

mujahedeen group so that when the time for complete Islamisation comes, ready-made material is available. In the meantime, Islamic classics are explored, researched and presented, Islamic concepts are formulated and a policy is undertaken to transform the minds and attitudes of teachers by making them capable of learning, analysing and teaching each branch of knowledge from the Islamic point of view. That is why the Islamic Academy is exploring the possibilities of co-operation with those people in authority who want Islamisation of education but are not fully aware of the methods of doing it. It also intends to see that the infra-structure of the society is filled up with people who believe in Shari'ah, and are ready to go ahead with Islamisation, however slow that process may be at the outset.

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THE ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHERS' VIEWS ON EDUCATION

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'Whoever wishes to perfect himself as a human being [*insāniya*] and reach the rank 'amr' which is meant by 'human nature' in order to integrate his self [*li-yatimma dhātahu*] and have the same preferences and intentions as those of the philosophers, let him acquire these two arts [*sina'āt*]. I mean the theoretical and practical parts of philosophy; as a result, there will accrue to him the essential natures of things [*ḥaqā'iq al-umūr*] by means of the theoretical part, and good deeds by means of the practical part.*

Ibn Miskawayh, *Tarīb al-sa'ādah*.

The Islamic conception of education, which has attracted so much attention recently, cannot be fully understood without an appreciation of the views of Islam's philosophers concerning all aspects of education from its goal to content and from curriculum to method. In recent years, however, the significance of Islamic philosophy has been often neglected and even its Islamic character denied by those who in the name of an Islam, rationalistically interpreted, outwardly oppose things Western while allowing modern ideas to dominate the vacuum created in their mind and soul as a result of the rejection of the Islamic intellectual tradition in its millennial development.

The view of the Islamic philosophers concerning education is of great significance not only because of its innate value but also because it was this world-view associated with the philosophers that produced over the ages the great men of learning and science who are so much appreciated today in these very quarters which attack the Islamic philosophers while praising Islamic science as a result of that scientism which has crept into the world-view of so many so-called Islamic fundamentalists and revivalists.¹ It must be stated at the outset that Islamic philosophy as it developed over the centuries is Islamic in character and is an integral part of the Islamic intellectual tradition.² Moreover, it was the educational system which trained the Islamic philosophers that also produced the Islamic scientists; there existed a single educational system which made possible the appearance of the Muslim philosopher-scientists over the ages, of men who were at once philosophers and masters of some field of science.³ Finally, the views of these philosopher-scientists concerning education is essential in making possible today the re-establishment of an educational system which would be at once Islamic and of a veritable intellectual character. If there is to be once again an educational system to produce an al-Bīrūnī or an Ibn Sīnā, it must at least take seriously the views which they held concerning education. For centuries Islam produced men who were at once the most devout Muslims and foremost thinkers in various intellectual disciplines. Present-day Muslims in search of re-creating an authentic Islamic education system cannot but take into consideration the views of such men concerning the content, goal, methods and meaning of education.

*Trans. by D. Gutas in 'Paul the Persian on the Classification of the Parts of Aristotle's Philosophy: a Milestone between Alexandria and Bagdad', *Der Islam*, Band 60, Heft 2, 1983, p.232.

Islamic philosophy is not of course confined to a single school nor is it simply the sum of the views of individual philosophers following one upon the wake of another as one finds in post-medieval European philosophy. Although there are individuals who stand as solitary figures in the history of Islamic thought, Islamic philosophy consists essentially of perspectives or schools which have survived over the ages. To grasp in a synoptic fashion the views of the Islamic philosophers concerning education, it is necessary to turn to outstanding representatives of each school,⁴ while to survey the field completely would require the examination of each school as it has developed over the centuries. For the purpose of the present essay, therefore, we have chosen the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā', Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī and Mullā Ṣadrā, representing the Ismā'īlī, Hermetic – Pythagorean, Peripatetic (*mashshā'ī*), Illuminationist (*ishrāqī*) schools and the 'transcendent theosophy' (*al-ḥikmah al-muta'āliyah*) respectively.

Although the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' came to be associated later with Shī'ism in general and Ismā'īlism in particular,⁵ their *Rasā'il* came to be read in a wide circle of Islamic scholars and thinkers, both Sunnī and Shī'ite, and including such celebrated Sunnī theologians as al-Ghazzālī. The *Rasā'il*, while being a synthesis of Shī'ite learning presented in an encyclopedic fashion, possessed an educational impact that went beyond the confines of a particular school to touch the whole of the Islamic community. Likewise, while its perspective in which Neoplatonic, Hermetic and Neopythagorean element were integrated into Islamic esoterism remained closely wed to Ismā'īlī philosophy, its philosophical influence was felt widely among many different figures and later periods of Islamic history. It is enough to read the pages of the *Asfār* of Mullā Ṣadrā to realize how powerful were indeed the echoes of the *Rasā'il* some seven centuries later.

The purpose of the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' in composing the *Rasā'il* is itself educational and the question of education, its goal, stages, content, methods and other elements are to be found throughout the fifty one treatises which comprise the *Rasā'il*.⁶ It is, however, especially in the seventh treatise of the first volume entitled *Fī'l-ṣanā'i' al-'ilmiyyah* (the section *Fī'l-'ilm wa'l-ma'lūm wa'l-ta'allum wa'l-ta'lim* i.e. *On Knowledge, the Known, Teaching and Learning*) they deal with education, while in the ninth treatise called *Fī bayān al-akhlāq wa asbāb ikhtilāfihā...* (*Concerning the Description of Ethics and the Cause of Differences among its Schools...*) they deal with the influence of the environment, the home and the school, professors and other pertinent factors upon students.⁷ According to the Ikhwān, the soul is a 'spiritual, celestial, luminous, living and knowing substance potentially and active by nature'.⁸ The goal of education is to enable the soul to actualize these potential possibilities thereby perfecting it and preparing it for eternal life.⁹ Knowledge acquired through education is in fact the ultimate nourishment which sustains man's immortal soul while actualization of what is potential in the soul is existence (*wujūd*) itself, the mode of existence which does not perish with death.

This process of actualization is composed of stages of which the most important are *tahdhīb* (refinement), *taṭhīr* (purification), *tatmīm* (contemplation) and *takmīl* (perfection).¹⁰ These stages are moral as well as

propedeutic; in fact the two are never separated in the view of the Ikhwān who re-assert the universal Islamic principle stated in so many *ḥadīths* that gaining of theoretical knowledge and purification of the soul have to be combined in order for 'science' or '*ilm*' to become rooted in the soul, transform its substance and embellish it in such a way that it will be worthy of eternal life in the Divine Presence.

The Ikhwān also consider the stages of life in which education has to be imparted to body, mind and soul. From birth to the age of four the senses and instincts are to be strengthened. From the age of four through fifteen the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, etc. are to be mastered in the school (*maktab*) with the help of a teacher (*mu'allim*) through the process of dictation (*imlā'*). After this age, the mental powers become more mature and the student begins to learn from a master (*ustād*) through the use of the intellect ('*aql*') by means of demonstration (*burhān*) and also through inspiration (*ilhām*).

There is a hierarchy of knowledge as there is a hierarchy of teachers. Education is based on a hierarchy which leads from the exoteric sciences to the esoteric through the instruction imparted by teachers who themselves stand in a hierarchy which ranges from the *mustajīb* to the *ḥujjah* and *imām*, the latter possessing perfect knowledge of both the exoteric and the esoteric orders.¹¹ The goal of education is to perfect and actualize all the possibilities of the human soul leading finally to that supreme knowledge of the Divinity which is the goal of human life. While education prepares man for felicity in this life, its ultimate goal is the abode of permanence and all education points to the permanent world of eternity (*al-ākhirah*) beyond the transient vasillations of this world of change. According to the Ikhwān, the ultimate goal of education, even while one is mastering the sciences of nature, is not to dominate over the world and gain external power but to dominate over oneself in such a manner as to be able to go beyond the world of change into the abode of eternity embellished with the ornament of knowledge combined with virtue which alone is worthy of the world into which the soul of the faithful hopes to enter at the end of this earthly journey.

Among the well-known Muslim philosophers, the first to have treated the question of education in a substantial manner was Ibn Sīnā, the foremost among the Muslim philosopher-scientists, who is the source and origin of so many basic aspects of traditional Islamic thought.¹² He deals specifically with the question of education in his *Tadbīr al-manāzil* while also referring to this subject in several passages of the logic of the *Shifā'*, *Risālat al-siyāṣah*, and the *Canon*. Of course, his discussion of the nature of man and his entelechy in several of his philosophical works should also be considered as being related to the subject of education in the most general sense of the term for whenever Ibn Sīnā deals with man, he also concerns himself with his final end and the means whereby man can attain perfection, the process of the attainment of his perfection being nothing other than education in its most universal sense.

For Ibn Sīnā education begins at the moment of birth and even before at the moment that man chooses a mate whose moral and intellectual character will deeply affect the child who is yet to be born. He also emphasizes the role of the wife and mother in the bringing up of the children and her share in their earliest

education. The child is to be given discipline from the time of breast feeding and the first steps in his learning manners and morals and building up of character (*ta'dīb*) are to be taken in this earliest stage of human life, while the teaching of the sciences should begin when the body of the child begins to form fully with the joints becoming firm and the ears and tongue functioning fully. Ibn Sīnā insists, moreover, that each child should be given individual attention and brought up according to his or her particular make up. In no case should there be a quantitative egalitarianism imposed upon everyone for this would be against qualitative differences which are ingrained within the very substance of human nature and which must be nurtured and protected with the greatest care rather than overlooked. He goes in fact so far as to assert that the consideration of human beings solely on the basis of quantitative equality leads to their destruction and perdition.¹³

In the *Canon* Ibn Sīnā specifies the regimen from infancy to adolescence, having at once an educational and medical goal in mind. 'The great principle here is the inculcation of control of the emotions. One should take care that they do not give way to anger and fear, or be opposed by despondency, or suffer from sleeplessness. They should therefore be allowed that which is pleasing and appetizing and one should avoid giving them anything arousing disgust.'¹⁴ As a result, the mind becomes accustomed to positive emotions from the beginning and develops good habits while the body also benefits from these positive habits of the mind.

Meanwhile the child grows to an age when in addition to the parents and family who have been his sole teachers until now, a suitable teacher from outside must now be sought for him. 'At the age of six, he may be given tuition by a master [who is of mild and benevolent disposition], who will teach him step by step and in order [cheerfully, without constraint]. He should not be compelled to stay continuously in school. [Relaxation of the mind contributes to the growth of the body]. At this age, bathing and rest should be less frequent, and the exercise before meals should be increased.'¹⁵ Ibn Sīnā advises that this programme is to be continued until the age of thirteen, insisting that light exercise should be encouraged while that which entails toil and hardship should be avoided between boyhood and adolescence. Meanwhile, grammar should be taught to the student followed at the age of 14 onwards by mathematics and then philosophy.

Ibn Sīnā distinguishes clearly between the first stage of education carried out in the house and the second carried out at school (*maktab*) under the care of a teacher (*mu'allim*). At this stage school and home begin to complement each other in achieving the goals of early education which are: the strengthening of faith, the building of good character, the acquisition of health, the gaining of literacy and the attainment of the rudiments of correct thinking and the art of a craft. The teacher should be carefully chosen because at this stage his influence upon the character of the pupil is as great as his influence upon his mind. Therefore, the teacher should be pious, have firm moral principles and be of gentle disposition as well as being knowledgeable. He must be the possessor of wisdom (*hikmah*; *khiraḍ*), and be able to have insight into the character of his pupils and even judge their gifts for pursuing different fields of knowledge so as

to be able to advise them as to which subject to pursue in later stages of life.

As for school, it is necessary because not only does it make possible the transmission of knowledge, but it also provides a social ambience wherein students can learn from each other and live with one another. Ibn Sīnā emphasizes the importance of healthy rivalry and competition as well as of encouragement to students in attaining educational goals. Moreover, the presence of other students makes possible discourse and disputation which increases understanding and the making of friends which helps to purify character and strengthen certain virtues.¹⁶

As far as the eight year program of the *maktab* is concerned, it begins with the Qur'ān, religious instruction and language. This is then followed by the teachings of ethics and then some kind of art or craft in the light of the students' capabilities and interests and also in view of what is needed to earn a living. Sports should also be taught and students should spend certain hours of the day in participating in some form of it. At this stage students should begin to earn some kind of livelihood while those who have the appropriate mental constitution and intellectual ability should continue their education further in such fields as medicine or other sciences.

As far as the method of instruction is concerned, Ibn Sīnā emphasizes moderation in dealing with students. The teacher should be neither excessively lenient nor harsh. He should choose a manner of instruction, whether it be through mental training, imitation, repetition, logical analysis, etc., that is in conformity with the nature of the student. Likewise, in the choice of the particular field of the arts for each student, the capabilities and the interest of the student should be taken fully into consideration.¹⁷

No discussion of Ibn Sīnā's views on education would be complete without mention of his doctrine of the intellect, the faculties of the soul and the hierarchy which determines the different levels of man's intellectual faculties and the process whereby man can attain to the highest level of intellectual perfection. Education on the higher level is in fact nothing other than the process of actualization and perfection of the faculties of the theoretical and practical intellect (*al-'aql al-nazarī* and *al-'aql al-'amālī*).

Ibn Sīnā deals with this subject in several of his works especially Book Six of the *Tabi'iyyat* of the *Shifā'* where he deals with the soul and its faculties and powers.¹⁸ A full discussion of this theory of the intellect (*'aql*) would require a separate study and in fact there have already been several works devoted to this very subject,¹⁹ but its brief mention is nevertheless necessary here because of its crucial educational significance. According to this theory, man 'possesses' both a theoretical and a practical intellect whose faculties he must strengthen, moderate and perfect as the case may be. Education of the mind is essentially that 'of the theoretical intellect',²⁰ while that of character involves both the theoretical and practical intellects. While the practical intellect includes all the vegetal and animal faculties (*al-quwa'l-nabā'iyyah* and *al-quwa'l-hayawāniyyah*) including apprehension (*wahm*), imagination (*khayāl*) and fantasy (*fantasiyyah*), the theoretical intellect encompasses the levels of material intellect (or intelligence) (*al-'aql al-hayūlānī*), intellect *en habitus* (*al-'aql bi'l-malakah*), intellect in act (*al-'aql bi'l-fī'l*) and finally the sacred or acquired intellect (*al-'aql*

al-quḍṣī or *al-'aql al-mustafād*). The process of learning implies the actualization of the potentialities of the intellect through the effusion of the light of the Active Intellect. It is this separate Intellect identified with the angelic substances that is the real teacher of the seeker of knowledge and the illumination of the human intellect by the hierarchy of Intelligencies that lies at the heart of the whole process of attaining knowledge the highest level of which is intuitive knowledge (*al-ma'rifat al-ḥaqsiyyah*) attained directly from the Active Intellect.

The *Visionary Recitals* of Ibn Sīnā in which his 'Oriental Philosophy' (*al-ḥikmat al-mashriqiyyah*) is expounded in a symbolic fashion,²¹ can also be studied as a source for his philosophy of education at the highest level. In these treatises the doctrine of the intellect becomes depicted concretely in the form of angels and celestial guides who lead man to the highest degrees of Divine Knowledge. The guide in *Ḥayy ibn Yaqzān* is the teacher par excellence and Avicennan angelology a key for the understanding of the master's educational philosophy.²² In his vast philosophical synthesis Ibn Sīnā begins the process of education with the role of the parents as the first teachers of the child and concludes with the angel who, in illuminating the soul, enables it to experience the vision of God and fulfill the ultimate goal of all education and in fact human existence itself.

It is this last strand of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy that is fully elaborated and developed by the Master of Illumination, Shaykh al-Ishrāq Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī.²³ The founder of the school of *ishrāq* emphasizes the necessity of the education of the whole man as the goal of philosophy. For him all life is oriented toward the attainment of knowledge through a process which is none other than educational in the universal sense of the term. The beginning of this process is marked by the thirst for knowledge when the 'student' already experiences the need for seeking knowledge, this seeking or searching being called *ṭalab*; hence, the person at this first stage of the educational process being called *ṭālib*.²⁴ The process continues with the development of the mental faculties or those of reason when the student is called *ṭālib al-baḥṭh*, seeker of discursive thought. This stage is followed by the disciplining of the passions and purifying of the soul, for according to Suhrawardī true philosophy can be attained only if the discursive faculties are perfected and also the soul is purified of its defilements and imperfection so that it can attain illumination. At this stage the seeker is called *ṭālib al-ta'alluh*, seeker of 'theosis' or the state of becoming God-like. At a higher stage the student becomes seeker of both discursive knowledge and theosis while gradually he develops into a philosopher (*ḥakīm*) well-versed first in discursive thought, then theosis and finally both. At last man becomes a theosopher (*al-ḥakīm al-ilāhī*) first of *baḥṭh*, then of *ta'allah* and finally of both. Above those human stages of perfection which are traversed by means of education understood in its *ishrāqī* sense stands the Imam who possesses full knowledge of metaphysical, cosmological and eschatological realities and who is the prototype of the human state and the exemplar of the perfection that is possible to man.²⁵ The final goal of education is the attainment of illumination which in turn requires the perfection of all the faculties of man, both mental and psychological, involving both the rational element and the soul with all its aspects and dimensions.

In this process of education the angel plays a particularly central role and in many of his treatises such as *Qisṣat al-ghurbat al-gharbiyyah*²⁶ and *Rūzī bā jamā'at-i ṣūfīyān*,²⁷ Suhrawardī identifies the angel with the Archangel Gabriel who was the instrument of the Qur'ānic revelation and who 'taught' the Prophet the word of God. The angel is also identified with the Holy Spirit and also the spiritual master (*murshid*) who is the veritable teacher in that process of education which constitutes the heart of both *ishrāqī* theosophy and Sufism.

As Suhrawardī writes at the beginning of his *Rūzī bā jamā'at-i ṣūfīyān* (*Epistle on the State of childhood*):

When I was a child I used to play, as children do, at the edge of the village. One day, I saw some children walking along together whose meditative appearance surprised me, I went up to them and asked: 'Where are you going?' 'We are going to school to acquire Knowledge', they told me. 'What is Knowledge?' I asked. 'We do not know how to answer that,' they said to me. 'You must ask our teacher'. And with that, they went on their way.

"Sometime later, I said to myself. 'Now, what is Knowledge? Why shouldn't I go with them to their teacher and learn from him what Knowledge is?' I started looking for them and could not find them; but I saw the shaikh standing alone in the deserted countryside. I approached and greeted him, and he returned my greeting, his whole manner towards me exhibiting the most courteous affability.

"Self: I saw a group of children on their way to school, and I asked them: 'What is the point of going to school?' They told me that I should ask their teacher that question. I was not interested at the time, so they left me. But after they had gone I felt the wish to find them again, and I started looking but couldn't find them. I am still looking for traces of them. If you can't tell me anything about them, tell me at least who their teacher is.

"Shaikh: I am their teacher.

"Self: You must teach me something about Knowledge.

"The shaikh took up a tablet on which he had written *alif, ba, ta...* (a; b, c,), and proceeded to teach me.

"Shaikh: Stop there for today. Tomorrow I will teach you something else, and every day a little more, until you become a Knower.

"I returned home, and until next day I kept repeating, *alif, ba, ta...* The two following days I went back to the shaikh for another lesson, and I assimilated these new lessons as well. It went so well that I ended up going to the shaikh ten times a day, and each time I learned something new. Finally, I never left his presence for a single moment, and I acquired a great deal of Knowledge.²⁸

Education for Suhrawardī is therefore inseparable from the spiritual life, from the illumination of the soul by the angel and the guidance provided by the angelic substances which, being themselves light illuminate the soul with veritable knowledge that is itself light, according to the well-known *ḥadīth*, 'Knowledge is light' (*al-'ilmu nūrun*) and that enable man to experience finally God who is the

Light of lights (*nūr al-anwār*).

In the field of education, as in so many other domains, the most extensive elaboration in the annals of Islamic philosophy is to be found in Mullā Ṣadrā whose synthesis of philosophy, Sufism, *Kalām* and the *Sharī'ite* sciences is fully reflected in his doctrine of the growth and development of the soul which underlies the whole question of education.²⁹ For Mullā Ṣadrā the genesis, growth and perfection of man and his soul, a subject which he usually identifies as *istikmāl al-nafs*, or perfection of the soul, occupies a central position and he deals with it in many of his works. The most complete treatment of the subject is to be found in the fourth journey of his magnum opus, *al-Asfār al-arba'ah*³⁰ while his other major works such as *al-Mabda' wa'l-ma'ād* and *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyyah* also deal extensively with the subject. Moreover, Mullā Ṣadrā returns to this theme in his works on the Qur'ān including his commentary upon the Light verse (*āyat al-nūr*)³¹ and his *Asrār al-āyāt*³² wherein is contained the synthesis of his doctrine of man.

Mullā Ṣadrā depicts upon a vast canvas the journey of man from the embryonic stage to his meeting with God and combines the curve of the life of man in this world with that in the world to come, treating these phases as parts of a single 'curve of life' stretching from the origin (*al-mabda'*) to the end (*al-ma'ād*). For him there is an organic relation between this life and the life to come and all moments and stages of life exist in the light of that final goal which is the encounter with God. He describes the nature, faculties and powers of man and the purpose and entelechy of his existence. This entelechy is perfect knowledge of God and the happiness which results from it. Knowledge for Mullā Ṣadrā transforms the being of the knower so that the whole process of education is the means whereby man ascends in the scale of being and moves toward the state of perfection for which he was created.³³

According to the principle of trans-substantial motion, the very substance of all beings in the world of generation and corruption is being continuously transformed, motion or change being not only in the categories of accidents but in the very substance of beings. In the case of man this process is most noticeable and 'radical', the human state being central in the terrestrial domain where man stands at the foot of the vertical axis which is related to all levels of being. Man is transformed through trans-substantial motion, which must not under any condition be confused with evolution in the modern sense,³⁴ from the mineral state to the plant, from plant to animal, from animal to the ordinary state of man and from this state to the angelic and finally beyond the angelic to the domain of Divine Proximity, or to use the Qur'ānic image 'the length of two bows'.³⁵ Up to the stage of the 'ordinary' human state, the process is carried out by both the angels and the forces of nature as God's agents in this world.

But from this stage onward, it is by means of the actualization of the potentialities of the soul and its faculties through education, that the process is carried onward. Since man is given free-will, this stage of the process does not take place 'naturally' and automatically before the existant in question entered the human state. Since the knower becomes united with the known at the moment of intellection (*ta'aqqul*), the very mode of existence of man is changed through the process of knowledge. For Mullā Ṣadrā the process of knowing is

the key to the future of man's mode of being and hence lies at the heart of the concerns of religion.

The perfection of man resides in the perfection of his soul for which Mullā Ṣadrā uses the traditional philosophical term *al-nafs al-nāṭiqah* or rational soul. But the term *nāṭiqah*, although usually translated as rational, must not be reduced to the modern understanding of this term. This word in Arabic still contains all the meaning which such terms as *nous*, *intellectus* and even *ratio* possessed before Cartesianism and empiricism deprived reason of its connection with the intellect and reduced it for the most part to its rapport with the outer senses. For Mullā Ṣadrā the *nafs al-nāṭiqah*, which is the first perfection of the body and the faculty capable of intellection,³⁶ possesses two basic faculties: accepting what descends from above (*al-quwwat al-'ālimah*) and acting upon what is below it (*al-quwwat al-'āmilah*). The second faculty which is the practical is helped by and depends upon the first which is the intellectual. The goal of education is the actualization and perfection of these faculties with the aim of fulfilling the purpose for which man was created, this purpose being the knowledge of God (*ma'rifat Allāh*).³⁷

The intellectual faculty consists of stages from the 'material intellect (*al-'aql al-hāyūlānī*) to the intellect *en habitus* (*al-'aql bi'l-malakah*) to the intellect in act (*al-'aql bi'l-fī'l*) which represents the perfection of the intellectual faculty. As for the perfection of the practical faculty, it resides in following faithfully the Islamic Divine Law (*al-sharī'at al-muḥammadiyyah*). The very process of learning (*ta'līm*) transforms the soul and enables it to be transformed from a state of potentiality to actuality. Education therefore, lies at the heart of religion and is the basic concern of Islam which in its totality, both the *Sharī'ah* and the Inner way or *Ṭarīqah*, consists of a vast programme of education for all aspects of the human state from the corporeal to the highest faculties of the spirit.

The most elevated kind of knowledge is the perception (*idrāk*) of God, a knowledge which, however, cannot be attained save through the possession of faith (*īmān*).³⁸ The strengthening of faith is therefore a pre-requisite of any educational system which seeks to possess an Islamic character while this strengthening is itself not possible without moral education and acquiring of the virtue of purity and reverential fear of God (*taqwā*). Man is able to attain to this supreme knowledge because his archetype (*al-insān al-kāmil*) which man bears within the depth of his being is the mirror in which is reflected the Supreme Name, *Allāh*, and hence the reality of all that is found in the world of manifestation.³⁹ Man is created in such a way that the Active Intellect comes at once before his *nafs* and is attained as the fruit of the perfection of the *nafs*. Through the process of education which results in this perfection, man realizes that he is the complete book containing all the signs (*āyāt*) manifested in His creation.⁴⁰ All learning and every step in the process of education is legitimate if it contributes to man's being able to read this 'book' which he carries within himself. Moreover, to read this 'book' is to fulfil the goal of life and to attain the end for which man was created. It is the ultimate goal of Islamic education.

In the present day discussion of Islamic education, far too little attention has been paid to the views of those Islamic philosophers and sages who over the centuries have meditated upon the meaning of education in the light of the

fundamental questions of who is man, what is his nature, where does he come from and where is he going. They proposed an educational philosophy which, while remaining faithful to the nature of man in the light of his nature and entelechy, served as a background for the creation of not only Islamic philosophy but also the Islamic science. The Islamic philosophers' views on education represent an important branch of that tree of Islamic intellectual tradition whose roots are sunk in the teachings of the Qur'ān and *Ḥadīth*. No serious concern with Islamic education today can afford to remain oblivious to this millennial heritage, nor can any account of Islamic education be considered as being complete without any consideration of the remarkable depth, amplitude, universality and also practical significance of the Islamic philosophers' educational concepts and views.

Notes

1. It is remarkable how the so-called fundamentalists share with the Islamic modernists their complete espousal of modern science and technology, indifference to Islamic sacred art, hatred of traditional wisdom and the peace and contemplation associated with the inner life and many other aspects of traditional Islam. In a most basic sense Islamic fundamentalism and modernism are the two sides of the same coin and share much in common in many issues while both are standing opposed to traditional Islam. See Nasr, 'Present Tendencies, Future Trends,' in M. Kelly (ed.), *Islam, The Religious & Political Life of a World Community*, New York, 1984, pp.275-292.
2. Those who claim otherwise are influenced either by Western interpretations of Islamic philosophy which sees it as only Greek thought in Arabic dress or of the Islamic theological and juridical schools of thought which have traditionally opposed *falsafah*. On the Islamic character of Islamic philosophy see S. M. H. Ṭabāṭabā'ī, *Uṣūl-i falsafay-i ri'ālizm*, Tehran, 1332 (A. H. Solar), Vol. I; H. Corbin (in collaboration with S. H. Nasr and O. Yahya), *Histoire de la philosophie islamique*, Paris, 1964, pp.13ff.; and S. H. Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, Albany (NY), 1975, introduction.
3. On the 'philosopher-scientists' see *Three Muslim Sages*, chapter 1.
4. This is the method we have developed in the study of Islamic philosophy in our *Three Muslim Sages* and cosmology in our *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, London, 1978.
5. On the identity of the Ikhwān see Nasr *ibid.*, pp.25ff.; and I. R. Netton, *Muslim Neoplatonists*, London, 1982, chapter one, where views of various scholars and the literature of the past few years on the subject are discussed.
6. See for example *Rasā'il*, Cairo, 1928, Vol. I, p.21 and 347; Vol. II, pp.129, 291, 348, 364 and 380; and Vol. III, p.385.
7. See L. Gardet, 'Notions et principes de l'éducation dans la pensée arabo-musulmane', *Revue des Etudes Islamique*, Vol. 44, 1976, pp.1-13; also A. L. Tibawi, 'Some Educational Terms in Rasā'il Ikhwān aṣ-ṣafā', *Islamic Quarterly*, Vol. 5, 1959, pp.55-60.
8. «...جوهرة روحانية سماوية نورانية حية بذاتها علامة بالقوة،
فعالة بالطبع...»

Rasā'il, Vol. I, Beirut, 1957, p.260.

9. «... وتصفية ايضاً لبقية ما في قوة النفس من العلوم إلى الفعل الذي هو الغرض الأقصى في التعاليم، وهو إصلاح جواهر القلوب، وتزويد أخلاقها وتتميمها وتكميلها للبقاء في دار الآخرة التي هي دار الحيوان...»

ibid., p.258.

10. See Tibawi, *op. cit.*, p.60.
11. On the Ismā'īlī understanding of these terms see H. Corbin, *Trilogie Ismaélienne*, Tehran-Paris, 1961, p.138.
12. On Ibn Sīnā see, Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, chapter 1; Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, pp.11; S. Afran, *Avicenna, His Life and Works*, London, 1958; and W. E. Gohlman, *The Life of Ibn Sīnā*, Albany (NY), 1974.
13. Ibn Sīnā writes, 'Equality of states and proximity of measures concerning human beings leads to corruption and finally causes their annihilation and destruction.' M. N. Zanjānī, *Ibn Sīnā wa tadbīr-i manzil*, Tehran, 1319 (A. H. Solar), p.6.
14. Ibn Sīnā, *A Treatise on the Canon of Medicine*, trans. O. C. Gruner, London, 1980, p.379.
15. *ibid.*
16. See Ibn Sīnā, *Tadbīr al-manāzil*, Baghdad, 1929.
17. For a summary of these views see I. Šādiq, 'Naẓariyyāt-i Ibn-i Sīnā dar bāb-i ta'līm wa tarbiyat,' *Jashn-nāma-yi Ibn Sīnā*, Vol. II, Tehran 1334 (A. H. Solar), pp.149-158.
18. See *Avicenna's De Anima, being the Psychological Part of Kitāb al-Shifā*, ed. F. Rahman, London, 1952. See also Ibn Sīnā, *Psychologie v. Jehe dile aṣ-Šifā*, 2 vols., ed. and trans. J. Bakoš, Prague, 1956.
19. See for example. H. A. Davison, 'Alfarabi and Avicenna on the Active Intellect,' *Viator*, 3, 1972, pp.109-178; and N. Ushida, *Etude comparative de la psychologie d'Aristote, d'Avicenne et de St Thomas d'Aquin*, Tokyo, 1968, especially chapter V.
20. The category of 'mind' belongs to modern philosophy and is alien to Ibn Sīnā's world-view.
21. On the 'Oriental Philosophy' see Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, trans. W. Trask, Irving (Texas), 1980, pp.36ff; and Nasr, *An Introduction to Islamic Cosmological Doctrines*, pp.185ff.
22. One day the whole 'Oriental Philosophy' and the cycle of Visionary Recitals should be studied in detail in the light of Ibn Sīnā's philosophy of education.
23. On Suhrawardī see Corbin, *En Islam Iranien*, Vol. II, Paris, 1971; Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, chapter 2; and Nasr, 'Shihāb al-Din Suhrawardī,' in M. M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol. I, Wiesbaden, 1966, pp.372-398.
24. The term *qālīb* is used with a special meaning in *ishrāqī* philosophy or wisdom (*ḥikmah*), while the term *qalabah*, closely related to it, has acquired, in Arabic and Persian, the general meaning of student especially of the religious sciences.
25. See Suhrawardī, *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, edited by H. Corbin, in *Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques*, Vol. II, Tehran-Paris, 1977, pp.10-12.
26. See *Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques*, Vol. II, pp.274-297; and W. M. Thackston (trans.), *The Mystical Visionary Treatises of Suhrawardī*, London, 1982, pp.100-108.
27. See Suhrawardī, *Oeuvres philosophiques et mystiques*, ed. S. H. Nasr, Vol. III, Tehran-Paris, 1977, pp.241-250; and Thackston, *op. cit.*, pp.44-50.
28. Thackston, *op. cit.*, pp.62-63.
29. Over the past two decades a fairly extensive literature has grown around the subject of Mullā Ṣadrā and numerous studies have been devoted to him especially by Persian scholars but there does not exist as yet any independent work concerned with his educational philosophy. On Mullā Ṣadrā see S. H. Nasr, *Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī and His Transcendent Theosophy*, London, 1978; Nasr, 'Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (Mullā Ṣadrā),' in Sharif M. M., (ed.), *A History of Muslim*

Philosophy, Vol. II, Wiesbaden, 1961, pp. 932-960; J. Morris (trans.) *The Wisdom of the Throne* – In *Introduction to the Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā*, Princeton, 1981; Corbin, *En Islam Iranien*, Vol. IV, Paris, 1972, pp. 54-122; and Corbin, *La Philosophie iranienne islamique aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, Paris, 1981, pp. 49-83.

30. See Nasr, *The Transcendent Theosophy of Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī*, chapter 3; and J. Muṣliḥ, 'Ilm al-naḥs yā rawānshināsi-i Ṣadr al-Muta'allihīn, Tehran, 1352 (A. H. Solar).
31. See Mullā Ṣadrā, *Tafsīr-e āyeh-e-nūr*, ed. by M. Khājavi, Tehran, 1362 (A. H. Solar).
32. See Mullā Ṣadrā, *Asrār al-āyāt*, ed. by M. Khājavi, Tehran, 1981, *al-mashhad al-thānī*, especially, pp. 126ff.
33. Mullā Ṣadrā explains this relation between knowing and being through the two principles of the unity of the knower and the known (*ittiḥād al-'āqil wa'l-ma'qūl*) and trans-substantial motion (*al-ḥarakat al-jawhariyyah*). On these principles see Nasr, 'Ṣadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī', pp. 948ff.
34. See Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred*, New York, 1981, pp. 244-245.
35. *Qāb al-qawsayn*. See the Qur'ān, LIII; 9.
36. See Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Mabda' wa'l-ma'ād*, trans. A. Ardakānī, ed. 'A. Nūrānī, Tehran, 1362 (A. H. Solar), p. 304.
37. *ibid.*, p. 306.
38. « إن أدرك الخلق تعالى يعلم مستأنف لا يمكن لأحد إلا في حراة قلب المؤمن المتقصر ولهذا بنى العالم وعلم الكون وادعم النظام »
Mullā Ṣadrā, *Tafsīr-e āyeh-e-nūr*, p. 168.
39. « ودرست في الانسان الكامل والمظهر الجامع ، يوجد جميع ما يوجد في عالم الاسماء وفي مظاهرها الاتفاقية ... »
ibid., p. 171. On the universal man see T. Burckhardt's translation of al-Jīlī, *Universal Man*, Sherborne, Glos., 1983; and S. H. Nasr, *Science and Civilization in Islam*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1968, pp. 338ff.
40. « الإنسان الكامل كتاب جامع لآيات ربه القدوس وسجل مفقود فيه عقائده العقول والنفس ، وكلية تامة مملوءة من فنون العلم والشجون ، ونسقة مكتوبة من مثال كن فيكون ... »
ibid., p. 175.

CREATION THE BEST ALTERNATIVE ON ORIGINS

Richard Bliss

Contrary to all of the exaggerations, misconceptions and misrepresentations brought forth by the liberal media and the anti-creationists today, it is a simple matter to show that scientific evidence for evolution is practically nonexistent. Evolution is nothing more than a model or frame of reference which is based upon inferences made from very meagre and often overstated scientific data. The scientific creation model, on the other hand, is at least as scientific as the evolution model, if there can be any scientific evidence for evolution assumed, and at least as non-religious as the evolution model if one confines himself to scientific evidence only.¹

The student studying about origins, whether it be in a science class or some other class, cannot possibly make a scientifically intelligent decision on this question unless he is able to hear the arguments from both sides; even then he must clearly understand that no one was there to observe events in the beginning. Scientific evidence, for the very beginning of life, cannot be had. This is precisely why science is so limited on this question. The evolutionary observer can only look for evidence that indicates random processes, not demanding an intelligent designer, could produce all of life as we know it. The scientific creationists, on the other hand, are looking at the same scientific data but clearly see the handiwork of a creator or intelligent designer.

Creationists do not argue about the existence of God, first causes alone demand this, but rather the exciting evidence shown by this handiwork. Many anti-creationists (humanists, agnostics and atheists) hope that science could possibly reveal that God does not exist and this seems to be their motive in the origin controversy. This article will emphasize the framework of the scientific creation model specifically, and will show how it is remarkably consistent with the skills and values put forth by the scientific enterprise. The article will also explore some too often untold features in the scientific data that compel logical reasoning toward creation rather than evolution.

There is no question that the creation model is an excellent framework for observable scientific evidence on the origins question; however, objective individuals must confess that scientific *proof* cannot be had. The reader should also be aware that no scientist would ever do research that assumed ahead of time what the outcome of his research would have to be, such as the anti-creationists are doing. In this context, scientists recognize that it is consistent with good research skills for the researcher to evaluate his data, and the data of others, so that he can draw *certain reasonable inferences*. The question of origins affords the scientist an opportunity to draw these inferences from a flexible model or framework within which one can correlate and integrate scientific information. This is no different than hypothesizing the structure of the Bohr or the quantum atom. No one sees an atom, but the evidence of its existence and structure is borne out by strong scientific data. By the same token, we cannot see the construction details of God's creation but we can draw inferences based upon what we can scientifically observe about that creation. The scientific



Education should aim at the balanced growth of the total personality of Man through the training of Man's spirit, intellect, the rational self, feelings and bodily senses. Education should therefore cater for the growth of man in all its aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific, linguistic, both individually and collectively and motivate all these aspects towards goodness and the attainment of perfection. The ultimate aim of Muslim education lies in the realization of complete submission to Allah on the level of the individual, the community and humanity at large.

In order to achieve the ultimate aims and objectives of education, knowledge be classified into the following two categories:

a) Given 'perennial knowledge' based on the Divine revelation presented in the Qur'ān and Sunnah and all that can be derived from them with emphasis on the Arabic language as the key to the understanding of both.

b) 'Acquired knowledge' including social, natural and applied science susceptible to quantitative growth and multiplication, limited variations and cross-cultural borrowings as long as consistency with the Shariah as the source of values is maintained.

There must be a core knowledge drawn from both with major emphasis on the first, specially on the Shari'ah, which must be made obligatory to all Muslims at all levels of the educational system from the highest to the lowest, graduated to conform to the standards of each level. This, along with the compulsory teaching of Arabic, should form the major section of the core curriculum. These two alone can sustain Islamic civilisation and preserve the identity of the Muslims.

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