicine. Composed probably in the 15th century by an Iranian author steeped in the Illuminationist school of philosophy, it drew on accounts of yogic breath control, divination, and summoning of Hindu goddesses that had circulated independently in Persian as early as the 14th century (under the Hindi title Kamarubijaksaa), to which it added additional material on the hatha yoga practices of the Nath Jogis, contained in ten chapters that follow the introduction. The conclusion of the “Hymn” is, however, postponed to the closing lines of the tenth and final chapter of the yogic text (X.11). Exactly how the “Hymn of the Pearl” may have been transmitted into Arabic is still unclear, although it is conceivable that Syrian Christian intellectuals communicated the story to Muslim philosophers in some of the eclectic salons of later Abbasid Baghdad. The Arabic version exists in two recensions, one of which (a) preserves the Indic material fairly well, while the other (b) drops several Indic references and introduces a significant number of Islamizing touches. Counting both recensions, there are at least 46 manuscripts of the Arabic text, of which I have examined 25.\footnote{For a general description of these manuscripts, see Ernst, “Islamization,” Chart 1.} The majority of these manuscripts are in the libraries of Istanbul, with a few others scattered among libraries in Arab and European countries; this distribution is clearly due to the fact that the Arabic Pool of the Water of Life was commonly (though erroneously) attributed to the patron saint of the Ottoman Empire, the Andalusian Sufi master Muhyy al-Din b. al-`Arabi (d. 1240).

A separately circulating version of the Arabic “Hymn” narrative indicates that, outside Sufi circles, Muslim philosophers viewed this story as equivalent to the symbolic tales of Ibn Sina (Avicenna). Corbin was the first to point out that the initial frame story in The Pool of Nectar (Int.7-8, 13-14) is strongly suggestive of the “Hymn of the Pearl”; he initially made this suggestion with reference to two Arabic manuscripts attributed to Ibn Sina (Z1, Z2).\footnote{For these stories, see Corbin, Avicenna, passim.} These two manuscripts, based on
recesion a, contain the main portion of the fragmentary “Hymin” narrative from The Pool of Nectar, but without the Sukhrwardiine tale. Later on Corbin became acquainted with the Arabic edition of the Amritakunda published by Yusef Husain, and he then realized that this was the source of the tale found in the two Ibn Sinâ manuscripts. 12 In both of these Ibn Sinâ manuscripts, the “Hymin” story occurs as the second of three narratives that form an appendix to a commentary on Ibn Sinâ’s famous poem on the soul. The first of the three stories is the allegorical Treatise of the Bird by al-Ghazâlî, and the third is a commentary on the Prophetic saying, “People are asleep, and when they die they awake.” 13 Both manuscripts lack the concluding paragraph of the frame story (X.11), so it appears that the compiler of these Ibn Sinâ manuscripts had no access to the full version of the story other than via the introduction to the Arabic Pool of Nectar, or else it was not realized that the conclusion was to be found at the end of the yogic text. The interpretive context suggests that readers of this Arabic version of the “Hymin” belonged to the mystically inclined philosophical milieu characteristic of later Avicennanism and Illuminationism.

Directly dependent on the two Arabic recensions of the Amritakunda translation are two recensions in Ottoman Turkish, which were clearly translated directly from their Arabic counterparts. The name of the translator of the first recension, based on family a, is not known; there are 3 MSS, and the oldest of all the Turkish MSS (Tur allies, dated 1151/ 1738–9) belongs to this group. The translator of the second recension (from family b) was a well-known Ottoman scholar of the eighteenth century, “Abd Allâh Şahlî al-Din al-Ushshaqî (d. 1196/1782), known as Şahlî. He was the author of numerous translations and commentaries, written in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian, on classical works by Ibn al-‘Arabi, Rûmî, and others. 14 His recension, represented by 4 MSS, also has the distinction of having been printed at Istanbul in 1328/1910–11, and at least two printed copies are preserved (Tur allies). Especially prominent among readers of the Turkish text are members of the Mevlavi order (the so-called “whirling dervishes”), who also owned copies of the Arabic text. Common to both Turkish recensions is that they invariably identify the text as the product of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s pen. The Turkish translations do not offer any major transformation of the text, aside from repetitions for the sake of clarity, plus a few inserted phrases that mostly reinforce the Şûfin character of the text. 15 They appear to extend the Arabic textual tradition with little change, except for insisting on the importance of the text as part of the canon of Ibn al-‘Arabi’s writings.

The tradition of The Pool of Nectar in Persian is considerably more complicated, with three separate translations having been made from the Arabic by Indian authors: two of these translations contain the “Hymin of the Pearl” in a fragmentary fashion. One of these was the translation of a certain Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Razzâq (Per allies), which two dissatisfied anonymous readers later revised in distinct recensions (Per allies allies, Per allies). The main text of the “Hymin of the Pearl” story is missing altogether from these manuscripts, but in one recension the conclusion of the yon text inexplicably contains the brief ending of the story.

The best-known of the Persian translations of The Pool of Nectar was made by Muhammad Ghawth Gâliyârî (d. 1563), an eminent leader of the Shaṭṭârî Şûfi order in India, under the title The Ocean of Life (Bahir al-bayâlî). This text is relatively widespread, with at least 24 known manuscripts (several of which were accompanied by miniature illustrations of yoga postures) plus two separate lithograph editions. Remarkably, Muhammad Ghawth’s version of the “Hymin of the Pearl” alludes to two passages of the Syriac original that are not found in the Arabic translation, referring to the narrator’s royal parents, and to the jeweled garment of his celestial self; this strongly suggests that Muhammad Ghawth worked from a recension of the Arabic text that no longer exists, representing an earlier and fuller stage in the transmission of the text. The Persian translations are all related to the Arabic of family a. The Arabic version of the “Hymin” seems to have been very freely translated by Muhammad Ghawth, and he omitted the concluding paragraph altogether from his translation. Since this paragraph can be recovered from the version of Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Razzâq, we can restore the most complete Islamicate version of the “Hymin of the Pearl” by combining these two Persian translations.

Finally, in the middle of the nineteenth century, a scholar in the Indian Deccan made a partial translation of Muhammad Ghawth’s Persian Bahir al-bayâlî into Deccan Urdu. The Urdu translation, which in this unique manuscript has several orthographic curiosities, follows the Persian of Muhammad Ghawth fairly closely. 16 As with Muhammad Ghawth, the Urdu lacks the conclusion to the “Hymin of the Pearl.” Only one manuscript copy is known. 17 Shâh ‘Ali, a member of the

12 Henry Corbin, “Pour une morphologie de la spiritualité Shi‘ite”; Husain, “Haud al-bayâlî.”
13 For Ghazâlî’s Treatise of the Bird, see Corbin, Avicenna, pp. 196–97.
14 For Şahlî, see Mahmud Erol Kudî, “The Ibn al-‘Arabi of the Ottomans.”
15 The Ottoman translations also feature misreadings, which in two cases (T20,
16 The very clear script has frequent double b in one-syllable words, uses four dots to indicate retroflex consonants, drops aspiration from the postposition sah, and is inconsistent with the spelling of do-chashti ke and gat-tmahül.
17 Andhra Pradesh Oriental Manuscript Research Library (Asâfiyya) 1997/1–47 Taṣawwuf Urdu, Asâfiyya catalogue, II, 275. I am grateful to Dr. Omar Khalidi of
Qādiri Ṣūfī order residing in Intiyazgarh or Adoni, entitled his Urdu translation *The Sea of Life* (*Haqīqat Samandar*), and he reportedly dedicated it to his spiritual guide, Ḥājjī ʿAbd al-Karīm, in 1250/1834-35. He did this with some trepidation, and his lack of confidence initially led him to translate only the two introductory frame stories and the first two chapters of the yoga text (fols. 1–47b).

**Transformation and interpretation of the “Hymn of the Pearl”**

From the foregoing remarks, it is evident that all four Islamicate versions of the “Hymn of the Pearl” are fragmentary at best. The Persian, Turkish, and Urdu translators evidently did not even recognize that the story had a conclusion that came after the main body of the text on hatha yoga. In the tabular arrangement of these texts and translations below, it is also clear that only a small fraction of the Syriac original has been referenced in these Islamicate versions, no more than one sixth (16 of 105 lines). Can one really say, then, that these translations truly represent the narrative of the “Hymn of the Pearl”? I would argue that these new versions contain distinctive elements that cannot easily be explained without reference to the “Hymn.” Furthermore, despite the elimination of other salient features of the tale (including the pearl itself), these versions retain core themes of the original story, which justify our retaining this title. Clearly, however, there are transformations and new interpretations of the story, which will be briefly explored here.

The Arabic version in *The Pool of Nectar* simplifies the original “Hymn” story considerably, and it dispenses altogether with many of the more colorful details. The same is true of the other Islamicate versions, which is why they must be considered fragmentary. Quite de-mythologized, it has now become a much more abstract psychological allegory, in which the soul descends into the world and then finds itself by attaining union with God. The supplies and treasures for the journey, the removal of the jeweled garment, and the archetypal figure of the serpent in the sea which guards the mysterious pearl that forms the object of the narrator’s quest — all these elements have simply disappeared. The dangerous journey from Mesopotamia to Egypt, a typical gnostic allegory for the descent of the soul into the body, has become an explicitly psychocosmic itinerary to the “City of Life,” a Suhrawardian symbol for the human body as microcosm. Of the complex sojourn in Egypt, all that remains is the motif of forgetfulness and recollection. The striking image of the letter from the king and queen of the East, which flies like a bird to the narrator and awakens him, is likewise absent. The various anonymous companions, courtiers, and treasurers who appear in the original “Hymn” have been replaced by two figures: a royal minister, who regulates entry to the “City of Life” and informs the hero of all the dangers on the way; and the “master of the City,” an initiatic figure who reveals himself as the narrator’s true self. The lengthy passage describing the return to the kingdom in the East is almost entirely missing. The existing Arabic version of *The Pool of Nectar* even dispenses with the symbolism of the jeweled royal garment, though it surfaces again in the Persian and Urdu translations. The principal aspects of the original story that remain in these fragmentary versions are the narrator’s journey to an unknown land to fulfill his covenant with the king, his forgetfulness and remembrance, and his reunion with the heavenly self.

While the Ottoman version, for the most part, sticks closely to the Arabic, it nevertheless adds interpretive glosses and atmospheric touches that accentuate the solemnity of the tale by more or less overt theological identifications. One of these gestures occurs when the narrator speaks to the minister (T8): in recension a he adds a phrase redolent of courtly rhetoric, “There is no doubt of my lord’s glory (farār) and authority (himma).” Another such incident takes place at the climax of the story (T20), where the narrator dives into the Water of Life: he now learns that the master of the City of Life is the Supreme Creator (*Cennâb-e Bāri*), language that can only mean God. In the next passage (T21), the Ottoman version follows a reading from recension b, which drastically changes the announcement that the master gives to the narrator; instead of saying soberly, “Welcome. You are one of us,” he takes a more ecstatic tone: “I am longing for you, I am longing for you” This seems to substitute more of a Ṣūfī tone of divine love in place of the flat philosophical proclamation of unity. In the concluding paragraph (T24), the Ottoman version of Şalâhī takes a considerable liberty in changing the monistic overtones of the final revelation. Where the Arabic reads, “So I understood his allusion and found that my self was he (nafṣī hiya kuma),” the Ottoman has, “my self was itself (nafsīma...hiya hiye).” The altered text preserves a much more respectable distance between Creator and creature.

As mentioned previously, the Persian translation of Muhammad Ghawth preserves features of “Hymn of the Soul” that do not survive in any copy of the Arabic version. The opening of the Persian translation, which refers separately to the king and queen who are the parents of the
protagonist, preserves in this way a fuller evocation of the royal setting of the text than that found in the Arabic version. More importantly, the Persian text contains a description of the jeweled and golden garment which comes to meet the narrator as he returns home, reflecting him and becoming one with him. This feature is entirely absent from both existing Arabic recensions. From the appearance of this feature it may be concluded that the translation by Muhammad Ghawth presupposes a no longer extant Arabic recension predating the older recension of the Arabic text. Nevertheless, it is surprising that the Persian translation omits the key passage (A20, P16) in which the narrator dives into the Water of Life. This passage has instead become a characteristically Sufi account of esoteric self-knowledge. The plasticity of the story, and the freedom with which different interpreters have treated it, seem to be regular features of the transmission of the tale.

The marginal notations on the best copy of the Persian translation of Muhammad Ghawth (included here in the notes) also indicate the application of a characteristically Sufi interpretive strategy to what was originally a philosophical allegory. This commentator employed the metaphysical terminology of the school of Ibn al-‘Arabi to explicate the story as a cosmicogonic unfolding, in which the divine qualities are manifested in existence through the primordial human, Adam, with frequent reference to the pre-creational covenant of Qur’ān 7:172. Such an interpretation would have found ready acceptance among a readership drawn primarily from members of Indian Sufi orders.

The Urdu translator omits (U1) the Qur’ānic references to the divine hat of Qur’ān 2:117 introduced in the Persian of Muhammad Ghawth (P1), and he makes a number of other changes in vocabulary and emphasis. Most of these changes are of a scribal character, although one interesting addition is the passage in which the narrator completes his journey. The Persian (P13) reads, “I approached a venerable man (pir) seated on the king’s throne, who was the master (shaykh) of that City.” In contrast, the Urdu (U13) has, “Traveling gradually I came to the City. I saw a young man (ek javān) who was upon the seat of the king; he is the master (shaykh) of that City.” While the transformation of the old man into a youth could invite further speculation, the Urdu translation in itself is valuable mainly as a witness to the reception of the Persian.

Overall, the chief new elements introduced in the Islamicate versions are mainly theophanic encounters with apparitional figures of authority who represent the true self. First is the king’s minister, who controls all coming and going at the gate of the kingdom, and who provides a description of all the perils of the journey. He repeatedly warns the protagonist to pay attention and not to forget his covenant with the king. Second is the mysterious “master seated on the throne of a king,” whom the narrator finds in the City of Life after forgetting his mission. This master is clearly both a stand-in for the king and at the same time the narrator’s true self, literally mirroring the latter’s every word and action; this encounter prompts the narrator to remember his covenants. Next, the minister reappears, and makes the hero dive into the Water of Life, which simultaneously bestows mystical knowledge and reveals the king, the goal of the story. The conclusion is reserved, however, for the appendix that is placed at the end of the yoga text (A23–A24). The narrator finds himself in a “web” and lifts up his head, evidently a metaphor for being enmeshed in the world of bodies yet striving to ascend to the spiritual level (the translators seem to have struggled with this image). Once again he sees the king’s minister as his own reflection, and he realizes that he and the king are one. The king drives the symbolic point further by “taking a spider’s thread; first he split it into halves, then he made them one. Then he said, ‘One times one is one.’ “ Taking the spider’s web for the warp and weft of creation, this signals once again that unity with the true self is found in the union of body and spirit that is the City of Life.

More nuances are hidden in the enigmatic image of the sage splitting a spider’s thread in half, restoring it to unity, and then uttering the phrase “One times one is one” in explanation. The basic message here at first sight appears to be the underlying unity of the creator and the creation, of God and the self, which is further emphasized as a continuation of the imagery of reflection: “So I understood his allusion and found that my self was he, and I was his reflection.” Corbin understands this arithmetical symbol in terms of Sufi and Shi‘i concepts of multiple theophanies, in which God is manifest in multiple forms (Imāms or beautiful faces).

Corbin actually cites only one parallel passage in which the arithmetical phrase “one times one” occurs (without the conclusion “is one”), drawing upon the Risālat al-quds or Treatise on Sanctity by the Persian Sufi Rūzbihān Bağlī (d. 1209): “As long as it is not ‘one times one,’ the wayfarer does not reach the essence of the vision of unification.” Corbin appears to have gone astray, however, in applying this example to the symbolic arithmetic of The Pool of Nectar. In this passage from Rūzbihān, as well as in parallel expressions in other works by the same Sufi, the phrase “one times one” is used to emphasize the
transcendence of the divine unity and the distance between creator and creation; the divine unity multiplies itself endlessly without detracting from that unity, while creation by implication adds up to multiplicity.21

The probable source for the symbolism of “one times one is one” in The Pool of Nectar is rather to be sought in the Illuminationist tradition, from the well-known emanationist adage that “from the one only one proceeds.” In Avicennan metaphysics, the First Cause only produces a unitary effect, the First Intellect. The corollary to this point is that the philosopher or mystic must put away plurality and become pure unity in order to contemplate and return to the source of being. As Suhravardi put it, “The One is not comprehended except by a unitary being, for it is a unitary being, as al-Hallâj said at the time of his crucifixion: ‘It is sufficient for the One that the One be isolated in itself.’”22 The placement of this symbol of unity at the end of the treatise means that it must be considered not as a general and univocal formulation about the unity of the creator and the creation, but as the final (and typically Neoplatonic) insight of the microcosmic pilgrim in the return to the source of being. The frame story itself is introduced as “the answer to someone asking about the source and the goal” (Int. 7), invoking by the Arabic phrase “the source and the goal” (al-mabda’ wa-l-ma’âd) an array of cosmological and soteriological doctrines pertaining to the final destination of the soul.23 The splitting of the spider’s thread and its restoration is an allusion to the evanescent and illusory status of multiplicity, the web of creation, when viewed from the perspective of the return to the One.

The Islamicate versions of the frame story stress the importance of finding the king, that is, God, in the human world, but this is primarily a philosophical and mystical metaphor for attaining union with God. It is the king that is to be found, since the pearl no longer forms a part of the story. In the Persian translation, the Šufi mystical approach colors the narrative more emphatically than the Arabic, insisting that there is no existence but God, and that all transformation takes place through the divine unity (although one of the Ottoman versions is more cautious on this point). The goal in the Syriac original of the “Hymn of the Pearl” is heavily cloaked with symbols; it only occasionally provides an allegorical key, as when the royal garment is explicitly identified as knowledge (gnosis). There the narrator is only told that successful completion of his mission will ensure his appointment as court herald, and toward the end the story barely hints at his attainment of greater intimacy with the king, when the narrator hopes to stand next to the king by the royal gate. The Islamicate authors are generally not so reticent. In the Arabic version, the narrator’s multiple encounters with his higher self in the forms of the king and his minister reinforce the notion that one must seek the theophanic true self. Meeting the spiritual double who is a perfect reflection of oneself is a motif that reverberates throughout early Gnostic and Manichaean literature. As Corbin repeatedly pointed out, the symbolism of the spiritual twin can be used to argue for continuity between these earlier Near Eastern traditions and the philosophical mysticism of Suhravardi.

The significance of the Pearl story for the Arabic version and its translations hinges upon the narrator’s mystical relationship with the king, formulated as a covenant. The instruction to remember this covenant is important enough to be repeated in the Arabic version (A3–A4, A9 A10), first in relation to finding the king in the City of Life, and later to finding both the royal minister and the king there. Some manuscripts insert a gloss, which takes the covenant beyond the boundaries of the story, identifying it as the primordial relationship between the souls of humanity and God, alluded to in a famous verse of the Qur’an (7:172). In this covenant, made in pre-eternity, God asked the souls, “Am I not your Lord?” and they replied, “Yes.” This exchange forms the basis for monotheism, but in the Avicennan version, it is mystically interpreted along the lines of the Socratic saying attributed to the Prophet Muḥammad: “He who knows himself already knows his Lord.” In the same way, the Persian translation connects the symbolism of the garment as an image of the soul to the notion of the soul as an image of God, as formulated in both Hermetic alchemy and in a Prophetic saying: “When you reach the end of the wayfaring, and you see the ornamented and golden heavenly garment (khirqa), put it on. That is the form of the Father of Bodies (abâ al-ajsâd) [i.e., alchemical sulphur]; for [God] created man in his own form is the essence of this information.”

What is the significance of the changes that have taken place in the story of the “Hymn of the Pearl”? The metaphors of clothing and disguise in the original narrative suggest a Manichaean disdain or contempt for the body itself, which is simply to be replaced by a spiritual or astral body. The disguise that the narrator adopts in Egypt is the physical body needed in the dark material world, and it is eating the food of Egypt that induces the narrator’s forgetfulness. This earthly body con-

21 Rüzbihâñ Baqlî, Sharh-i shahisgâl, pp. 281, 446, 453, 533.
22 Suhravardi, Itwân fi ’t-şiqâd al-hukmân, in Šeûnên, ed. Corbin, vol. 2, pp. 266 67. Suhravardi’s reading of al-Hallâj’s saying is typically philosophical. Šufi versions of this saying read al-wâjid (“the ecstatic”) for the first instance of al-wâjid (“the One”), so that the saying would now mean, “All that matters to the ecstatic is the increasing solitude of his Only One, in himself”; cf. Massignon, The Passion of al-Hallâj, p. 289.
23 R. Arnaldez, “Ma’âd,” EF, s.v.
trasts with the royal garment that flies to him and becomes one with him, for it is the gnosis of his otherworldly origin. All this has been abandoned in The Pool of Nectar and replaced with theophanies of divine authority combined with announcements that these figures represent the narrator’s true self. The cautious and pessimistic allegories of the “Hymn” have been replaced by bold declarations that God is to be found in the world. These declarations have the additional effect of eliminating all the dramatic tension of the story, but that is the price to be paid for the change of emphasis.

The locus where this divine-human encounter takes place is the City of Life (al-balad al-ma‘mūra), a distinctively Bahā’i allegory for the psycho-physical totality of the human being. This phrase is the Arabic translation of Bahā’u’llāh’s Persian term “Citadel of Life” or “Citadel of the Soul” (shahrīstān-i jān). Although we are told that the journey to this abode is a dangerous one, it is a microcosmic journey, which replaces the journey from Parthia to Egypt with a luxuriant allegory of the external and internal senses and faculties. This allegory (omitted from the translations below), taken directly from a Persian philosophical fable by Bahā’u’llāh, is pure Aristotelian psychology in the Avicennian mold. Its insertion here shifts the mood away from the Gnostic sense of tragedy over the soul’s descent into matter, replacing it with a distinctively upbeat confidence in the ability of the soul to recognize God through its natural faculties.

The two distinctive characteristics of the Islamicate versions, then, are the mystical unity between the soul and God in the cosmos (as symbolized by the narrator and the king) and the detailed exploration of the microcosm through an allegorical Aristotelian psychology according to Bahā’u’llāh. Since the key to the now simplified plot is to seek the king in the world, it is clear that the addition of the Bahā’i psychological allegory was no afterthought. This philosophical gnosis of the microcosm is the very means by which one may know God. And the yogic treatise that follows this introduction is precisely the same sort of psychocosmic analysis, presented to a Muslim audience with many overt invocations of both Aristotelian and Qur’ānic vocabulary. The Arabic translator was clearly steeped in the Bahā’i universe where being is equated with light. The hata yogic emphasis on the body as the locus of salvation must have greatly appealed to the Arabic translator, who saw yoga as fulfilling the objectives of Islamic Neoplatonism, a tradition that was not averse to incorporating symbols and practices from unconventional sources. The most common title of the Arabic version was The Pool of the Water of Life, and the gnostic fount into which the narrator then fell was nothing less than the Water of Life itself. The Water of Life has numerous symbolic associations in Near Eastern lore, in the Qur’ān, and in Islamicate philosophy. As part of the frame for the translated yoga text, the invocation of this symbol is a broad enough hint that we may conclude that the yoga teaching is itself the immortality-inducing gnosis which was (or should have been) the object of the original narrator’s quest. This suspicion is borne out by further references to the Water of Life in the yoga text, which all have to do with yogic practices such as drinking the “nectar” of saliva (II, 7), breath control (V, 4), and urethral suction (VI, 5). In the Acts of Thomas, the “Hymn of the Pearl” was the apostle’s lament while he languished imprisoned in India. Now India is no longer a land of exile. The fragmentary versions of the “Hymn of the Pearl” have now become an ode to Indian ascetic practice, though set in an Islamic key.

Appendix: Tabular comparison and translation of the Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Urdu versions of the “Hymn of the Soul”

Paragraph numbers are given for each language (A for Arabic, T for Turkish, P for Persian, and U for Urdu); when preceded by S at the left margin of the English translations of the Arabic and Persian, this refers to the numbering of verses of the Syriac version in Poirier’s edition, pp. 343-48. Correspondences between paragraph numbers are indicated by the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Syriac</th>
<th>Arabic</th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>Persian</th>
<th>Urdu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>P8</td>
<td>U8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>P1-P2</td>
<td>U1-U2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S11</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>T3</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>U4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>T4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A5</td>
<td>T5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S17</td>
<td>A6</td>
<td>T6</td>
<td>P3-P9</td>
<td>U3-U9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A7</td>
<td>T7</td>
<td>P4</td>
<td>U4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A8</td>
<td>T8</td>
<td>P8-P9</td>
<td>U8-U9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S11</td>
<td>A9</td>
<td>T9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S12</td>
<td>A10</td>
<td>T10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Arabic version of the "hymn of the soul"

A1

كنت في قديم البلد، وهي مسكن آبائي وأجدادي.

S1. I was in the olden country, which was the dwelling of my parents and grandparents.

The master of the country summoned me and said, "It is not proper to dwell in this land of mine except after journeying to the City of Life, which is the farthest extreme of my country."

A2

وطني صاحب البلد، وقال: لا يصح السكن في بلدي إلا بعد السفر إلى البلد الممورة، وهي متبى بلادي.

S11. "So do not forget my covenant."

A3

 فلا تنسى عهدي.

S12. "For you will find me in that City."

A4

فإنا بكذبي في ذلك البلد.

A5

"Ask its description of my minister, who is seated at my gate. None enters without his knowledge and none leaves without his permission." When I reached the gate, I found him and greeted him, and he returned my greeting and welcomed me. I said, "My lord has ordered me to journey to the City of Life, so describe it for me." He said to me,

---

24One MS (K) adds a gloss here, "the spiritual world."
25Several MSS (BEF1) add a gloss here, "which is ‘Am I not your Lord?’ The phrase is taken from Qur'an 7:172, identifying the covenant of this story with the pre-creation covenant between God and the souls of humanity (cf. Schimmel, Dimensions, index, s.v. "Covenant, primordial").
A6. “There are hardships and difficulties before you reach him.”

A7. “And in your return to us are others even greater than these. I fear that you will forget the covenants, because of the distance and hardships, and that you will remain forever suffering from separation and far from returning.”

A8. I said, “I must travel there, so describe for me its qualities and the path to it.” Then he said, “Listen and pay attention to what I say; I will tell you how to arrive at the place.”

A9. “And do not forget my covenant.”

A10. “You will find me and my master in this country.”

A11. “The first of the hardships that you will encounter is the two great seas, and then there are seven mountains and four passes. Then after that, there are three stations filled with calamities and evils.”

A12. “Then from there you will reach a path narrower than the eye of an ant, so that you will not be able to go upon it on foot: rather, you will go upon it annihilated, upside down, on your head.”

A13. “And if you pass these difficulties, you will lift up your head in the City of Life.”

A14. “You will observe these signs and all these descriptions, and at that time you will forget all the covenants and not remember anything about them. So when you enter into it, beware of heedlessness, lest you remain suffering for ever and ever.”

A15. “You will find me and my master in this country.”

A16. “I will tell you how to arrive at the place.”

---

26 Several MSS insert a gloss, “which are the soul (nafs) and nature (tab).” Others (BCDGJ) add, regarding the two seas, that “that first one is the upright heaven (al-falak al-mustaqqim), and by them is meant the soul and nature.” Astronomers define “the upright heaven” (Latin sphaera recta) as the celestial sphere as seen from the terrestrial equator, with the celestial equator passing through the zenith (Hartner, “Falak,” vol. 2, p. 762b).
While I was roaming about its grossnesses and subtleties, I reached a master seated on the throne of the king, and he was the master of [the City]. I greeted him and he also greeted me, and I spoke to him and he also spoke to me. Everything I did and said, he did and said.

S66. Then I looked closely, and [saw that] he was I, and the master was my reflection.

S66–57. This situation awakened me and reminded me of the covenants.

While I was in this astonishment, I suddenly faced the minister of my master, who had advised me and made the covenant with me. He took me by the hand and said, “Dive into this water, for it is the Water of Life.” When I dived into it, I understood all its mysteries and found my master, after gaining gnosis of the signs, but abandoning their use.

A21

All these were allusions and symbols for the attainment of salvation and eternal happiness, which cannot be attained except by gnosis of the cognizing and distinguishing rational soul for the managing of states. In this way man is superior to animals.
He made an allusion by taking a spider’s thread: first he split it into halves, then he made them one. Then he said, “One times one is one.” So I understood his allusion and found that my self was he, and I was his reflection. Farewell.

The Turkish translation

| T1 | Dedi ki kadimü’ü bilädda idim ol benim abâ ve ecdadımı meskenidir. He said, I was in the olden country, which was the dwelling of my parents and grandparents. |
| T2 | Biläd sahibi beni taleb eyledi ve dedi ki bizim beldemizde sakin olmak ilâ bir beldede sakin olmak illa belde-i másrûreye seferden sonra olur ki ol biläd-i mâmûre bizim mütehâ bilâdiımızdır. The master of the country summoned me and said, “It is not proper to dwell in this land of mine except after journeying to the City of Life, which is the farthest extreme of my country.” |
| T3 | Ve sefer ettikte ahdimizi unuttu ki ol ahd “elestû bi-rabbiküm”dır. “And on the journey, do not forget our covenant, which is ‘Am I not your Lord’ (Qur’an 7:172). |
| T4 | Takîk an ol biläd-i mâmûrede beni buhursun. “You will certainly find me in that Land of Life.” |
T5
Ve ol bilâd-ı mümûrenin vasfını kapımuzda duran vezirînden sual eyle zira ol bilâda bir kimse dahil olmaz illâ onun ilmi ile olur ve bir kimse ondan çıkmaz illâ onun izniyle çıkar vaktta ki bilâd-ı mümûreye sefer edip ol kapıya vasil olduğum veziri buldum ve ona selâm verdim ol dahi aleykî alî pes ona kedîm ki belde-i mümûreye sefer etmekîye efendîmiz bana emreledi. Vezîr dedi ki;

“And ask the description of that Land of Life from my minister who is standing at our gate. None enters this Land without his knowledge and none leaves without his permission. When I traveled to the Land of Life and reached that gate and found that minister and greeted him, he returned my greeting. I said ‘My lord has ordered me to travel to the City of Life.’ The minister said

T6
Tahkîkan senin seferinde şehâdât ve akabaât vardır.

T7
Ve bize rücueunda ondan dahı ziyâade şiddetler vardir. Pes indi hâvî ederîm ki sefer ettiğinde ahîdi unutup ve edebde dek fi-râkân eliminde baki ve vîsalînî bâdi olursun.

“and in your return to us are others even greater than those. I fear that you will forget the covenants on the journey, and that you will remain forever suffering from separation and far from returning.”

T8
Ben vezîre dedim ki elbette bu belde-i mümûrenerin seferi bize labûd’ildir. Pes indi ol belde-i mümûrenin sifatını bana vasf eyle ve tariyini bana beyân eyle. Vezîr dedi ki: kavîlîmine dinle

T9
Ve âhîdi unutma

T10
Tahkîkan sen beni ve efendîmiz ol beldede bulursun.

“And do not forget the covenant.

“For you will truly find our lord and me in that City.

31Recension a adds, “There is no doubt of my lord’s glory (farr) and authority (himmah).”
The first of the hardships that you will encounter is the two seas, which are the soul and nature, and seven mountains, and four passes, and three stations filled with calamities and evils.

Then from there you will reach a path narrower than the eye of an ant, so that you will go upon it upside down, on your head.  

And when you pass these difficulties, you will find yourself in the City of Life.

You will observe these mentioned signs and all these descriptions, and at that time you will forget all the covenants and not remember anything about them. So when you enter into it, beware of heedlessness, lest you remain suffering for ever and ever.

The author said, So I traveled and traversed the two oceans, the mountains, the passes, and the stations, and I reached that place which he had mentioned. I remained in that mentioned path and stayed there for a long time.

But I remembered nothing of it.

32 Recension a adds, “and on your breast (ṣadr),”
33 Recension a reads, “you will save your head and you will be in the City.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T17</td>
<td><strong>Bu arahlta</strong> vilâyetin kesâyîf ve letâvifîn devr ederken bir şahsî vâsiyet oldum ki: padisâhîn kürûssûsî üzerine ciîs etmiş, ki ol beldenin şeyhidir. Ol şeyhe selâm verdim, ol dahi 'aleyk ahd. Ben ona söyledi bana söyledi. Ve heh bir şey ki ben am işleri ve söylerim, ol dahi onu işler ve söyler.**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T18</td>
<td><strong>Pes imdi bu hayrette iken</strong> efendimini bana vasiyet ve adêt ini vesile mülakâ oldum ve elim ahd ve bu suyal dal ki tahhan mûllî-hayat budur dedi. Vakta ki daldum, cennî mermûzâtımı fehn ettim ve efendim olan Cenâb-ı Bâriyî bulundum. Bu alâmati bilip ve istîmalînî terkden sonra,**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T19</td>
<td><strong>Bu hâlet beni mebbûh kıldû ve sebkât eden uluhud hâtrima getirdi.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

35“Bewildered” (mebûh) seems to be a mistake for “awakened” (Ar. nabaḥat); another Arabic MS (X) in a marginal comment clearly glosses nabaḥat with Ottoman “awareness” (âddâb).

36Recension a has a ludicrous misreading here, caused by dropping a dot; thus “dive” (âddâb) becomes “sneeze” (Ar. tîta), so the narrator is told, “Sneeze, because to sneeze is the Water of Life (bu akermek âb-i hayatî).”

37See note 27 above.
T22

Pes indi bu mezkûrûn kökleri neçata ve ma’âdîl-ebedeneyîndîn içîn işârât ve rûmûzûnattur ve bu dedîmîz neçat taman hasîl olmaz illâ nefs-i nâtîkayi bildikten sonra; ki ol natîka dedîmîzîn têdbîrî-ef’alîn içîn müfkkire ve mümmeyzîdîr ki, onunî ile insan hayvan üzerrîne fâk olunmuştur.

All these were allusions and symbols for the attainment of salvation and eternal return, which cannot be attained except by gnosis of the cognizing and distinguishing rational soul for the managing of states. In this way man is superior to animals.

[\text{Yoga text comes here}]

[\text{Yoga text comes here}]

[\text{Yoga text comes here}]

T23

Musamûnîf dedi vakta ki bu zikrî sebkat eden suale muttali’ oldum, efendimin bana olan vezirinîn bul- dum, ki ol benîn ve bu vezir benîn aksîmîn. Pes imdi hayran kaldım ve bu hayrette efendime mülkü oldum.

The author said, when I became aware of the preceding question, I found the minister of my master, he was I, and the minister was my reflection. I remained astonished, and in this astonishment, I beheld my master.

\text{\textsuperscript{38}} Return (ma’âdî) seems to be a mistake for “happiness” (sa’âda).

\text{\textsuperscript{39}} The translator appears to have understood “lifted up” (Ar. \textit{iffalatu}) metaphorically as gaining awareness or information, instead of its literal meaning.

T24


He signaled me by taking a spider’s futility; first he split it into halves, then he made them one. Then he said, “One times one is one.” So I understood and found that my self was itself, and I was my master’s reflection.

\text{\textsuperscript{40}} A misreading of “a thread” (\textit{hayât min hayât}) as “futility” (hubât) may have been facilitated by an idiomatic expression in Ottoman Turkish, “hubût-u ankebût: to come to nothing, fall, miscarry, go wrong, to be futile, be of no avail, be lost.”
The Persian translation

P1: The master of the kingdom of non-existence made to the queen an allusion to "Be!"; to the extent possible in the world of command; "And it is" (Qu'ran 2:117) came to pass in accord with capacity. He gave the order, "Whatever my minister says is to be obeyed." He explained the special transformation of every entity, from the palace of divinity and the station of the might of pure unity.

P2: Then he stated, "It is not right for you to dwell here except after traveling to the House of Life (bayt al-ma'āmūr)."

S11: "You should not forget the ancient covenant because of these confusions, and if you do forget, you shall be afflicted by eternal separation." 45

P3: "Come, for this land is your dwelling place from pre-eternity to post-eternity."
He gave information of the essence, from the sea to the desert, both openly and secretly. He said, "In this path there are twenty-eight stations, and in every station there is a pass, and in every pass there are many hardships and numberless troubles.

P4: "And it is by a formula of division, indeed Faramosh Negh, Before the beginning of the

P5: In helplessness, willingly or not, he chose.

---

41Per1 A and Per1 B only, but confirmed by Urdu translation: Per1 J has "to himself." 42A marginal gloss in Per1 J reads, "The divinity that he summoned from his place of seclusion made a journey, and comes into manifestation. He mentioned the palace, and descended to the world of attributes. In relation to the first expression, he made use of the word 'palace,' and the explanation of the word 'station' is the sublime." On "might": "That is, the first specification and manifestation. Another meaning conveys appropriate perfection, i.e., something that once was, the form of which is perfected. That is, might is the essence of divinity. That is, palace has been explained as meaning that the divine and transcendent presence is in the veil of the isthmus. Were it not for that veil, creatures would have seen God visually. Listen to a subtle point: were it not for that veil, creation would never have manifested from God at all. Let one compare by understanding both aspects." On "unity": "That is, every known existence that is stored in pure unity is contained in Adam. This was given to every person. He explains that after the journey, the City becomes inhabited and supported." 43For the Arabic text's "the City of Life" (al-balad al-ma'āmūr)," the translator has substituted the Qur'ānic phrase "the House of Life" (al-bayt al-ma’āmūr, Qu'ran 52:4), commonly identified with the heavenly archetype of the Ka’ba which the angels circumambulate. A marginal gloss in Per1 J reads, "The House of Life is in the fourth heaven. Like the image of Adam, that image becomes visible in the form of an image; this becomes an explanation of the Essence and Attributes. This House of Life is one of the subtle compounds, and it is made of the four elements of the Presence." 44See Arabic, A6. 45Cf. Arabic, A7. A marginal gloss in Per1 J reads, "That is, utterly distant from the ancient gnosis, which you had spoken as 'they said yes' (Qu'ran 7:172), and which you should not forget; otherwise you will remain in the unbelief of eternal error." This connects the covenant to the same Qur'ānic verse cited in some copies of the Arabic version.
S14. Then he said, “When you reach the end of the journey, and you see the ornamented and golden heavenly garment, put it on.” That is the form of the ‘Father of Bodies’ (’abu al-qasād). He created man in His own form is the essence of this information. Blessed be God, the most beautiful of creators!” (Qurʾān 23:14) is the marvelous sign of this.

P7
Since the existence of power sought manifestation in all the creation of the Creator, the existence of wisdom became ready and existent within it [creation] at every level. Philosophers teach about the order and composition of the descent of every single being, whatever is in that foundation and is in this structure.

P8
The human reality, the second minister, who is cosmic existence and is perfectly imprinted by that presence, clarified through parables, and explained. “It is necessary for you to travel toward the City of Life, for that is the dwelling place of your parents and grandparents.”

P9
The minister said further. “The description of that City and the path to it is just as follows.”

P10
He explained: “The first of that world is the world of the soul, and from that are the hardships of the two seas, the seven mountains, the three stations, and the four levels.”

the loins of Adam, according to its capability, comes into manifestation by [divine] power. They are required according to the dictates of wisdom. That is, every member became manifest, and occurred according to capacity. In this there is no excess or defect. And when your lord took their seed from their backs and made them testify to themselves, he said, “Am I not your Lord?” They said yes” (Qurʾān 7:172). The meaning is this.”

46 Mukalla means the sense of adorned with gems or jewels, and can also mean crowned; marusya means set in gold or studded with gems, used mostly with reference to a crown or sword. The terms are often used together in royal contexts in Persian (Dhikhuwād, Lughat nāmā).

47 This sentence preserves a feature of the “Hymn of the Soul” that has not survived in any copy of the Arabic version: the jeweled and golden garment which comes to meet the narrator as he returns home, reflecting him and becoming one with him. From the appearance of this feature, it appears that the translation by Muhammad Ghaith presides the existing recension of the Arabic text.

48 “Father of Bodies” in alchemical parlance means sulphur, just as “Father of Spirits” (’abu al-arwaḥ) means mercury (Dhikhuwād, Lughat nāmā). A marginal gloss in Per.1 reads, “Whatever the revered Father of Spirits commands must be obeyed, for that is the substance of inner things, just as its own state is good. ‘I was a prophet when Adam was between water and clay’ [hadith].”

49 “God created man in his own form” is a hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad; cf. Furuzanfar, Abādith-i mathnawī, no. 346, p. 114.

50 A marginal gloss in Per.1 reads, “That is, the other creation of humanity was established within Adam, peace be upon him.”

51 A marginal gloss in Per.1 reads, “That is, every existent atom that existed in
P11

“The road is narrower than the eye of an ant, and there are many evils and numberless stations. It is difficult to traverse that on foot: one must traverse it with the heart.”

P12

“Why? The wayfarer’s coming is by the path of the existential names, and his going is by the path of the divine names.” As a saint has said, “Go his way footless, see his form without eye, recite his word without tongue, and drink his wine without mouth.”

P13

When I traversed and crossed all at once each of the passes and stations that I had heard from the minister including the seas, passes, and stations I approached a venerable man (pīrv) seated on the king’s throne, who was the master (shaykh) of that City. I greeted him, and after he returned my greeting, he began to converse, and I began speaking to him. Whatever I did, he did.

P14

S76. When I looked well, I saw that he was I, and the master was my reflection.

P15

When this state became clear, a state came upon me, and in that state I saw the minister.57 He said, “You have indeed arrived. Come, that I may convey you to the master of the greatest kingdom, and acquaint you with the chief minister.” When I began to seek by following the minister, I found the king and minister in myself. That which had been promised I witnessed entirely in myself, after recognizing the signs, allusions, and ciphers wrapped in secrets. “Let them understand who understand. Those given wisdom have been given a great good.” (Qur’an 2:269).

P16

57 A marginal gloss in Per.1 reads, “That is, when I traversed this realm and stations, and I arrived at the measure of divinity that is the reality of humanity, he said, ‘Congratulations!’ And he said, ‘What you have seen, understood, and passed through is all (?) illegible.’ By hearing these words, I found a new life, and was qualified by all the attributes. I became the master of knowledge and wisdom for all eternity. I saw one existence; when I began to observe, I comprehended the beauty of witnessing. When I disengaged, I forgot no one; with sign or without is according to what you say. With a subtle understanding, another comprehends the subtle.”
The Urdu translation

U1

و این اشارہ، بر گرفتن رسمان
عنکبوت دو پارہ کردن و بار
یکجا کردن او است. چون حس
کند اگے بکی در بکی [بکی]
پانے. بر این اشارہ معلوم شد
کہ اوست و من عكس آئیم
وباقی واله اعلام بالصواب.

The master of the realm
of non-existence made to
the queen an allusion suit-
able to possibility in the
world of command; it was
good, in agreement with its
capacity. He gave the order,
"Whatever my minister says
is to be done." He explained
the special transformation of
every entity: divinity and the
station of the might of pure
unity.

U2

اور پر کیا کہ تیرے نتیج بیج
اس جگا کی قرار لینا صواب
وہی پر - لیکن بیت المعمور کا
سر کیم

Then he stated, "It is not
right for you to dwell here,
but you must travel to the
House of Life."

U3

بعد آ کہ یہ یہ کہ ابتدا سے
ہمارا کہ تیری رہنے کی حکم پر
- یہ ہے کر، خبر پچائے، ظاہر
پاتن کی دروازہ سے جھکر یک
کہ دیا کہ بیچ اس راہ کہ بیت
المعمور پر اور اک مملکت پر پر
مملکت من حختین بیت اور
حنان پر شمار پر

Then [he said], "Come, for
this land is your dwelling
place from the beginning
to the end." He gave
information of the knowledge
from the door of the outer
and inner to the jungle.58
He said, "In this path is the
House of Life, and there are
eight stations, and in every
station there are many diffi-
culties and numberless trials.

58 The Persian expression “from the sea to the desert” (az daryā tā ṣahrā), signi-
fying all of creation, has been transformed here as daryā becomes darvāza, “door”
while ṣahrā becomes jangal (jungle).
U4  You should not forget the ancient condition because of the disturbances of the path, and if you do forget, you shall be disturbed and upset by the misfortunes of separation.

U5  For helplessness there is no cure; unwillingly he chose.

U6  Then he said, "When you reach the end of the journey, and you see the ornamented heavenly garment, put it on. That is the form of the 'Father of Bodies' (abū al-ajsad); for 'He created man in His own form' is the essence of outward appearance.

U7  Since it is in relationship to power that every creation has a Creator, the wisdom of the profit of existence made existent the totality of levels within it. Wisdom teaches about the order and composition of the station of every individual station; whatever is in that foundation is in this essence.

U8  The human reality, belonging to the second minister, who is common existence and is perfectly connected to that presence, made it evident by a metaphor, and said, "It is necessary for you to travel toward the City of Life, for that is the dwelling place of your parents and grandparents."

U9  The minister said further, "Let me give the description of that City and the detailed explanation of the path."

---

59 Somehow the key term "covenant" (‘āhd) has become "condition" (shart) both here and in U15, though it mysteriously reappears in U16.

60 The syntax and vocabulary of the Urdu differ substantially from the Persian here, treating Șaff as a noun ("profit") rather than an auxiliary verb, and making numerous other changes.
He explained: "The first of that world is the world of the souls, which is the place of difficulties, that is, the two seas, the seven mountains, the three stations, and the four levels.

The road is narrower than the eye of an ant, and there are many evils and numberless stations. One must traverse its stations on foot.

"Why?" The wayfarer’s coming is by the path of the existential names, and his going is by the path of the divine names. As a saint has said, ‘Go his way footless, see his form without eye, recite his word without tongue, and drink his wine without mouth.’"

When I heard this from the minister and found the sign, I made the journey and traversed the passes and stations in it as they were. Since all this was as I had heard, traveling gradually I came to the City. I saw a young man who was upon the seat of the king; he is the master (shaykh) of that City. I greeted him, and after he returned my greeting, he began to converse, and I began speaking to him. Whatever I did, he did.

When I looked well and made an effort, it became clear that that person was I, and the master was my reflection.

Then I attained the goal and remembered my former conditions.
When he saw this state, I became shy, and in that state I saw the minister. The minister said, "You have indeed arrived. Come, that I may convey you to the master of the greatest kingdom. [and] acquaint you with the chief minister." When I began to seek by following the minister, I found the king and minister in myself. That which had been promised by the covenant I witnessed in myself, after recognizing the relationship, allusions, difficult mysteries, and involved secrets. And from my understanding, "[Those] given wisdom have been given a great good (Qur'ān 2:269)."

Bibliography

Arnaldez, R. “Maʿād.” El, s.v.


Hartner, W. “Falak.” El, s.v.


---

SHAMEFUL AND INJURIOUS: AN IDEA OF IBN AL-MUQAFFA’ S IN KALILA WA-DIMNA AND AL-ADAB AL-KABIR

András Hámori
*Princeton University*

There are two interesting ideas common to the story of the Lion and the Bull in Ibn al-Muqaffa’s *Kalila wa-Dimna* as it appears in the two oldest Arabic manuscripts, and Ibn al-Muqaffa’s treatise best known as *al-Adab al-kabir*.\(^1\) The first idea is that the courtier-secretary should act as an ethical educator to the ruler. It is, I think, an element of intended irony that at the outset of his career the jackal Dimna plans to do just that. The second idea is the notion that unethical conduct results in shame as well as injury to the practical interests of the agent. By “ethical” and “unethical” I do not mean “moral” and “immoral” as values that apply to all human beings, but rather that an action does or does not conform to the code of behavior proper to the “men of excellence,” a kind of gentleman’s code on which, as I attempted to show in a previous paper, in Ibn al-Muqaffa’s view not only the reputation but also the self-respect of the idealized courtier-secretary depend.\(^2\)

I want to assess whether, and to what degree, these ideas are new, relative to the Pahlavi version of the story that Ibn al-Muqaffa used for his translation. We no longer have the Pahlavi text or its Sanskrit archetype, but we do have a Syriac translation from the Pahlavi, pre-dating Ibn al-Muqaffa’s.\(^3\) Comparison between this Syriac translation

---

\(^{1}\) I wish to thank Dr. Emmanuel Papoutsakis for his generous help with the Syriac passages cited in this article. Any errors in interpretation or grammar are, of course, my own.


\(^{3}\) The Pahlavi book of *Kalila wa-Dimna* was made by the Persian physician Būrān who travelled to India at the behest of Kāra Anūširvān (ruled 531–579 CE). It is a composite of translations from the Sanskrit. About half of it, including the story of the Lion and the Bull (although not the part known as Dimna’s Trial, which is generally admitted to be an Islamic addition), comes from a recension of the Panchatantra that is no longer extant. The date of the composition of the Panchatantra is unknown. Internal evidence establishes ca. 300 BC as the terminus post quem (see T. Part I, p. 20 [A list of the abbreviations used here appears at the end of this article]).