

Desire, Determination and Action in *Hayākil al-Nūr*: Exploring the Legacy of Suhrawardī in Mughal India (1526–1857)

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Abstract

This paper examines the influence of Suhrawardī's thought on Mughal intellectual landscape through a case study of the debate on human voluntary actions in Mīr Zāhid's (d. 1689) super-commentary on Suhrawardī's (d. 1191) *Hayākil al-nūr*. Central to this analysis is the relationship between cognitions, desires, and their role in the formation of will. I argue that for Suhrawardī, and subsequently Dawānī (d. 1502), volition is nothing more than an intense desire that dominates the soul. In contrast, Mīr Zāhid differentiates between desire and volition, positing that desire targets the goal of an action (e.g., being nourished), while volition pertains to the act itself (e.g., eating). By situating Mīr Zāhid's argument within the broader context of engagement with Suhrawardī's works in Mughal India, this paper contends that the study of the "Ishrāqī" legacy should not be articulated and pursued in terms of full adherence to Suhrawardī's worldview. Instead, it should focus on how intellectuals in Mughal India responded to his arguments.

Keywords

Suhrawardī – Ishrāqī tradition – human voluntary actions – Mīr Zāhid Harawī – Dawānī – Mughal India

1 Introduction

Shihāb al-Dīn Yahyā ibn Ḥabash ibn Amīrak al-Suhrawardī¹ holds a prominent place in the history of Islamic philosophy, and his innovative ideas have left an indelible mark on various facets of philosophical discourse across the Islamicate world, a fact which is underscored by the survival of more than thirty commentaries on his works from Turkey, Iran, and India.² Within the scope of the present study, which centers on Mughal India (1526–1857), the significance of Suhrawardī's ideas for understanding the Mughal intellectual landscape

- 1 Suhrawardī's life and thought have been the subject of numerous studies. For a lucid exposition of his life see, Hossein Ziai, "Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī, Founder of the Illuminationist School," in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 2003), 434–65. For a recent study of his philosophical system, see Jari Kaukua, *Suhrawardī's Illuminationism: A Philosophical Study* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).
- 2 Numerous studies have explored aspects of Suhrawardī's reception in the Islamic world. See, Mehdi Aminrazavi, *Suhrawardī and the School of Illumination* (New York: Routledge, 2013 [1997]); Rüdiger Arnzen, *Platonische Ideen in der arabischen Philosophie: Texte und Materialien zur Begriffsgeschichte von šuwar aflātūniyya und muthul aflātūniyya* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011); Henry Corbin, *En Islam iranien*, vol. 2: *Sohrwardi et les Platoniciens de Perse* (Paris: Gallimard, 1971); Frank Griffel, *The Formation of Post-classical Philosophy in Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021), 244–64; Hermann Landolt, "Les idées platoniciennes et le monde de l'image dans la pensée du Šaykh al-išrāq Yahyā al-Suhrawardī (ca. 1155–1191)," in *Miroir et Savoir: La transmission d'un thème platonicien, des Alexandrins à la philosophie arabo-musulmane*, ed. Daniel De Smet and Meryem Sebti (Leuven: LUP, 2008), 233–50; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, "The Spread of the Illuminationist School of Suhrawardī," *Studies in Comparative Religion* 6.3 (1972): 1–14; Reza Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran: Najm al-Dīn Maḥmūd al-Nayrīzī and His Writings* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 137–53; Sabine Schmidtke, *Theologie, Philosophie und Mystik im zwölferschiitischen Islam des 9./15. Jahrhunderts: die Gedankenwelten des Ibn Abī Ġumhūr al-Aḥsā'ī (um 838/1434–35–nach 905/1501)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); Lambertus Willem Cornelis van Lit, "The Commentary Tradition on Suhrawardī," *Philosophy East and West* 68.2 (2018): 539–63; Lambertus Willem Cornelis van Lit, *The World of Image in Islamic Philosophy: Ibn Sīnā, Suhrawardī, Shahrāzūrī, and Beyond* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017); John Walbridge, "Illuminationist Texts and Textual Studies: Essays in Memory of Hossein Ziai," ed. Ali Gheissari, Ahmed Alwishah, and John Walbridge (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 19–41; John Walbridge, "Suhrawardī and Illuminationism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, ed. Peter Adamson and Richard Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 201–23; John Walbridge, *The Leaven of the Ancients: Suhrawardī and the Heritage of the Greeks* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2000); John Walbridge, *The Science of Mystic Lights: Qūṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī and the Illuminationist Tradition in Islamic Philosophy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for Middle Eastern Studies, 1992); Hossein Ziai, *Knowledge and Illumination: A Study of Suhrawardī's Hikmat al-Ishrāq* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1990); Hossein Ziai, "The Illuminationist Tradition," in *History of Islamic Philosophy*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 2003 [1995]), 465–96.

becomes evident once we pay closer attention to various ways in which his legacy shaped social, cultural and political spheres during this period.

Within the political sphere, it is well-documented that Abū l-Faḍl ‘Allāmī (d. 1602), in his seminal work *Ā’in-i Akbarī*, incorporates the concept of “*farr-i izzadī*” or “the royal light of power,” which he derives from the writing of Suhrawardī, to theorize about Akbar (r. 1556–1605) as the ideal king.³ We are also aware that Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī and Badā’ūnī, the authors of *Tārīkh-i alfī*,⁴ utilized Suhrawardī’s *Talwīḥāt* and Dawānī’s *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr* to justify the Hindu belief in reincarnation (*tanāsukh*) to bolster the Mughal king’s political agenda, as the majority of Mughal subjects were non-Muslims.⁵

Similarly within the social and cultural contexts, in *Shāriq al-ma’rifā*, which is a Persian adaptation of *Laghuyogavāsishtha*, Abū l-Fayḍ Fayḍī (d. 1595) constructs a link between Plato, presented as the epitome of Ishrāqī thought, with Vyāsa, the supposed compiler of *Mahābhārata*, thereby implicitly identifying Indian texts such as *Yogavāsishtha* and *Bhagavadgītā*, as sourcebooks for Ishrāqī thought.⁶ In a different context, Farzāna Gushtāsp has demonstrated that Zoroastrian followers of Ādhar Kaywān (d. 1619), notably in the *Risāla-yi zar-i dast aqshār*, extensively used Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī’s (d. 1311) commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* to account for the generation of various strata of angelic beings.⁷ Moreover, the Hindu author Kundan Lāl Ashkī ibn Falsafī (d. ca. 1851)

3 See, Irfan Habib, “A Political Theory for the Mughal Empire – A Study of the Ideas of Abu’l Fazl,” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 59 (1998): 329–40, esp. 332; cf. Jos Gommans and Said Reza, “New Dawn in Mughal India: Longue Durée Neoplatonism in the Making of Akbar’s Sun Project,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 34.2 (2024): 455–76. For Suhrawardī’s usage of the term “*farrah*” as well as “*khurra-yi kiyānī*,” see Suhrawardī, *Partaw nāma*, in *Majmū’a-yi muṣannafāt-i Shaykh-i Ishrāq*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, vol. III (Tehran: Mu’assisa-yi muṭāla’āt wa taḥqīqāt-i farhangī, 1994), 81.

4 *Tārīkh-i alfī* is a historical work commissioned by the Mughal Emperor Akbar, detailing the history of Islam up to the end of the first millennium of the Islamic calendar. This significant text was authored by a group of scholars, including Aḥmad ibn Naṣr Allāh Tatawī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Naqīb Khān Qazwīnī, Ḥakīm Humām Gilānī, Ibrāhīm Sirhindī, Mīr Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī, and ‘Abd al-Qādir Badā’ūnī.

5 See, Ali Anooshahr, “Shirazi Scholars and the Political Culture of the Sixteenth-Century Indo-Persian World,” *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, 51.3 (2014): 331–52, esp. 348–49.

6 See, Abū l-Fayḍ Fayḍī, *Shāriq al-ma’rifā* in *Majmū’a-yi rasā’il* (Lucknow: Nawal Kishore, 1294/1877), 3; Carl W. Ernst, “Fayzi’s Illuminationist Interpretation of Vedanta: The *Shariq al-ma’rifā*,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 30.3 (2010): 356–64. For a lucid exposition of Muslim engagement with *Laghu-Yoga-Vāsishtha*, see, Shankar Nair, *Translating Wisdom* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2020), chapters 1, and 4.

7 See, Farzāna Gushtāsp, *Ādhar Kaywān* (Tehran: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 2021), 278–99. Maliḥa Karbāsiyān has also investigated the influence of Suhrawardī’s *Wāridāt*

in *Iksīr-i sa'ādat*, which he finished in 1798, refers to Suhrawardī's views on the purity of the soul as a prerequisite for ascending to the world of lights.⁸

Although scholars recognize the impact of Suhrawardī's philosophy on Mughal India, some question the presence of a unique "Ishrāqī school" during the post-classical period in India, or anywhere else in the Islamic world. From this standpoint, while numerous intellectuals engaged with Suhrawardī's writings, there is insufficient evidence to suggest a sustained lineage of thinkers predominantly adhering to his philosophical framework. Concerning this point, James Morris writes:

By Sadra's time, the philosophical writings of Suhrawardi [...] do not seem to have attracted the same sort of following and complex social connections as the three disciplines we have just discussed [*kalām*, *falsafa*, and *taṣawwuf*]. Rather than forming the basis of an independent school, they were apparently another of the intellectual options facing the small elite of educated philosophers.⁹

Scholars including Arnzen, Rudolph, and Cornelis van Lit echo a similar perspective.¹⁰ In a recent article, Cornelis van Lit states that, despite the existence of numerous commentaries on Suhrawardī's writings, discerning which commentators genuinely align with Suhrawardī's thought proves challenging. Similarly, in a monograph dedicated to the study of 'the world of image' (*ʿālam al-mithāl*) in the post-classical period, Cornelis van Lit demonstrates that Suhrawardī's ideas on this topic received little enthusiasm from Muslim intellectuals.¹¹ Therefore, in applying these inquiries and concerns to the Mughal context, one might raise the following questions: To what extent did Suhrawardī's thought influence the intellectual landscape in South Asia during the Mughal period? What criteria should we deploy to gauge this

wa taqdisāt on Ādhar Kaywān. See Maliḥa Karbāsiyān, *Az wāridāt wa taqdisāt-i Suhrawardī tā samīnād-hā-yi Ādhar Kaywān* (Tehran: Nigāh-i mu'āṣir, 2023).

8 Kundan Lāl Ashkī, *Iksīr-i sa'ādat* (Delhi, Jamia Hamdard Library, Abdussattar Collection 15128), 11.

9 See, Mullā Ṣadrā, *The Wisdom of Throne*, trans. James Winston Morris (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 29. This passage is quoted along with Fazlur Rahman's comments concerning the absence of a distinct Ishrāqī school in Mullā Ṣadrā's time in van Lit, "The Commentary Tradition on Suhrawardī," 540.

10 See, van Lit, "The Commentary Tradition on Suhrawardī," 540; Arnzen, *Platonische Ideen in der arabischen Philosophie*, 185–98; Ulrich Rudolph, *Islamische Philosophie: Von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Munich: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2004), 93.

11 van Lit, *The World of Image in Islamic Philosophy*, 113–42.

influence? How did Suhrawardī's thought arrive in Mughal India, and can we truly speak of an identifiable Ishrāqī tradition existing during this period? To address these queries, this study delves into the Indian reception of one of Suhrawardī's seminal texts, *Hayākil al-nūr*, by examining the commentary by Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī along with the *ḥāshiya* authored by the Indian scholar Mīr Zāhid Harawī (d. 1689).¹² Moreover, it particularly focuses on the concept of human voluntary action (*af'āl irādiyya*) as a case study.

2 Situating Mīr Zāhid's *Ḥāshiya* in the Context of Suhrawardī's Reception in India

Prior to investigating Mīr Zāhid's *ḥāshiya*, it is crucial to contextualize his engagement with *Hayākil al-nūr* within the wider reception of Suhrawardī's ideas in India. First, it must be noted that well before the Mughal period, Indian intellectuals were acquainted with the works and ideas of Suhrawardī. For instance, there is reason to believe that Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' (d. 1324), the prominent Chishti Sufi Shaykh, was aware of Suhrawardī's *Mūnis al-ushshāq*. In fact, Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī (d. 1325), in *Afḍal al-fawā'id*, recounts a gathering with Niẓām al-Dīn Awliyā' on the 17th of June 1313¹³ during which the Shaykh

12 The precise birth date of Mīr Muḥammad Zāhid ibn Muḥammad Aslam al-Harawī remains unknown. His ancestry traces back to the city of Herat, as his father originated from there. His father subsequently migrated to Central Asia, later settling in India. He gained recognition when the Mughal emperor Jahangir (r. 1605–27) appointed him as the judge of Kabul, a position he held until his demise in 1650. In terms of education, Mīr Zāhid pursued rational sciences in Lahore under the tutelage of Muḥammad Fāḍil al-Badakhshī (d. 1640). Al-Badakhshī had himself been a student in Central Asia, mentored by Yūsuf Kawsaj Qarabāghī, who was a direct disciple of the eminent Persian philosopher, Mīrzā Jān Bāghnawī. Mīr Zāhid's stature in the Mughal court grew when he became associated with Emperor Aurangzeb (r. 1659–1707). Initially serving as the overseer (*muḥtasib*) for military accounts, he later earned the prestigious appointment as the head (*ṣadr*) of religious endowments in Kabul. His life came to an end there in 1689–90. For more on his life and works, see, Ghulām 'Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Subḥat al-marjān*, ed. Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Ṭarīḥī (Beirut: Dār al-rāfiḍayn, 2015), 134–46; Ṣiddīq Ḥasan Khān al-Qannawjī, *Abjad al-'ulūm*, vol. III (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 1978), 231; Ismā'īl Pāshā, *Hadiyyat al-'arifīn* (Tehran: Maktabat al-islāmiyya, 1967), vols. I, 372; II, 301; 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir wa-bahjat al-masāmi' wa-l-nawāzīr*, vol. V (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1999), 371. See also Mahdī Sharī'atī's introduction to *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla fī l-taṣawwur wa-l-taṣdīq* (Qom: Maktabat al-shahīd al-Sharī'atī, 1999), 7–36, and Khaled El-Rouayheb, *The Development of Arabic Logic (1200–1800)* (Basel: Schwabe Verlag, 2019), 180–82.

13 It corresponds to the 16th of Ṣafar in the year 713 after Hijra.

referred to Suhrawardī's discourse on the nature of reason (*'aql*).¹⁴ Moreover, 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Mahā'imī (d. 1431), the great *mufasssīr* and a renowned expositor of Ibn 'Arabī's writings, rejects Suhrawardī's view on the nature of universals in *Ajillat al-ta'yīd*.¹⁵ Concerning this point, he writes:

[Root text: 1] According to Plato, who accepted the immaterial forms (*al-muthul al-mujarrada*), the existence of a universal essence is permissible.

[Commentary 1.1]: Since he said that in the extramental world there is an individual instance (*fard*) for each species (*naw'*), which is capable of receiving contrary properties (*al-mutaqābilāt*) while remaining detached from them, pre-eternal, and permanent through its immateriality. And when someone responded that what is the recipient is the unconditioned essence (*māhiyya lā bi-sharṭ shay'*) and not a conditioned essence (*māhiyya bi-sharṭ shay'*), the Master of Ishrāq [Suhrawardī] interpreted this to [mean that] there is an immaterial part (*juz'*) for each existent from the intelligible world, which governs its affairs.

[1.2] They call it "the lord of species" (*rabb al-naw'*) and in the language of *sharī'a* it is called "the angel of mountains" and "the angel of seas." And even though they proclaim that it is a particular, they also hold that it is a universal, for there is an emanative relation (*nisba fayḍiyya*) between it and all [of its instances] not in the sense that it is a common meaning shared by them so that it would necessitate the existence of an immaterial humanness occurring in the matter.

[1.3] And I say, it is false to say that a part of the individual is an unconditioned essence for it [i.e. the unconditioned] encompasses the conditioned. Thus, it permits the possibility that something characterized by one attribute may also be characterized by its opposite. But rather, that part is the unconditioned essence before becoming a part,

14 In *Mūnis al-ushshāq*, Suhrawardī writes that God's first creation was reason, endowed with three inherent properties: knowledge of the self, knowledge of the real (*haqq*), and knowledge of that which is not. Beauty, according to Suhrawardī, originated from the knowledge of the Real, love from knowledge of the self, and sorrow from knowledge of that which is not. Nizām al-Dīn Awliyā' deploys this imagery to set up his discourse on the meaning of love. See, Amīr Khusraw Dihlawī, *Afḍal al-fawā'id* (Delhi: Maṭba'a raḍawī, 1887), 25; cf. Suhrawardī, *Mūnis al-ushshāq*, in *Majmū'a-yi muṣannafāt-i Shaykh-i Ishrāq*, ed. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, vol. III (Tehran: Mu'assisa-yi muṭāla'āt wa taḥqīqāt-i farhangī, 1994), 267–68; see also Muḥammad Karīmī Zanjānī Aṣl, *Hikmat-i ishrāqī dar hind* (Tehran: Intishārāt-i iṭṭilā'āt, 2008), 21.

15 This work is his auto-commentary on his *Adillat al-tawḥīd*.

and it becomes conditioned after it becomes a part. Moreover, it remains unconditioned when one disregards this priority and posteriority. [Therefore,] the interpretation of the Master of Ishrāq is false for what he said concerning contrary entities is impossible.¹⁶

As the passage above makes clear, Mahā'imī criticizes Suhrawardī's interpretation of the Platonic forms, as articulated through the concept of the "lord of species" (*rabb al-naw'*). In Mahā'imī's reading, the "lord of species" is a problematic concept for it involves conflicting properties. Suhrawardī holds that for an individual tree, there is an individual entity called the lord of species of tree, which is at once particular and universal. Its sense of universality originates from the fact that it has a relation with all its instances while being an individual entity. Moreover, it exists in the individual instances as a part of them. This latter notion is highly problematic for Mahā'imī for it leads to the undesired result that an individual will be qualified by a property that is contrary to its nature. In other words, a particular tree will be qualified by its part which is universal and unconditioned. Mahā'imī's critique of Suhrawardī is not limited to *Ajillat al-ta'yīd*. In the chapter on the prophet Hūd in *Khuṣūṣ al-ni'am*, which is Mahā'imī's commentary on Ibn 'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, he considers the followers of Suhrawardī to be mere ascetics (*al-murtādīn*), who have limited access to the true knowledge of the divine nature and attributes compared to the Mutakallimūn and the Sufis.¹⁷ This appraisal is significant because it shows that not all intellectuals in India had a positive attitude towards Suhrawardī and his ideas.¹⁸

While certain intellectuals from the pre-Mughal era had exposure to Suhrawardī's works, there was a discernible surge of interest in his writings during the Mughal era. Central to this renewed enthusiasm were Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī and Ghiyāth al-Dīn Manṣūr Dashtakī (d. 1542), two eminent Persian philosophers who lived in Shiraz during the late Timurid and early Safavid period. Dawānī's contribution to the dissemination of Suhrawardī's teachings was complex and multifaceted. In *Tahlīliyya*, Dawānī extols Ishrāqīs as the most eminent among philosophers (*'uẓamā'-i ḥukamā'*) lamenting that the

16 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Mahā'imī, *Ajillat al-ta'yīd fī Sharḥ Adillat al-tawḥīd* (Princeton, Princeton University, Garrett Collection MS 4601Y), 8a.27–8b.15; (Qom, Markaz-i Dhakhā'ir-i Islāmī, MS 226.1), 13a.16–13b.19.

17 'Alī ibn Aḥmad al-Mahā'imī, *Khuṣūṣ al-ni'am*, ed. Aḥmad Farīd al-Mizyādī (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2007), 289.

18 Not all interpreters of Ibn 'Arabī in India shared the same critical perspective. For a more positive view see, Khwāja Khwurd, *Fawā'id* (Patna, Khudabakhsh Library, MS 3997 Arabic), 9a, where he explores the relation between notions of light and existence.

profound nature of their teachings has caused the scholars of rational sciences to disregard them. Consequently, the students of philosophy in madrasahs are deprived of illuminations (*ishrāqāt*) that their teachings impart.¹⁹ Perhaps that is why, Dawānī began teaching Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* to his students – as noted in his *Sharḥ al-zawrā*²⁰ – and wrote marginal *ḥawāshī* on the text.²¹ Moreover, Dawānī wrote a commentary on Suhrawardī's *Hayākil al-nūr*, titled, *Shawākil al-ḥūr*, which he dedicated to the Bahmanid vizier Khwāja Maḥmūd Gāwān (d. 1481). Gāwān himself is purported to have written a *ḥāshiya* on Dawānī's commentary,²² a manuscript of which is preserved in the Asafiyya Library.²³

Furthermore, Dawānī's succession of students played a pivotal role in spreading Suhrawardī's ideas during the Mughal era. Dawānī sent several of his disciples to Gujrat, notably Khaṭīb Abū l-Faḍl Kāzīrūnī²⁴ (d. 1523), 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭārimī (d. 1534), Abū l-Faḍl Astarābādī, (d. 1523) and Sayyid Rafī' al-Dīn Ṣafawī (d. 1546).²⁵ Among these figures, 'Imād al-Dīn Ṭārimī and Abū l-Faḍl Kāzīrūnī are of particular significance. Ṭārimī mentored the Shaṭṭārī Shaykh

19 Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī, *Tahlīlīyya*, ed. Firisha Faraydūnī Furūzanda (Tehran: Kayhān, 1994), 48–49. Dawānī then proceeds to provide a summary of the major themes in Suhrawardī's philosophy such as modulation in essences (*tashkik dar dhātīyyāt*), the nature of light, the nature of bodies as extension, etc. to articulate Suhrawardī's proof for the existence of *nūr al-anwār*.

20 See, al-Dawānī, *Sab' rasā'il*, ed. Aḥmad Tūsarkānī (Tehran: Mīrāth-i maktūb, 2003), 203.

21 The autograph copy of Dawānī's *ḥāshiya* on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* is housed in Baghdad at Maktabat al-Awqāf al-Āmma, MS 5275/1.

22 This work elicited other super-commentaries including those by Yūsuf Kawsaj Qarabāghī, and Mīr Zāhid Harawī, to which I will return later in this article.

23 See, Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur: Supplementband 1* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1937), 782; van Lit, "The Commentary Tradition on Suhrawardī," note 60. I have not seen the manuscript, and it is possible that it might be another copy of Dawānī's commentary dedicated to Gāwān. For the letter exchange between Dawānī and Gāwān, see Gāwān's *Ri'yāḍ al-inshā'*, ed. Ghulam Yazdani (Hyderabad: Dār al-ṭab' sarkār'ālī, 1948), letter no. 41.

24 See, Mirzā Hasan Ḥusaynī Fasā'i, *Fārsnāma-yi Nāshiri* (Tehran: Dār al-ṭibā'a-yi Āqā Murtaḍā, 1895), 250.

25 This point is further corroborated by several early manuscripts dating back to this period. A copy of the summary of *Alwāḥ Imādīyya* was transcribed by Shahr Allāh ibn Shams al-Dīn on Rabī' al-Awwal 13th, 994 (March 4th, 1586), in Ahmadabad. This manuscript is preserved in the Princeton Garrett MS collection, number 4771Y. Additional early-Mughal copies of *Ishrāqī* works include two manuscripts of Qūṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyya, MS Ḥikma 892 (completed 15 September 1544), and Ilāhiyyāt Library, University of Tehran, MS 100 (copied in Ajmer, 1615). See, Muṣṭafā Dirāyatī, *Fihristigān-i nuskhā-hā-yi khaṭṭī-yi Īrān [Fankhā]* vol. 19 (Tehran: Sāzmān-i asnād wa kitābkhāna-yi milli-yi Jumhūrī-yi Islāmī-yi Īrān, 2012), 540.

Wajīh al-Dīn ‘Alawī Gujarātī (d. 1590) who demonstrates familiarity with Suhrawardī’s perspectives on matters such as the extra-mental existence of universals and the concept of knowledge by presence (*al-‘ilm al-ḥuḍūrī*) in his *Hāshiyat Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*.²⁶ As for Khaṭīb Kāzirūnī, he was a teacher of Qāḍī Mubārak Nāgūrī (d. 1592) in rational sciences, who supposedly wrote a *hāshiya* on Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī’s *Sharḥ Hikmat al-ishrāq*.²⁷

Next, Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shīrāzī (d. 1555), a direct disciple of Dawānī, played a significant role in the transmission of Suhrawardī’s thought by training two notable students who were actively engaged in philosophical pursuits in India. These students are Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī (d. 1589) and Mīrzā Jān Bāghnawī (d. 1587). Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī, who was also a student of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, went from Shiraz to the court of ‘Ādilshāh I in Bijapur and was subsequently summoned by Akbar the great Mughal emperor to go to Agra.²⁸ In *Risāla-yi As’ila wa ajwiba* he refers to Suhrawardī’s view on the nature of space and compares it with those of Ibn Sīnā and Mutakallimūn.²⁹ Moreover, a student of Bāghnawī, Yūsuf Qarabāghī (d. 1625), wrote a *hāshiya* on Dawānī’s *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*.³⁰

Dawānī’s influence extended beyond his students active in India; indeed, the works of some of his students who did not travel there also played a significant role in shaping the reception of Suhrawardī’s intellectual legacy. A

26 Wajīh al-Dīn ‘Alawī Gujarātī, *Hāshiyat Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* (Qom, Gulpāyghānī Library, MS 128/1), 68b.

27 As the father of Abū I-Faḍl – Akbar’s vizier – and Fayḍī – the emperor’s chief poet – he served as a principal conduit through which Suhrawardī’s ideas reached Akbar’s court.

28 For more on the significance of Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī for intellectual history during this period, see ‘Abd al-Bāqī Nahāwandī, *Ma’āthir-i Raḥīmī*, ed. Muḥammad Hidāyat Ḥusayn (Calcutta: The Asiatic Society, 1910), 2:550; ‘Abd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir*, vol. IV (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 1999), 392–93; Anooshahr, “Shirazi Scholars,” 331–52; Zubaid Ahmad, *The Contribution of Indo-Pakistan to Arabic Literature, from Ancient Times to 1857* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1968), 127–56; M. A. Alvi, and A. Rahman, *Faṭḥ Allāh Shirazi: A Sixteenth Century Indian Scientist* (Delhi: National Institute of the Sciences of India, 1968); Sayyid Ghulām ‘Alī Āzād Bilgrāmī, *Ma’āthir-i kirām*, ed. Muḥammad Lyallpūrī (Lahore: Maktaba-yi ihyā-yi ‘ulūm-i sharqiyya, 1971), 226, 228–29; Sharif Husain Qasimī, “Faṭḥullāh Shīrāzī,” in *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, ed. Ehsan Yarshater (New York: distributed by Eisenbrauns, 1982–); Raḥmān ‘Alī, *Tuḥfat al-fuḍalā’ fī tarājim al-kumalā’* [*Tadhkira-yi ‘ulamā-yi Hind*] (Lucknow: Nawal Kishore, 1914), 160; Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *A Socio-Intellectual History of the Isnā ‘Asharī Shī‘īs in India*, vol. II (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1986), 196–97; Sajjad Rizvi, “Mīr Dāmād in India: Islamic Philosophical Traditions and the Problem of Creation,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 131.1 (2011): 9–23, esp. 9–11; G. M. D. Sufi, *Al-Minhāj, Being the Evolution of the Curriculum in the Muslim Educational Institutions of India* (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, 1941), 54–55.

29 See, Faṭḥ Allāh Shīrāzī, *Risāla-yi As’ila wa ajwiba*, ed. Shahrād Shahvand, 10 (forthcoming).

30 See, van Lit, “The Commentary Tradition on Suhrawardī,” note 57.

noteworthy example of this line of influence is Qāḍī Mīr Ḥusayn Maybudī (d. 1504), who authored a commentary on Athīr al-Dīn Abharī's (d. 1265) *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*.³¹ This work inspired numerous sub-commentaries that gained prominence in India. In this commentary, Maybudī emphasizes the necessity of studying the works of Suhrawardī for those seeking the truth.³² He also investigates Suhrawardī's ideas, addressing topics such as the rejection of hylomorphism,³³ the difference between minerals, and plants,³⁴ God's knowledge of particulars,³⁵ the happiness of human beings who have not developed their rational powers,³⁶ and the nature of space.³⁷

Arguably, the most significant of these topics for Maybudī was Suhrawardī's rejection of hylomorphism. In his *Munsha'āt*, Maybudī expands on this topic, expressing his agreement with Suhrawardī that bodies are not composed of matter and form.³⁸ He even suggests that Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī also shared the same view. Maybudī notes that in *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, Ṭūsī focused primarily on defending and clarifying Ibn Sīnā's positions and intentions. However, in *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, which represents Ṭūsī's own views, he defines bodies as extended substances (*jawhar mumtadd*), a definition which aligns with Suhrawardī's perspective.³⁹

Notable scholars who wrote *ḥawāshī* on Maybudī's commentary, include Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan 'Ilmī (fl.ca. 1565),⁴⁰ Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Lārī (d. 1572),⁴¹ Fakhr

31 For the manuscript evidence of its reception in India during Mughal period, see for instance, *Sharḥ Hidāya* of Maybudī (Tehran, Sipahsālār Library, MS 8121/2), where the colophon indicates that the scribe is Ghiyāth al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad Gilānī, who finished the work in Jumādī al-Thānī of 1054/August 1644 in Ḥaydarābād. Cf. Muṣṭafā Dirāyatī, *Fankhā*, vol. 20, 951.

32 Al-Maybudī, *Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, ed. 'Aliridā Jawānmardī Adīb (Tehran: Mirāth-i maktūb, 2020), 202:

إِنَّ الْوَاجِبَ عَلَى طَالِبِ الْحَقِّ مَطَالَعَةُ كُتُبِ الشَّيْخِينَ أَبِي عَلِيٍّ وَشُهَابِ الدِّينِ الْمُقْتُولِ

33 Ibid., 24.

34 Ibid., 107.

35 Ibid., 170–71.

36 Ibid., 199–200.

37 Ibid., 48.

38 Qāḍī Ḥusayn Maybudī, *Munsha'āt-i Maybudī*, ed. Nuṣrat Allāh Furūhar (Tehran: Nuqṭa, 1997), 193.

39 Ibid. See also Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī, *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (Tehran: Maktab-i i'lām-i islāmī, 1986), 146.

40 Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-'Ilmī was active in India during the reign of Ḥusayn Nizām Shāh I (r. 1553–1565). For his life see, 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir*, vol. IV, 407.

41 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn was a disciple of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī and Kamāl al-Dīn Lārī, a direct student of Dawānī. For more on his life and works, see, Reza Pourjavady, "Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī and His Samples of the Sciences," *Oriens* 42.3–4 (2014): 292–322.

al-Dīn Sammākī (d. 1576), and Qāḍī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī (d. 1610).⁴² Muḥammad Ḥasan ‘Ilmī’s *ḥāshīya* on Maybudī’s commentary called *Ghāyat al-hidāya* was widely studied in India. In this work, ‘Ilmī deals with a number of Suhrawardī’s views discussed in Maybudī’s work, but perhaps most distinctly focuses on a passage in *al-Taḥwīḥāt* in which Aristotle tells Suhrawardī in a dream that true philosophers are Sufis such as Bāyazīd Baṣṭāmī (d. 874) and Tustarī (d. 896).⁴³ Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Lārī also shows admiration for Suhrawardī and his works. This interest is evident both in the symbolic expressions used in the introduction as well as the content of this work itself. In the introduction to his *ḥāshīya* he praises the Prophet, stating that all lights of knowledge emanate from the illumination of his allusions (*ishrāq taḥwīḥātihi*),⁴⁴ which permeate the tablets of understanding (*alwāḥ al-afḥām*), and the forms of human souls (*hayākil al-nufūs*).⁴⁵ Furthermore, he refers to the Prophet’s companions as the Ishrāqīs⁴⁶ (*al-ishrāqīyyūn*), who brought the lights of faith and the signs of religion to human kind.⁴⁷ However, his engagement with Suhrawardī extends beyond such expressions. On numerous issues – such as the nature of space,⁴⁸ the existence of an immaterial dimension (*bu’d mujarrad*),⁴⁹ Platonic forms,⁵⁰

42 He studied under Mullā ‘Abd al-Wāḥid Shūshtarī, who in turn was a student of Jamāl al-Dīn Maḥmūd Shīrāzī, the direct disciple of Dawānī. See, ‘Alā’ al-Mulk Shīrāzī, *Firdaws* (Tehran: Anjuman āthār millī, 1973), 51; cf. Qāsim Kākā’ī, “Ashnā’ī bā Shāḡirdān-i Maktab-i Shīrāz,” *Khīradnāma-yi Šadrā* 11 (1998): 23–33.

43 Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-‘Ilmī, *Ḥāshīya ‘alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī ‘alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268/2), 48; al-Suhrawardī, *al-Taḥwīḥāt al-lawḥīyya wa-l-‘arshīyya*, ed. Najafqulī Ḥabībī (Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy, 2009), 242. In addition, he addresses the dispute over whether the discourse on the human soul falls under natural philosophy or metaphysics, addressing Suhrawardī’s view alongside those of Ibn Kammūna (*Sharḥ al-Taḥwīḥāt*) and Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (*Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*). See, ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī bi-taḥshīyat al-fāḍil al-mutawaqqid al-kāmil al-mutawaḥḥid mawlānā al-mawlawī Muḥammad ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Farangī Maḥallī al-Lakhnawī* (Lucknow: Maṭba‘ al-Yūsufī, 1907), 356, [henceforth, *al-Maybudhī ma’a ḥawāshī ‘Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*].

44 The words *taḥwīḥāt*, *alwāḥ*, and *hayākil* are titles of Suhrawardī’s works, and as such, they carry an implicit allusion to him in this passage.

45 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Ḥāshīya ‘alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Tehran, Majlis Library, MS 211015), 1a.

46 Later in this text, Lārī defines the Ishrāqīs as those who purify their inner selves, allowing the rays of knowledge to shine upon their souls. See, *ibid.*, 43a.

47 *Ibid.*, 1a.

48 *Ibid.*, 31a.

49 *Ibid.*, 57b.

50 *Ibid.*, 62b.

rejection of motion in the category of quantity,⁵¹ among others⁵² – he investigates facets of Suhrawardī's philosophy.

Fakhr al-Dīn Sammākī, a student of Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, also wrote a *ḥāshiya* that circulated in South Asia.⁵³ In this work, he engages with Suhrawardī's critique of Ibn Sīnā's proof for the existence of matter, particularly focusing on the notion of conjunction (*ittiṣāl*) and disjunction (*infiṣāl*).⁵⁴ Similarly, Qāḍī Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī, the chief judge of Lahore during Akbar's reign, addresses Suhrawardī's refutation of prime matter in *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* in his *ḥāshiya* on *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*.⁵⁵ Moreover, in *Majālis al-mu'minīn* he elaborates on Suhrawardī's views on the nature of bodies,⁵⁶ and in *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*⁵⁷ he delves into Shahrazūrī's perspective on the distinction between discursive (*baḥthī*) and intuitive knowledge (*dhawqī*).⁵⁸

In addition to Dawānī and Dashtakī, two other Persian scholars, Mīr Dāmād and Mullā Ṣadrā, were instrumental in the dissemination of Suhrawardī's teachings in Mughal India. During the middle of 17th century, the writings of these two figures seem to have found their way into the subcontinent through the

51 Ibid., 82a.

52 See also, *ibid.*, 39b, 41a, 61a, 71b, and 83b.

53 For evidence regarding the circulation of his work in South Asia, see *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 20, 32–33, 35, 45, 47, 117; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī ma'a ḥawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 44, 75, 96, 99.

54 See, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī* (Tehran: SIPRI, 2020), 92, 108. He deals with a host of other issues as well such as Suhrawardī's rejection of *ṣūra naw'īyya*, the nature of space, the meaning of *hay'ā* in Suhrawardī's thought, etc. See, *ibid.*, 72, 79, 94, 116, 129, 181, 184–185, 213, 234.

55 See, Nūr Allāh al-Shūshtarī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 41. This manuscript contains selections from a wide range of *ḥawāshī* on Maybudī's commentary on *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*. For clarity, I will specify the author's name each time I refer to this text.

56 Nūr Allāh Shūshtarī, *Majālis al-mu'minīn*, ed. Aḥmad 'Abdmanāfi, vol. 11 (Tehran: Islāmiyya, 1998), 224.

57 Nūr Allāh al-Shūshtarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, ed. Shihāb al-Dīn Mar'ashī Najafī, vol. 1 (Qom: Mar'ashī Najafī Library Press, 1988), 482.

58 It is noteworthy that later glossators on Maybudī's commentary in India such as Mullā Ḥasan, 'Abd al-Ḥalīm Lakhnawī, Mīr Hāshim, Mullā Ismā'īl Murādābādī, and 'Ayn al-Quḍāt Ḥaydarābādī all showed interest in Suhrawardī's ideas; see Mullā Ḥasan, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 41–42, 379, 416; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī ma'a ḥawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 42, 318, 327–28, Sayyid Hāshim, *ibid.*, 320; Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt, *al-Maybudhī [ma'a Ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]* (Quetta: Maktaba rashīdiyya, [a reprint of the original lithograph printed in 1309/1891]), 34, 44, 49, 99, 101, 106, 141, 275, 288, 291, 314, 343, 475 (*Sharḥ Hayākil* of Dawānī), Mullā Ismā'īl Murādābādī, *ibid.*, 50; Mīr Hāshim, *ibid.*, 75, 100, 415.

intellectual activity of figures such as Mīr Findiriskī (d. 1640), Mīr Muḥammad Hāshim Gīlānī (d. 1651), and Mīr Dāmād's students Nizām al-Dīn Aḥmad Gīlānī (d. 1660) and Muḥammad Sharīf Kashmīrī (fl. 17th cen.).⁵⁹ In particular, two works by these thinkers received particular attention in the subcontinent, Mīr Dāmād's *al-Ufuq al-mubīn* and Mullā Ṣadrā's *Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*. In *Ufuq al-mubīn*, Mīr Dāmād turns to Suhrawardī's view on generation (*ja'l*) and considers his own view on this topic an improvement on what Suhrawardī had said. Moreover, Mīr Dāmād deals with modal logic in Suhrawardī's writing,⁶⁰ and is particularly critical of Suhrawardī's reduction of temporal priority to priority by nature.⁶¹

Among Mughal intellectuals, Qāḍī Mubārak Gūpāmawī, for instance, seems to have drawn on Mīr Dāmād's *Taqwīm al-īmān*, adopting the phrase *al-'ilm al-shurūqī al-ḥuḍūrī* to describe "knowledge by presence." Furthermore, he relies on Mīr Dāmād's authority to clarify the concept of Platonic forms and Suhrawardī's notion of the lord of species (*rabb al-naw'*).⁶² Critics, such as Mahā'imī, argued that this idea leads to the undesirable conclusion that a particular conditioned entity would possess a universal unconditioned property, which is problematic.⁶³

In response, Gūpāmawī explains that Platonic forms should be understood as the objects of God's knowledge before the creation of particular things in the world.⁶⁴ According to this understanding, the actual world contains only particular entities, but their origin lies in God's knowledge. As such, there is

59 Sajjad Rizvi, "Mīr Dāmād in India," 20–23. Muḥammad Sharīf Kashmīrī, a student of Mīr Dāmād wrote a treatise on God's knowledge of particulars, copies of which are housed in Mar'ashī Najafī Library in Qom (MS 2792) and Tehran University Library (MS 298 SH). See also, 'Aliakbar Ṣafārī, "Yādī az Muḥammad Sharīf Kashmīrī az 'Ulamā-yi Qarn-i Yāzdahum Shāgird-i Mīr Dāmād," *Kitāb-i Shī'a*, no. 3 (Spring–Summer 2011): 63–65.

60 Suhrawardī views modal quantifiers as integral to the predicate itself. For example, he interprets the statement "it is possible that Bakr is a writer" as "Bakr is a possible-writer." Therefore, when evaluating true statements that reflect the actual state of affairs, this possibility of writing becomes a necessary attribute of Bakr. In other words, within the given circumstances, Bakr is necessarily a possible writer.

61 Mīr Dāmād, *Ufuq al-mubīn*, ed. Ḥamid Nāji Iṣfahānī (Tehran: Mirāth-i maktūb, 2012), 708, 715.

62 In addition to *Taqwīm al-īmān*, Mīr Dāmād addresses the issue of Platonic forms in his other works such as *Qabasāt*. See, Nariman Aavani, "Platonism in Safavid Persia: Mīr Dāmād (d. 1631) and Āqājānī (ca. 1661) on the Platonic Forms," *Ishraq: Islamic Philosophy Yearbook* (2017): 112–36.

63 This critique arises from the belief that, as a singular form, the particular must maintain a connection with its archetypal form.

64 Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-'ulūm wa-Hāshiyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī ma'a minḥiyātihī*, ed. Sayyid 'Alī Fāḍil al-Mūsawī (Qom: Markaz 'ushsh Āl Muḥammad, 2018), 232–33.

no contradiction here because Platonic forms do not exist within particulars themselves, but rather as objects of divine knowledge that precede the multiplicity of the world.

Much like his teacher Mīr Dāmād, Mullā Ṣadrā was deeply influenced by the writings of Suhrawardī. Although he penned a sizeable *ḥāshīya* on Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, his most significant contribution to the dissemination of Suhrawardī's teachings in South Asia came through his commentary on Abhari's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*.⁶⁵ This commentary became a foundational text in the *Dars-i Niẓāmī* curriculum in 18th century India, prompting the composition of over ninety *ḥawāshī* on Ṣadrā's work.⁶⁶

In this commentary, Mullā Ṣadrā invokes Suhrawardī's works and ideas in over fifty separate contexts,⁶⁷ including the classification of sciences,⁶⁸ the rejection of the form of species (*ṣūra naw'īyya*),⁶⁹ Platonic forms,⁷⁰ the definition of motion,⁷¹ motion in the category of quantity,⁷² theory of vision,⁷³ generation (*ja'l*),⁷⁴ causation,⁷⁵ the notion of contingency,⁷⁶ and the issue of reincarnation (*tanāsukh*).⁷⁷ Consequently, it is no surprise that glossators such

65 It is also noteworthy that Mullā Ṣadrā personally made a copy of Suhrawardī's *Partaw-nāma*. See, Mohammad Karimi Zanjani Asl, "The Autograph Manuscripts of Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1045 AH/1635 CE): Classification and Preliminary Study" in *Personal Manuscripts: Copying, Drafting, Taking Notes*, ed. Durand-Guédy and Jürgen Paul (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2023), 288–333, esp. 320.

66 'Alī Akbar Thubūt, *Fīlsūf-i shīrāzī dar hīnd* (Tehran: Hirmis, 2001), 7–334. For more on the Farangī Maḥallī scholars, see, Francis Robinson's *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (London: C. Hurst, 2001) and Jamal Malik's *Islamische Gelehrtenkultur in Nordindien* (Leiden: Brill, 1997).

67 Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, ed. Maqṣūd Muḥammadi (Tehran: SIPRI, 2014), vol. 1, 9, 14, 56, 73, 77–79, 80, 82–84, 134–135, 177, 194, 219, 274, 284, 311, 319, 430; vol. 11, 15, 31, 37, 84, 91, 95–97, 100, 118, 141, 154, 161, 167–169, 180, 204, 218, 220–221, 226, 235, 284, 292–293, 305, 334, 355.

68 Ibid., vol. 1, 9.

69 Ibid., vol. 1, 73.

70 Ibid., vol. 1, 134.

71 Ibid., vol. 1, 177.

72 Ibid., vol. 1, 193 (via Dawānī's *Sharḥ ḥayākil*).

73 Ibid., vol. 1, 384.

74 Ibid., vol. 11, 177.

75 Ibid., vol. 11, 84.

76 Ibid., vol. 11, 37.

77 Ibid., vol. 11, 384. For more on the notion of *tanāsukh* in Suhrawardī's writings, see, Sabine Schmidtke, "The Doctrine of the Transmigration of the Soul According to Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (killed 587/1191) and His Followers," *Studia Iranica* 28.2 (1999): 237–54.

as Nizām al-Dīn Sihālāwī (d. 1740),⁷⁸ Muḥammad Aʿlam Sandilawī (d. 1784),⁷⁹ Baḥr al-ʿUlūm (d. 1810),⁸⁰ Walī Allāh ibn Ḥabīb Allāh Lakhnawī (d. 1853),⁸¹ and ʿImād al-Dīn Labkanī,⁸² frequently made reference to Suhrawardī's ideas in their respective *ḥawāshi* on the text.

Mullā Ṣadrā's appraisal of Suhrawardī's philosophy is multifaceted, encompassing elements of interpretation, critique,⁸³ and defense.⁸⁴ One issue that Mullā Ṣadrā particularly focuses on is Suhrawardī's view on the nature of bodies. In *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, Suhrawardī argues that bodies are extended substances that are simple and non-composite in nature.⁸⁵ In *Talwihāt*, in contrast, he states that bodies are composites of matter, and form.⁸⁶ Moreover, while magnitude is considered an accident in *Talwihāt*, it is said to be a substance in *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*. As such, there seems to be a tension in Suhrawardī's writings. In Mullā Ṣadrā's understanding, however, there is no contradiction here, because the terminology that Suhrawardī uses in the two texts mean different things. In the example of candle wax changing shape, one could argue that 'magnitude' (*miqdār*) has two distinct meanings in this context. The first sense refers to a magnitude that remains fixed and unchanging (namely the total mass), despite the alterations in the wax's shape. The second sense pertains to

78 Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya* (Kolkata, Calcutta National Library, MS 324), 2a, 26b, 31b, 32b, 34b, 36a–38b, 40b, 42b, 43a–43b, 54b, 55b, 57b, 59a–60a, 61a, 62a, 80b, 96b, 100a, 105a, 107a.

79 Muḥammad Aʿlam al-Sandilawī, *Hāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya* (Kolkata, Calcutta National Library, MS 335), 13b, 14a–14b, 24a.

80 Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Hāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Rampur, Raza Rampur Library MS 3576), 64b, 66a, 80b, 84a–85a, 90b, 91b–92b, 93b–94a, 95a, 95b, 96a–97a, 99b, 104a, 106b, 109b, 110a, 110b, 113b, 127a–127b, 134a, 135a–135b, 140b, 141b, 157b, 159b, 171b, 173a, 192b, 217b.

81 Walī Allāh al-Lakhnawī, *Hāshiyat al-Ṣadrā* (Lucknow: Nawal Kishore, 1885), 16–17, 23, 36, 42, 92, 114, 116, 136, 140, 145, 148, 151–63, 166–68, 173, 179, 183–84, 191, 201, 225–26, 228, 236, 238–37, 239, 243–44, 246–47, 282, 328, 360, 361, 366, 388.

82 ʿImād al-Dīn al-Labkanī, *Hāshiya Sharḥ al-Hidāya* (Patna, Khudabakhsh Library, MS Arabic 1871), 9a, 11b, 15a, 31b–32a, 33b, 51b, 53a–53b, 54a, 57b–58a, 60b–61a, 61b, 62a, 63a, 82a–82b, 86a–87a, 90b, 91b, 100a–100b, 108b, 117b, 125b.

83 For instance, Mullā Ṣadrā criticizes Suhrawardī's argument that the definitions of motion proposed by Ibn Sīnā and others are circular. Ṣadrā contends that these definitions are not logical definitions (*ḥadd*) but rather lexical definitions. Moreover, he argues that motion is a primary, self-evident concept, which eliminates the need for a formal definition. See, Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, vol. 1, 177.

84 See, for instance, Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, vol. 1, 83–84.

85 Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination = Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq: A New Critical Edition of the Text of Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*, ed. and trans. John Walbridge and Hossein Ziai (Provo, Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), 52–56.

86 Al-Suhrawardī, *al-Talwihāt in al-Ḥikma al-ishraqiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Malikī, vol. 111 (Tehran: Adiyān wa madhāhib, 2015), 212.

a magnitude that varies and fluctuates in accordance with the changes in the wax's shape. Now the fixed unchanging magnitude, which is a substance in *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, is what is called matter (*hayūlā*) in *Talwīḥāt*.⁸⁷

Not all Indian intellectuals agreed with this interpretation. For instance, Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālāwī and Baḥr al-'Ulūm both suggest that *Talwīḥāt* represents Suhrawardī's summary of the Peripatetic perspective, while *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* reflects Suhrawardī's own mature philosophical thought.⁸⁸ Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālāwī's engagement with Suhrawardī's ideas is particularly noteworthy, especially his critique of hylomorphism. He argues that Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī's proof for the existence of matter in *Muḥākamāt* is incomplete, and that one should agree with al-Shaykh al-Maqtūl on this issue.⁸⁹ Furthermore, regarding the question of whether accidents are constitutive of the nature of entities, Sihālāwī suggests that Mullā Ṣadrā's views were influenced by Suhrawardī. On Sihālāwī's understanding, Suhrawardī affirms that accidents are constitutive of the nature of entities and he argues that ultimately Ibn Sīnā's view can be reconciled with that of Suhrawardī.⁹⁰

In addition to the contribution of Iranian scholars whose works led to the dissemination of Suhrawardī's ideas in the subcontinent, it is crucial to mention commentaries on Suhrawardī's works that circulated in India.⁹¹ Foremost among commentaries authored outside India are Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*,⁹² Ibn Kammūna's

87 Mullā Ṣadrā, *Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, vol. 1, 79.

88 Niẓām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 36b; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 92b.

89 Niẓām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 31b.

90 Ibid., 59a–59b.

91 It is noteworthy that Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥazīn Lāhijī authored several super-commentaries (*hawāshī*) on Suhrawardī's works, including a *ḥāshiya* on Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, a commentary on Suhrawardī's *Kalimat al-taṣawwuf*, and a *ḥāshiya* on Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*. He seems to have completed these works before his migration to India. Ḥazīn's father studied under Āqā Husayn Khwānsārī and Mullā Rafī'ā, but Ḥazīn himself studied Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr* with Sayyid Ḥasan Ṭāliqānī in Isfahan. Later, in Shiraz, he studied Suhrawardī's *Talwīḥāt* under Mawlānā Muḥammad Bāqir, also known as "Ṣūfī." See Muḥammad 'Alī Ḥazīn Lāhijī, *The Life of Sheikh Muhammed Ali Hazin*, ed. and trans. Francis Cunningham Belfour (London: Oriental Translation Fund, 1831), 11, 53, 71.

92 See for instance, Mir Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 101; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 20; Walī Allāh al-Lakhnawī, *Ḥāshiyyat al-Ṣadrā*, 360–61. Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī [ma'a Ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 275, 303.

Sharḥ al-Tabwīḥāt,⁹³ and Mullā Ṣadrā's *ḥāshīya* on *Sharḥ Hikmat al-ishrāq*.⁹⁴ Occasional references are also made to Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī's *Sharḥ hayākil al-nūr*,⁹⁵ and Shahrazūrī's works.⁹⁶ Among these works, Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's commentary appears to have been the one most widely studied. This conclusion is drawn not only from the fact that his commentary was even read by non-Muslims, but also because the *ḥawāshī* that I examined contained the most references to this commentary.⁹⁷ Moreover, encyclopedic works such as Tahānawī's (d. ca. 1745) *Kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn*,⁹⁸ and 'Abd al-Nabī Aḥmadnagarī's *Dastūr al-'ulamā'*⁹⁹ rely on this work to explain Suhrawardī's views.

As for commentaries written in India, Muḥammad Sharīf Niẓām al-Dīn Harawī (fl. 17th century) wrote a partial commentary and account of *Hikmat al-ishrāq* in Persian titled *Anwārīyya*. In this work, he elucidates the main philosophical tenets of the book's second part, drawing heavily from Quṭb

- 93 See for instance, 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, ed. 'Abd al-Naṣīr Aḥmad al-Shāfi'ī (Kuwait: Dār al-ḥiyā', 2012), 318; Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 193, 202; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 129; Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-'Ilmī, *Ḥāshīya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 416.
- 94 See, for instance, 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 178; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbiyya* (Tehran, Majlis Library, MS 18905), 18b; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 106b, 110a; Walī Allāh al-Lakhnawī, *Ḥāshīyat al-Ṣadrā*, 179, 183; 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Lakhnawī, *Ḥāshīyat Mīr Zāhid 'alā l-Mawāqif* (Doha, Dār al-Kutub al-Qaṭariyya, MS 1024), 19b.
- 95 See for instance, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 79; Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudī [ma'a Ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 34.
- 96 See, Nūr Allāh al-Shūshṭarī, *Iḥqāq al-ḥaqq*, vol. 1, 482.
- 97 See for instance, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 72; Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Ḥāshīyat Mīr Zāhid 'alā Mullā Jalāl*, ed. Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī et al. (n.p.: Dār al-'Allāma al-'Aṭṭār li-l-'ulūm al-'aqliyya, 2024), 67–68; Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 135, 196, 208; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 239; Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-'Ilmī, *Ḥāshīya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 416; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudī ma'a ḥawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 356; Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudī [ma'a Ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 44, 141; Walī Allāh al-Lakhnawī, *Ḥāshīyat al-Ṣadrā*, 158, 160.
- 98 See for instance, Muḥammad ibn 'Alī al-Tahānawī, *Kashshāf iṣṭilāḥāt al-funūn* (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān nāshirūn, 1996), vol. 1, 14; 11, 1203 (the meaning of conversion ('*aks*') in logic); 11, 1282 (God's knowledge of particulars is *ḥudūrī*).
- 99 Qāḍī 'Abd al-Nabī Aḥmadnagarī, *Dastūr al-'ulamā'*, translated into Arabic by Ḥasan Ḥanī Faḥs (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-'ilmiyya, 2000), vol. III, 287; vol. IV, 27, 137.

al-Dīn Shīrāzī's commentary.¹⁰⁰ However, what perhaps stands out most in this work is his engagement with the Hindu concept of cycles of time, and angelic beings.¹⁰¹ 'Abd al-Nabī al-Shaṭṭārī, is also credited with writing a commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* called *Rūḥ al-arwāḥ*, though no extant manuscript has been recorded.¹⁰² Qāḍī Mubārak Nāgūrī and Abū l-Faḍl 'Allāmī are also said to have written *ḥawāshī* respectively on Quṭb al-Dīn's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*.

A mention also must be made of Mīr Zāhid Harawī's *ḥāshiya* on Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil*, which is the focus of the present study. Mīr Zāhid's prominence in South Asia is largely due to his commentary on Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī's *Risāla fī l-Taṣawwur wa-l-taṣdīq* as well as his *ḥawāshī* on Dawānī's commentary on *Tahdhīb al-manṭiq* and Jurjānī's *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*. However, his *ḥāshiya* on Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr* also garnered some attention, and for instance, 'Abd al-Ḥayy Lakhnawī (d. 1866) wrote a *ḥāshiya* on Mīr Zāhid's *ḥāshiya* called *Ta'līq al-ḥamā'il 'alā Ḥawāshī l-zāhidīyya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*.¹⁰³ Finally, attention must be drawn to 'Ubayd Allāh Khān Tarkhān (fl. 1728), an intellectual who was active in Delhi in the early decades of eighteenth century. He penned an introductory commentary on *Hayākil al-nūr* in which he criticizes the complexity of earlier commentaries, complaining that their advanced and intricate nature rendered Suhrawardī's philosophy inaccessible to beginners.¹⁰⁴ What makes this work particularly noteworthy is that it highlights the role of Suhrawardī's *Hayākil* in the madrasah curriculum of the time.

Apart from the works of Iranian scholars who brought Suhrawardī's ideas to Mughal India, one must also mention the works of Indian scholars whose

100 For more on the reception of Suhrawardī's ideas in India, especially in the 20th century India, see Zanjānī Aṣl, *Ḥikmat-i ishrāqī dar hind*, 85–213.

101 Muḥammad Sharīf Nizām al-Dīn Harawī, *Anwārīyya*, ed. Hossein Ziai (Tehran: Amīr kabīr, 1979), 35–37, 65–68, 150–51.

102 For his life and works, see 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir*, vol. 5, 581.

103 See 'Abd al-Ḥayy al-Ḥasanī, *Nuzhat al-khawāṭir*, vol. VIII, 1269. In *Risāla-yi dānishmandī*, Shāh Walī Allāh (d. 1762) delineates his intellectual heritage, tracing it back to Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī via Mīr Zāhid Harawī. The imprint of Suhrawardī's philosophy is distinctly evident in his works, notably in *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha* and *al-Taḥfīmāt al-ilāhiyya*. Other intellectual active in Madrasa Raḥīmiyya such as Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz and Shāh Rafī' al-Dīn also refer to Suhrawardī's ideas in their respective *ḥawāshī* on Ṣadrā's *Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*.

104 'Ubayd Allāh Khān Tarkhān, *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr* (London, British Library, Delhi, Arabic 1636), 3a. 'Ubayd Allāh Khān Tarkhān wrote a commentary on Abhari's *Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, titled *Kifāyat al-ḥikma*. In the colophon, he mentions completing it in Delhi on January 30, 1728 (17 Jumādī al-Thānī 1140 AH), at the age of 21. For the manuscript reference, see John Rylands Research Institute, MS Arabic 247.

works were, as part of educational curriculum in the rational sciences, widely studied in the subcontinent. These include Mullā Maḥmūd Jawnpūrī's (d. 1652) *al-Shams al-bāzigha*, Muḥibb Allāh Bihārī's (d. 1707) *Sullam al-'ulūm*, along with three works of Mīr Zāhid Harawī known as "*al-zawāhid al-thalātha*," mentioned earlier. An examination of these works and their commentaries reveals various degrees of engagement with Suhrawardī's writings. For instance, Mullā Maḥmūd Jawnpūrī seems to have little to no interest in Suhrawardī's ideas. This is particularly conspicuous in a treatise that he wrote on the nature of matter (*hayūlā*), called *al-Dawḥat al-mayyāda fī taḥqīq al-ṣūra wa-l-mādda*, where he does not mention Suhrawardī's well-known critique of prime matter.¹⁰⁵ The same disinterest is manifest in *Shams al-bāzigha* as well. In my examination of *Shams al-bāzigha*, I could not even find a single reference to the writings of Suhrawardī, and this disregard is to some extent also reflected in the super-glosses on the text. For instance, Ḥamdallāh Sandīlī, mentions Suhrawardī only once, and it is in the context of discussing the relation between time and motion.¹⁰⁶

The case of Bihārī's *Sullam* and its commentators, however, presents a different scenario. Although Muḥibb Allāh makes only a single reference to the Ishrāqīs in the root text, the commentators on *Sullam* exhibit more interest in Suhrawardī.¹⁰⁷ For instance, Mullā Ashraf Bardawānī (fl. 1739), who authored one of the earliest commentaries on the text, discusses Suhrawardī's ideas on the issue of simple generation (*ja' l basīṭ*).¹⁰⁸ Another commentary that garnered significantly more attention was written by Qāḍī Mubārak Gūpāmawī (d. 1749). In this work he discusses the Ishrāqī view on God's knowledge of particulars, elucidating that it occurs through knowledge by presence (*'ilm ḥudūrī*). The theory of knowledge by presence is among Suhrawardī's most widely accepted theories in the subcontinent. This theory appears primarily in three contexts, the soul's self-awareness, God's knowledge of particulars, and finally the division of knowledge into conception and assent. Regarding the latter issue, a debate arose among Mughal intellectuals about the nature of the knowledge that is then divided into the subcategories of conception

105 Mīr Zāhid's work on matter was published numerous times with *al-Shams al-bāzigha*. See, al-Jawnpūrī, *al-Shams al-bāzigha* (Lucknow: Intishārāt maṭba' 'alawī li-Bakhsh'alikhān, 1861), 253–72 [1–22].

106 Ḥamdallāh al-Sandilawī, *Ḥāshiya 'alā l-Shams al-bāzigha* (Amman, The Prince Ghazi Trust for Quranic Thought, MS 18551), 162a.

107 Asad Ahmed, *Palimpsests of Themselves: Logic and Commentary in Postclassical Muslim South Asia* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2022), 156.

108 Ashraf al-Bardawānī, *Sharḥ Sullam al-'ulūm* (Kolkata, Calcutta National Library, MS 304), 4a.

and assent.¹⁰⁹ The central question was whether this knowledge pertains to knowledge in general or specifically to acquired knowledge (*‘ilm ḥuṣūlī*). In other words, does this kind of knowledge encompass knowledge by presence, allowing for *ḥuḍūrī* conceptions and assents, or is knowledge by presence something categorically beyond conception and assent? Qāḍī Mubārak contends that this kind of knowledge is a form of acquired knowledge, arguing that knowledge by presence is fundamentally different from conception and assent.¹¹⁰ This is because presential knowledge is not divided into self-evident (*badīhī*) and theoretical (*naẓarī*), whereas both conception and assent are divided into self-evident and theoretical.¹¹¹ On the contrary, some scholars argued that the knowledge under question is knowledge as such, highlighting that the self-evident (*badīhī*) and presential (*ḥuḍūrī*) are co-extensive.

Other commentators, such as Mullā Ḥasan and Baḥr al-‘Ulūm, offer distinct perspectives on Suhrawardī’s philosophy. Mullā Ḥasan examines several of Suhrawardī’s theories, including generation (*ja‘l*),¹¹² knowledge by presence,¹¹³ and the gradation of essences (*tashkīk fī l-māhiyya*).¹¹⁴ However, his most notable contribution is his analysis of geometric bodies (*jism ta‘līmī*) in Suhrawardī’s philosophy.¹¹⁵ The case of Baḥr al-‘Ulūm is also noteworthy.¹¹⁶ He highlights Suhrawardī’s argument that existence is a mentally constructed concept,

109 Evidence suggests this issue can be traced back to the works of Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, particularly his commentary on *Hikmat al-ishrāq* and *Durrat al-tāj*. See, for instance, Mir Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma‘mūla*, 135; id., *Hāshiya-yi Mir Zāhid bar Mullā Jalāl [ma‘a l-hawāshī]* (Lucknow: Maṭba‘ ‘Alawī Muḥammad ‘Alī Ḥusaynkhān, 1876), 68.

110 Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-‘ulūm wa Ḥāshiyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī*, 42. For other references to Suhrawardī’s ideas see, *ibid.*, 25–26, 27, 37, 51, 57, 59, 64, 66, 193, 195, 198, 232–33.

111 This argument was already discussed by Mir Zāhid. Advocates of this perspective assert that when an entity is divided into two subcategories, it must inherently possess the capacity to encompass both subcategories. For example, when one considers the fact that numbers are either even or odd, the nature of number must be capable of embodying both forms. However, this reasoning does not apply to the case of knowledge by presence, as such knowledge is inherently certain and not subject to acquisition. Consequently, it cannot be the type of knowledge that is further divided into conception and assent, as both types can be acquired.

112 Mullā Ḥasan, *Sharḥ Sullam al-‘ulūm* (Kerala: Maktabat al-amīn, 2022), 14–15.

113 *Ibid.*, 19.

114 *Ibid.*, 54–54.

115 *Ibid.*, 85.

116 Baḥr al-‘Ulūm refers to Suhrawardī’s views and his commentators on a number of occasions. See for instance, ‘Abd al-‘Alī Baḥr al-‘Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-‘Ulūm ‘alā Sullam al-‘ulūm*, 167, 171, 176, 178–79, 186, 202, 212–13, 239, 242–44, 263, 267 (Ibn Kammūna), 310, 318 (Ibn Kammūna), 323, 327, 333.

comparing it to the views of Abū l-Ḥasan Ash‘arī (d. 936).¹¹⁷ Regarding perception (*idrāk*), Baḥr al-‘Ulūm mentions Niẓām al-Dīn Sihālāwī’s interpretation, which claims that Suhrawardī proposed a theory of *shabaḥ* in knowledge. According to this view, the mind perceives not the object itself, but its likeness, drawing a clear distinction between the two.¹¹⁸

Mīr Zāhid Harawī’s three works also engage with Suhrawardī’s philosophy to different degrees. One of Mīr Zāhid’s most widely circulated works was his *ḥāshiya* on *Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*. He was among the earliest thinkers to write a *ḥāshiya* on this text in Mughal India. Besides Mīr Zāhid, his contemporary ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm Siyālkūtī likewise wrote a *ḥāshiya* on *Mawāqif*, in which he examines Suhrawardī’s doctrine of the “lord of species” and his claim that bodies are extended substances.¹¹⁹ Much like Siyālkūtī and Bihārī, Mīr Zāhid also examines the nature of bodies,¹²⁰ lord of species (*arbāb anwā’*),¹²¹ and the issue of simple generation.¹²² However, his most distinct engagement may be his examination of the nature of angels in Suhrawardī’s philosophy.¹²³

As for Mīr Zāhid’s *ḥāshiya* on Dawānī’s *Sharḥ Tahdhīb al-manṭiq*, the root text does not refer to Suhrawardī,¹²⁴ and Mīr Zāhid does not explicitly mention Suhrawardī by name. Nonetheless, he mentions Suhrawardī’s view on God’s knowledge of particulars obtaining through *ḥudūrī* knowledge, and refers to Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī’s *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* to explore the nature of conception and assent.¹²⁵ It is thus unsurprising that the glossators on the text such as

117 Ibid., 178–79.

118 Ibid., 186. However, Baḥr al-‘Ulūm does not specify in which work Suhrawardī explicitly endorses this view.

119 ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm al-Siyālkūtī, *Ḥāshiya ‘alā Sharḥ al-Mawāqif*, ed. Maḥmūd ‘Umar al-Dimyātī (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1998), vol. II, 168 [on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and bodies as extension (*jawhar mumtadd*)]; vol. III, 32 [Regarding Suhrawardī’s view on *rabb al-naw’*]; vol. IV, 175; vol. VII, 42. See also ‘Abd al-Ḥakīm al-Siyālkūtī, *Ḥāshiya ‘alā Kitāb al-Muṭawwal* (Qom: al-Sharīf al-Raḍīyy, 1982), vol. I, 50 [on the meaning of *ḥads* in Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī’s *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*], vol. I, 355 [on the definition of essence in *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*].

120 Mīr Zāhid, *al-Ḥāshiya ‘alā Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* (Lucknow: Nawal Kishor, 1876), 60; for the widespread influence of this works, see, Asad Q. Ahmed, “The *Mawāqif* of ‘Aḍud al-Dīn al-Ījī in India,” in *Philosophical Theology in Islam*, ed. Ayman Shihadeh and Jan Thiele (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 397–412.

121 Ibid., 54.

122 Ibid., 58.

123 Ibid., 54.

124 Jalāl al-Dīn al-Dawānī, *Sharḥ Tahdhīb al-manṭiq*, ed. ‘Abd al-Naṣīr al-Shāfi‘ī (Kuwait: Dār al-ḥiyā’, 2014).

125 Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Ḥāshiyat Mīr Zāhid ‘alā Mullā Jalāl* ed. Zayn al-Dīn al-Ḥusaynī and Ibrāhīm ibn Bakhīt al-Bayḍānī (n.p.: Dār al-‘allāma al-‘Aṭṭār li-l-‘ulūm al-‘aqliyya, 2024), 66

Qāḍī Mubārak Gūpāmawī,¹²⁶ Baḥr al-‘Ulūm,¹²⁷ and Muḥammad Ṣuḥūr Allāh (d. 1840)¹²⁸ all deal with these issues.

Mīr Zāhid’s commentary on Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī’s treatise on conception and assent is perhaps the work in which Mīr Zāhid engages most substantially with Suhrawardī’s ideas. These topics include Suhrawardī’s theory of vision (*ibṣār*),¹²⁹ God’s knowledge of particulars,¹³⁰ the nature of knowledge,¹³¹ the difference between conceptions and assents,¹³² and the nature of judgements.¹³³ A unique case of engagement with Suhrawardī’s ideas in this text occurs in the context of theory of knowledge. In *Muṭārahāt*, Suhrawardī seeks to prove that knowledge is a real positive property of the soul. To prove this point, he argues that when one perceives an object, the resulting knowledge is either a positive property of the self or not. Put differently, does this knowledge add something to us or not? If it does not, did something cease to exist in us or not?¹³⁴ If one claims that it is a form of negation (*intifāʿ*), we must then ask whether it negates a prior cognition or a non-cognitive attribute of the self. If perception involves negating a previous perception, then that perception must have been a positive, existing entity – since something that lacks being cannot negate a non-existing entity. Alternatively, if knowledge is the cessation of a non-cognitive property of the self, this would imply that the self possesses an infinite number of properties. All of these properties would need to be nullified whenever one cognizes something new, which is absurd. As such, Suhrawardī concludes that knowledge must be a positive property of the soul.¹³⁵

In *Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, Dawānī revisits this issue, arguing that Suhrawardī’s proof is incomplete. He suggests that Suhrawardī should have asserted that if

(God’s detailed knowledge about particulars is *ḥuḍūrī*), 67 (*Shāriḥ of Maṭālīʿ* in *al-Risāla al-maʿmūla* and Quṭb al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī in *Sharḥ Hikmat al-ishrāq*).

126 Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Hāshiya ‘alā Ḥawāshī l-zāhidīyya ‘alā Mullā Jalāl* (Damascus, Majmaʿ al-Lughā al-ʿArabiyya bi-Dimashq, MS 133), 11a–12b.

127 ‘Abd al-ʿAlī Baḥr al-‘Ulūm, *Hāshiya-yi ‘Abd al-ʿAlī bar Mīr Zāhid Mullā Jalāl* (no place, Maktaba Hāshimī, no date), 52, 64, 68.

128 Mīr Zāhid, *Hāshiya-yi Mīr Zāhid bar Mullā Jalāl [maʿa l-ḥawāshī]*, 64.

129 Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-maʿmūla*, 91–92.

130 Ibid., 94.

131 Ibid., 101.

132 Ibid., 202.

133 Ibid., 185, 188, 190, 208.

134 For if neither something is added nor is something removed from us then we are the same before and after knowing the object, which is absurd.

135 Al-Suhrawardī, *al-Muṭārahāt* in *al-Hikma al-ishrāqīyya*, ed. Muḥammad Malikī, vol. VI (Tehran: Adīyān wa madhāhib, 2019), 413–14.

perception is merely the negation of prior cognitions, it must inevitably trace back to a positive, existing perception. Otherwise, one would be compelled to accept an infinite regress of cognitions pertaining to the self, each negating the previous one – an idea that is rationally untenable. Furthermore, in this sequence of cognitions (... , a, b, c), if ‘b’ negates ‘a,’ and ‘c’ negates ‘b,’ then upon perceiving ‘c,’ we must also perceive ‘a’ as a positive entity, since ‘c’'s negation of ‘b’ – b itself being the negation of ‘a’ – results in the double negation of ‘a,’ thereby affirming ‘a.’¹³⁶

Mīr Zāhid, in his commentary on Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī's treatise, builds on the ideas of Suhrawardī and Dawānī to refine his own understanding of the issue. He criticizes Dawānī's interpretation of negation (*salb*), arguing that Dawānī mistakenly views it as a case of simple negation (*salb basīṭ*), whereas it should be understood in the sense of negation in a metathetic (*ma'dūla*) statement. For instance, when one says “Bakr is non-Indian,” one affirms a metathetic predicate – non-Indian – of the subject Bakr. Similarly, in the context of knowledge, one affirms the negation of a previous cognition in relation to the self. Thus, cognition ‘c’ is not the result of a double negation of ‘a’ leading to a positive cognition of ‘a,’ but rather an affirmation of the negation of ‘b’ for the soul. Furthermore, Mīr Zāhid criticizes Dawānī's reliance on infinite regress, pointing out that at each moment, a new cognition negates the previous one. This implies that once an object is perceived, all preceding cognitions are erased from the mind, leaving no possibility for an infinite regress.¹³⁷

Regardless of whether we concur or dissent with Mīr Zāhid and Dawānī, what stands out in this passage is the way that both philosophers dissected Suhrawardī's argument. To substantiate his claim that knowledge entails the addition of an actual form to the soul, Suhrawardī sought to demonstrate the implausibility of the alternative. Thus, if nothing is added to us, then something must necessarily cease to exist within us: either the previous cognition or another non-cognitive property of the soul. However, both of these options lead to undesirable outcomes. The concepts of negation (*intifā'*) and cessation (*zawāl*) in Suhrawardī's original text are not explicitly defined in the strict logical sense of negation (*salb*). Yet, both Dawānī and Mīr Zāhid evidently interpret them in this manner. In other words, Dawānī construes the cessation of the previous cognition as a negative judgment regarding that cognition, implying that it does not correspond to reality. Mīr Zāhid, by contrast, understands it as an affirmative statement with a negative predicate term. This shift in emphasis

136 Al-Dawānī, *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr [Thalāth rasā'il]*, ed. Aḥmad Tūysarkānī (Mashhad: Majma' al-buḥūth al-islāmiyya, 1990), 126.

137 Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 102–3.

subsequently influenced interpretations of Suhrawardī's text in the works of Ghulām Yaḥyā,¹³⁸ Irtiḍā' 'Alikhān,¹³⁹ and Baḥr al-'Ulūm.¹⁴⁰

To this point, I have presented a broad outline of the diverse avenues through which Suhrawardī's thought permeated the Mughal intellectual landscape and found its way into the madrasah curriculum. As a final consideration within this context, I wish to offer some preliminary general reflections on the extent of Suhrawardī's influence in Mughal India. First, it is important to emphasize that Suhrawardī's ideas, along with those of his commentators, were at the center of scholarly debates across a wide array of topics in logic, natural philosophy, metaphysics, and epistemology. Topics discussed include:

- 1- Logic
 - a. Conception and assent and the division of knowledge into *ḥuḍūrī* and *ḥuṣūlī*¹⁴¹
 - b. Distinction between conception and assent¹⁴²
 - c. The meaning of statement (*qaḍīyya*)¹⁴³
 - d. Self-evident statements¹⁴⁴
 - e. The subject matter of logic¹⁴⁵
 - f. Concomitance (*talāzum*)¹⁴⁶

138 Ghulām Yaḥyā ibn Najm al-Dīn al-Bihārī, *al-Risāla al-quṭbīyya wa-l-Ta'liqāt al-zāhidīyya wa-l-Ḥāshīya 'alayhā li-mawlānā Ghulām Yaḥyā* (Lucknow: Maktaba muḥammadiyya, n.d.), 29–36.

139 Irtiḍā' 'Alikhān, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya* (Cairo, Azhar Library, MS Logic 49204), 15.

140 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya*, 16a–17a.

141 See, Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Ḥāshīya Mīr Zāhid 'alā Mullā Jalāl*, 66–67; id., *Ḥāshīya-yi Mīr Zāhid bar Mullā Jalāl [ma'a l-hawāshī]*, 53, 68; Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Ḥāshīya 'alā Ḥawāshī l-zāhidīyya 'alā Mullā Jalāl*, 11a–12b; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya-yi 'Abd al-'Alī bar Mīr Zāhid Mullā Jalāl*, 52; Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-'ulūm wa-ḥāshīyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī ma'a minhiyātih*, 42; Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 196; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya*, 3a–5a; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī ma'a ḥawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 318–19.

142 Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 135.

143 Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 149, 185, 188, 190, 208.

144 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya*, 94b.

145 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 212–13.

146 Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 140b.

2- Natural Philosophy

- a. Body as extension (*imtidād*)¹⁴⁷
- b. Magnitude (*miqdār*)¹⁴⁸
- c. Condensation (*takāthuf*) and rarefaction (*takhalkhul*) of bodies¹⁴⁹
- d. Continuity (*ittiṣāl*) and discontinuity (*infīṣāl*) in bodies¹⁵⁰
- e. Differentiation of bodies¹⁵¹
- f. Mathematical body (*jism ta'limī*)¹⁵²
- g. Vision (*ibṣār*)¹⁵³
- h. Growth (*numuww*)¹⁵⁴
- i. Time¹⁵⁵
- j. Space¹⁵⁶

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- 147 Qāḍī Mubārak al-Güpāmawī, *Sullam al-ʿulūm wa-Ḥāshiyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī*, 198; Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 39b, 41b; ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī maʿa ḥawāshī ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 42; Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī [maʿa ḥawāshī Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 49; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 32b–34b; Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 96a, 104a.
- 148 Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 36a, 43a; Muḥammad Aʿlam al-Sandilawī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 13b; Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 92a–93b, 96b.
- 149 Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 37a; 38b; Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 95a, 96b–97a.
- 150 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Taʿlīqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 108; Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī [maʿa Ḥawāshī Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 44; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 38b; Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 85a.
- 151 Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī [maʿa Ḥawāshī Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 50.
- 152 Mullā Ḥasan, *Sharḥ Sullam al-ʿulūm*, 85.
- 153 ʿAbd al-ʿAlī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-ʿUlūm ʿalā Sullam al-ʿulūm*, 263; Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-maʿmūla*, 91–92; Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī [maʿa Ḥawāshī Muḥammad ʿAyn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 275.
- 154 Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 96b.
- 155 Ḥamdallāh al-Sandilawī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā l-Shams al-bāzigha*, 162a; Fakhr al-Dīn Sammākī, *Taʿlīqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 234; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 80b, 100a, 107a; Baḥr al-ʿUlūm, *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 173a, 217b.
- 156 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 10a; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Taʿlīqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 79.

- k. Immaterial dimension (*bu'd mujarrad*)¹⁵⁷
- l. Form of species (*ṣūra naw'īyya*)¹⁵⁸
- m. Theory of motion¹⁵⁹
- n. Matter (*hayūlā*)¹⁶⁰
- o. The example of glass [in the context of disproving matter]¹⁶¹
- p. The example of a candle [in the context of disproving matter]¹⁶²
- q. Void¹⁶³
- r. The soul and the subject matter of natural philosophy¹⁶⁴
- s. Locus (*ḥayyīz*)¹⁶⁵
- t. Determination (*'azm*) and desire (*shawq*)¹⁶⁶
- u. Differentiation of the souls before creation¹⁶⁷
- v. Sound¹⁶⁸

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- 157 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Hāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 57b, 71b; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 184–85; Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudī [ma'a Ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 96, 99, 100, 101; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 157b.
 - 158 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 61a; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 94; Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-'Ilmī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 42; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 26b, 54b, 62a.
 - 159 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 82a; Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 213, 283; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 96b; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 192b.
 - 160 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 72; Nūr Allāh al-Shūshtarī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 41; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 31b; Muḥammad A'lam al-Sandilawī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 14a; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 64b, 80b, 99b.
 - 161 Muṣliḥ al-Dīn al-Lārī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 83b.
 - 162 Muḥammad A'lam al-Sandilawī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 14b.
 - 163 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Sammākī, *Ta'liqāt-i Fakhr al-Dīn Ḥusaynī Sammākī bar Sharḥ Hidāya-yi Maybudī*, 181; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 90b.
 - 164 Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-'Ilmī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 416; al-Maybudī and 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudī ma'a ḥawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 356.
 - 165 Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudī [ma'a ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 106.
 - 166 Ibid., 288.
 - 167 Ibid., 303.
 - 168 Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 135a.

3- Metaphysics

- a. God's knowledge of particulars¹⁶⁹
- b. Notion of being¹⁷⁰
- c. Unity of the necessary being¹⁷¹
- d. Simple or compound generation (*ja'l*)¹⁷²
- e. Platonic forms/lord of species (*arbāb anwā'*)¹⁷³
- f. World of images (*'ālam al-mithāl*)¹⁷⁴
- g. Prophecy¹⁷⁵
- h. Modulation (*tashkīk*) in the essence¹⁷⁶
- i. Multiplicity of aspects (*kathrat al-jihāt*) in the immaterial intellects¹⁷⁷
- j. Immaterial intellects and bodies¹⁷⁸

169 See, Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Hāshiyat Mīr Zāhid 'alā Mullā Jalāl*, 66; id., *Hāshiya-yi Mīr Zāhid bar Mullā Jalāl* [*ma'a l-hawāshī*], 63–64; Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-'ulūm wa-hāshiyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī*, 25–26; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 167; Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 94; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā al-Hāshiya al-zāhidiyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya*, 7b; Muḥammad ibn Ḥasan al-'Ilmī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Maybudī 'alā Hidāyat al-ḥikma* (Mashhad, Āstān Quds Library, MS 12268), 379–80; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī ma'a hawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 327–28.

170 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya-yi 'Abd al-'Alī bar Mīr Zāhid Mullā Jalāl*, 64; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 176–79; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 310; Ghulām Yaḥyā ibn Najm al-Dīn al-Bihārī, *al-Risāla al-quṭbīyya wa-l-Ta'līqāt al-zāhidiyya wa-l-Hāshiya 'alayhā li-mawlānā Ghulām Yaḥyā*, 20; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā l-Hāshiya al-zāhidiyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya*, 58b, 94b; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 98b.

171 Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 40b.

172 Ashraf al-Bardawānī, *Sharḥ Sullam al-'ulūm*, 4a; Qāḍī Mubārak Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-'ulūm wa-Hāshiyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī ma'a minhiyātīhi*, 37; Mullā Ḥasan, *Sharḥ Sullam al-'ulūm*, 14–15; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 176; Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī* [*ma'a Hawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Quḍāt al-Ḥaydarābādī*], 314; Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 2a.

173 Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-'ulūm wa-Hāshiyatuhu*, 27; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 327–33; Muṣliḥ al-Dīn Lārī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 62b; Nizām al-Dīn Sihālāwī, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 55b; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 171b.

174 Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 157b.

175 Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 157b.

176 Mullā Ḥasan, *Sharḥ Sullam al-'ulūm*, 56; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 239, 323; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Hāshiya Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 91b, 92b, 113b.

177 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 171.

178 Al-Maybudī, *al-Maybudhī ma'a hawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 345.

- k. Accident's inherence in its locus
- l. Definition of substance¹⁷⁹
- 4) Theory of Knowledge
 - a. Knowledge by presence¹⁸⁰
 - b. Knowledge as the negation of the preceding cognition.¹⁸¹
 - c. Knowledge and the categories¹⁸²
 - d. Self-awareness¹⁸³

A cursory look at these topics demonstrates that natural philosophy is the area in which Suhrawardī's thought was discussed most extensively. Although the proliferation of Suhrawardī's natural philosophy in India is partially due to the spread of works such as Ṣadrā's *Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, it is also equally important to note that Mughal intellectuals found a critical link between Suhrawardī's natural philosophy and his metaphysics of light. This is perhaps most conspicuous in Suhrawardī's theory of body. In *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, Suhrawardī demonstrates the existence of immaterial lights by arguing that if luminosity were an intrinsic attribute of bodies, then every body would have to be luminous. This means there must be a cause extrinsic to bodies that makes them luminous – namely, the immaterial lights and, ultimately, the Light of Lights (*nūr al-anwār*). For Ibn Sīnā, fire is luminous whereas trees are not because of the species-form (*ṣūra naw'īyya*) that distinguishes fire and its properties from other bodies. Suhrawardī, however, rejects both hylomorphism and the species-form, and criticizes Ibn Sīnā's proofs for the existence of matter through the notions of continuity and discontinuity. As such, Suhrawardī's rejection of Ibn Sīnā's proofs for the existence of matter is integral to how his metaphysics of light was developed, and this is a point which did not go unnoticed by Mughal intellectuals.

179 Nizām al-Dīn al-Sihālāwī, *Ḥāshīya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hidāya*, 60a; Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma*, 109b–110a.

180 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya-yi 'Abd al-'Alī bar Mīr Zāhid Mullā Jalāl*, 68; Mullā Ḥasan, *Sharḥ Sullam al-'ulūm*, 19; Ghulām Yahyā ibn Najm al-Dīn al-Bihārī, *al-Risāla al-quṭbīyya wa-l-Ta'liqāt al-zāhidīyya wa-l-Ḥāshīya 'alayhā li-mawlānā Ghulām Yahyā*, 9; 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya*, 3a–b, 10b.

181 Mīr Zāhid al-Harawī, *Sharḥ al-Risāla al-ma'mūla*, 99–103; Ghulām Yahyā ibn Najm al-Dīn al-Bihārī, *al-Risāla al-quṭbīyya wa-l-Ta'liqāt al-zāhidīyya wa-l-Ḥāshīya 'alayhā li-mawlānā Ghulām Yahyā*, 29–30; Irṭiḍā' 'Alīkhān, *Ḥāshīya 'alā l-Ḥāshīya al-zāhidīyya 'alā l-Risāla al-quṭbīyya* (Cairo, Azhar Library, MS Logic 49204), 15.

182 Qāḍī Mubārak al-Gūpāmawī, *Sullam al-'ulūm wa-Ḥāshiyatuhu l-mashhūra bi-l-Qāḍī*, 51.

183 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī, *al-Maybudhī ma'a ḥawāshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm al-Lakhnawī*, 320; Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Qudāt al-Ḥaydarābādī, *al-Maybudhī [ma'a ḥawāshī Muḥammad 'Ayn al-Qudāt al-Ḥaydarābādī]*, 291.

Discussions of the above-mentioned topics vary in their level of engagement with Suhrawardī's thought. In many cases, Suhrawardī's view is merely mentioned as one of several options presented by previous philosophers. Although such instances do not constitute constructive engagement, they nonetheless attest to a widespread familiarity with his ideas among Mughal intellectuals. Yet the fact that these works cite Suhrawardī without further analytical examination should not lead us to underestimate their importance. Even when an idea is only noted in a new context, it can be innovative and therefore merits closer scrutiny. A good example is Harawī's *Anwārīyya*, where his presentation of Suhrawardī's notion of "dominating lights" (*anwār qāhira*) may not be innovative in itself, but it becomes significant once one recognizes that he juxtaposes the idea with the Hindu notion of divine beings (*dēvtā*, Skt. *devatā*).¹⁸⁴

A more constructive approach to understanding Suhrawardī's thought is evident in instances where Mughal intellectuals attempted to reconcile seemingly contradictory elements within his works. For instance, his interpreters often grappled with the apparent tension between the affirmation of matter in *Talwihāt* and its rejection in *Hikmat al-ishrāq*. Likewise, the concept of magnitude, presented as an accident in *Talwihāt*, is treated as a substance in *Hikmat al-ishrāq*. Finally, whereas *Talwihāt* characterizes body as a compound of matter and form, *Hikmat al-ishrāq* depicts it as a simple reality. These apparent contradictions have led to a rich tradition of scholarly debate and interpretation among Mughal intellectuals. By seeking to harmonize these seemingly conflicting views, scholars have contributed to a deeper understanding of Suhrawardī's philosophical system and its implications for furthering rational sciences in Mughal India.

Finally, there are instances where Mughal intellectuals engaged with Suhrawardī's thought in creative ways, both affirmatively and critically, to construct their own philosophical views. This suggests that while they did not always agree with Suhrawardī on every issue, his ideas nonetheless influenced their philosophical views. One example of such engagement is Baḥr al-'Ulūm's comparison of Ibn 'Arabī's notion of immutable entities (*a'yān thābita*) with Suhrawardī's concept of the lord of species (*arbāb anwā'*), which he integrates into his own theory of universals.¹⁸⁵ Another example is Mīr Zāhid's argument regarding the rejection of knowledge as the cessation of prior knowledge, where he interpreted cessation in a metathetic (*ma'dūla*) sense. In my view, this level of engagement represents some of the most sophisticated and elaborate interactions with Suhrawardī's philosophy in Mughal India. Mīr Zāhid

¹⁸⁴ Harawī, *Anwārīyya*, 35.

¹⁸⁵ 'Abd al-'Alī Baḥr al-'Ulūm, *Sharḥ Baḥr al-'Ulūm 'alā Sullam al-'ulūm*, 327–33.

Harawī's views on the psychology of action, set out in his *Hāshīya* on Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, offer yet another case of such engagement.

Therefore, in my view, when examining the presence of an Ishrāqī tradition in India, it would be a mistake to limit the investigation to thinkers who embraced Suhrawardī's philosophy in its entirety. Instead, much like the legacy of Ibn Sīnā, which has been explored across a wide range of topics, we should focus on how Mughal intellectuals responded to key arguments of Suhrawardī's philosophy. These arguments extend beyond the topics often associated with Suhrawardī like Platonic forms or the world of images, and encompass a broad spectrum of issues in natural philosophy, logic, and metaphysics.

3 Psychology of Action in the Commentarial Tradition on *Ishārāt*

Mīr Zāhid and Dawānī's engagement with Suhrawardī's ideas did not occur in a vacuum, and in fact two texts and their commentarial tradition provide crucial context for understanding the reception of Suhrawardī's ideas in Mughal India. These two texts are *Ishārāt* by Ibn Sīnā and *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād* of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī. *Ishārāt* is not the first text that discusses the four-stage theory of action. Based on the commentary of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī and Ṣadrā's remarks in the *Asfār*, it appears that Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites alike discussed this topic in their works,¹⁸⁶ and by the time of Ibn Sīnā, the language of action seems to have been fully formed. Nonetheless, given the widespread influence of Ibn Sīnā's views, I will begin with his treatment of this topic. In the *Ishārāt*, Ibn Sīnā writes:¹⁸⁷

As for the voluntary motions, they are more psychologically intense (*ashadd nafsāniyya*)¹⁸⁸ [than natural motions]. They have a determining

186 See, Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Ḥikmat al-muta'āliya fī l-asfār al-'aqliyya al-arba'a*, ed. Muḥammad Riḍā Muẓaffar, vol. VI (Beirut: Dār iḥyā' al-turāth al-'arabī, 1981), 337–40.

187 The primary focus of this chapter in the *Ishārāt* is the question of will in the celestial spheres, yet in addressing that topic Ibn Sīnā raises several issues that pertain to human volition. In what follows, I confine myself to passages that deal directly with human action, omitting discussions of the spheres and any examples that do not advance our understanding of human voluntary action. In this section, Ibn Sīnā argues that a circular motion cannot be caused by nature (*ṭab'*), since in such a motion the point from which something departs is identical to the point toward which it returns. Because a natural motion cannot aim at the very point from which it recedes, circular motion must arise from an act of will, which presupposes a soul.

188 Ibn Sīnā begins the discussion on voluntary action by stating that "voluntary motions are more psychologically intense (*ashadd nafsāniyyatan*) [than the vegetal motions]." The

principle (*‘āzim*) based on a conclusive decision, which submits, and is receptive (*munfa‘il*) to imagination, estimation or reason. [Then] an irascible power originates from it which repels that which is harmful, or an appetitive power (*quwwa shahwāniyya*) comes about, which attracts what is necessary (*ḍarūrī*) or beneficial (*nāfi‘*) for the animal. Then moving powers in the muscles, which serve this order-giving [power], obey it.¹⁸⁹

Within this framework, every voluntary action rests on four principles (*mabādī‘*) whose joint presence makes the act inevitable: (1) instigating perception (*idrāk*); (2) desire (*shawq*); (3) firm determination or conclusive decision (*‘azm jāzim, ijma‘*); and (4) the movement of the body parts (*tahrik al-a‘ḍā’*).¹⁹⁰

first point that requires further clarification is the relation between actions and motions, asking why Ibn Sīnā uses the word *‘haraka*’ instead of, for instance, action (*fi‘l* or *‘amal*). The answer to this question lies in the fact that according to Ibn Sīnā, action is a form of motion, that is, it is a process in which something potential turns actual. And a voluntary action is a form of motion that is premised on the volition of the agent of action. The second point worthy of mention is the meaning of the phrase “being more psychologically intense.” Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, in his commentary, states that vegetal powers are similar to natural forces in that they do not require perception (*idrāk*) and awareness (*shu‘ūr*). It is in this sense that Ibn Sīnā talks about voluntary motions being more intense than vegetal motions, since voluntary motions require both. Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī gives another explanation in his commentary: the reason voluntary motions are more psychologically intense than vegetal motions is that, among earthly souls, whenever a voluntary motion is present, vegetal motion is also present, whereas the reverse is not true. I think Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī’s explanation seems to be closest to Ibn Sīnā’s intention. Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī finds Ṭūsī’s explanation faulty and expresses that the opposite of what Ṭūsī says is correct, but he does not clarify what he means by this statement in a clear manner. In earlier chapters, Ibn Sīnā divided the form of species (*ṣūra naw‘iyya*) into nature (*ṭabī‘a*) and soul (*nafs*). One of the differences between the two is that the activities of the former do not require awareness or volition and are often singular in nature. For instance, the natural motion (or activity) of a stone is to go to its natural habitus (*hayyiz*) which is the earth. This motion is singular and does not imply awareness and volition on the part of the piece of rock. Voluntary actions, on the contrary, imply awareness, volition and are also diverse in nature. Comparatively, since vegetal actions share more with the activities of insentient beings or natures, Ibn Sīnā says that voluntary motions are more psychologically intense in the sense that they are more removed from the activities of insentient beings.

189 Ibn Sīnā and al-Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt ma’a l-Muḥākamāt*, vol. 11 (Qom: Nashr al-balāgha, 1996), 41–12.

190 The technical term used in this context is *al-quwwa al-mabthūtha*, the power permeating the muscles. Ṭūsī starts his explanation by showing how we start from a thought and end in an action. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, on the other hand, starts with the closest principle that leads to an action, namely, the power to move the muscles, and works backwards.

4 Instigating Perception

A cogent theory of action should, *inter alia*, elucidate the necessity of each constituent step and demonstrate the impossibility of explaining an action without recourse to these prescribed stages. To illustrate this theory and examine the indispensability of each step, let us consider a commonplace example of an action and apply the proposed theoretical framework. Consider a scenario in which Bakr sees some salad in the kitchen and decides to eat it. He proceeds to the kitchen, grabs the bowl of salad, and consumes it. In this scenario, the primary action is the consumption of the food, with the preceding steps serving as preparatory measures. However, before Bakr's act of eating, it is reasonable to assume that certain events led to his decision to eat. Specifically, something may have prompted Bakr to initiate the action of eating. It could just be the feeling of hunger or the memory of how delicious the salad in the kitchen is. Then, he feels a desire to go into the kitchen to eat it. However, simply having the desire to carry out an action is not always enough to result in an action. On numerous occasions, a person may have the desire to do something but fail to follow through with it.¹⁹¹ So, Bakr needs to come to a firm decision to pursue his desire, which finally results in him moving his body to the kitchen to eat the salad. Finally, Bakr must have the requisite physical fitness in order to move his body to the kitchen and to use his facial muscles to consume the salad.

Using the example provided earlier, when Bakr becomes aware that eating a salad is an appropriate action for the purpose of satisfying his hunger, this cognitive episode that triggers his subsequent action is called "the instigating cognition." Islamic philosophers explored the notion of an instigating perception in various ways including, (a) its content, (b) its truth value, that is, whether or not it should correspond to reality, and (c) its source among other things.¹⁹² As for its content, in the *Ishārāt*, Ibn Sīnā holds that it consists of a recognition that an action is "necessary" (*ḍarūrī*), "beneficial" (*nāfiʿ*), or

191 For instance, a person who has diabetes might have the desire to eat chocolate but does not do so since he or she wills against it knowing that it is bad for health.

192 For Ibn Sīnā's account of estimation and its role in his theory of knowledge see, Deborah Black, "Estimation (*Wahm*) in Avicenna: The Logical and Psychological Dimensions," *Dialogue – Canadian Philosophical Association* 32.2 (1993): 219–58; for Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's critique of the internal senses see, Mehmet Zahit Tiryaki, "From Faculties to Functions: Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī's Critique of Internal Senses," *Nazariyat: Journal for the History of Islamic Philosophy and Sciences* 4.2 (2018): 75–118.

“harmful” (*dārr*).¹⁹³ Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī specifically mentions that the content of a given instigating perception pertains solely to the awareness that the action is beneficial or harmful. Ṭūsī states that its content is the perception of suitability in a thing that is pleasant (*ladhīdh*) or beneficial (*nāfiʿ*), or the perception (*idrāk*) of incompatibility (*munāfāt*) in a thing that is harmful or unpleasant (*makrūh*). Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī uses the term “conception” (*taṣawwur*) instead of “perception” (*idrāk*) to describe the instigating perception and considers its content to be the conception as to whether attaining something is beneficial or harmful.¹⁹⁴ Often, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī critiques Ibn Sīnā’s viewpoints. However, in this instance, it is noteworthy that all the commentaries concur on the fundamental notion that the content of an instigating cognition revolves around the utility or detriment associated with the target of an action.¹⁹⁵

Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī calls this cognition a motivator or an instigator (*al-dāʿī*), because it serves as a catalyst that propels the agent to initiate an action. He raises the question of whether an instigating cognition is an essential prerequisite (*shart*) for all actions, and whether an individual must be aware of the action’s potential benefit or harm to act upon it. According to Rāzī, the consensus among most scholars leans towards the necessity of the motivating perception. They argue that the muscular power responsible for both action and inaction requires a reason when an agent chooses one course of action over another. After all, it is rationally implausible to favor one contingent option over another without a discernible reason for preference (*al-tarajjuh bi-lā murajjih*).¹⁹⁶

193 Ibn Sīnā’s words in this paragraph are terse and it might seem that he is describing irascible (*ghaḍabiyya*) and appetitive (*shahwāniyya*) powers, but based on his discourse in *al-Shifāʾ* and the remarks of Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī, Ṭūsī and Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī, it becomes clear that “being harmful” (*dārr*), “beneficial” (*nāfiʿ*), etc., are contents of the instigating perception that bring about desire or hatred in the agent of action. See al-Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. II, 411–12.

194 Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt maʿa l-Muḥākamāt*, vol. II (Qom: Nahj al-balāgha, 1996), 411, [hereafter *Muḥākamāt*].

195 However, there is a difference in terminology that may initially appear insignificant but has significant implications for our understanding of an instigating cognition upon closer examination. The word “perception” is a generic term which includes both concepts such as “food,” “usefulness,” etc. and assents such as, “the food in the kitchen is delicious.” If we take Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī’s use of “*taṣawwur*” to indicate conception as distinct from assents, then it would lead to the view that assents cannot function as instigating cognitions. Based on the context, however, it seems that Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī uses *taṣawwur* in a more generic sense to include both concepts (*taṣawwur*) and assents (*taṣdīq*).

196 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, ed. Riḍā Najafzāda, vol. II (Tehran: Anjuman āthār-i millī, 2005), 320.

However, some scholars contested the notion that motivating cognition is a necessary prerequisite for actions by presenting counter examples. According to this group, when a group of people are fleeing from a predator and are confronted with two paths that are identical in every aspect, it is inconceivable that they should allow themselves to be captured by the predator. And yet it is also impossible for them to take both paths or to choose one over the other since both are equally advantageous. Therefore, it is necessary to select one path without any reason (*murajjih*) for either. Another illustration centers on a person who is thirsty and is presented with two identical glasses of water. While there is no discernible reason to prefer one over the other, we know from experience that the person will choose one of them.¹⁹⁷

Historically, the issue of whether a *murajjih* is essential or not sparked significant debate between the Falāsifa and (early) Mutakallimūn. While delving into this debate is beyond the scope of the present study, it suffices to highlight that Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's critique of the necessity of an instigating cognition is from a particular angle. The idea is that we need a reason to act, and that the instigating cognition is that reason. However, he presents scenarios in which there does not seem to be a way for us to prefer one option over another and concludes that the reason upon which the necessity of an instigating cognition is premised must be rejected on this basis.¹⁹⁸ Another, perhaps better, example would be to ask about instances where we seem to act with no prior thought, such as scratching our face.

The next topic which is worth discussing is the truth value of the instigating perceptions. Do such cognitions always have to be true and correspond to the state of affairs in the world for them to lead to an action? Concerning this matter, Ibn Sīnā, Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī,¹⁹⁹ Ṭūsī,²⁰⁰ and Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī²⁰¹ all agree that an instigating cognition does not necessarily have to be true in order to prompt an action. This point is easily understood; for instance, Bakr may imagine that the salad in the fridge will satisfy his hunger and go to the kitchen, only to discover that there is no salad in the fridge.

197 He gives a similar example of someone thirsty who is offered two identical glasses of water.

198 It is worth noting that the two sides conceptualize this matter differently. In the first argument, the two sides are contradictory (action and non-action), whereas in the second situation, the two options are equal (two equal paths).

199 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. 11, 319.

200 Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. 11, 411.

201 Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥākamāt*, vol. 11, 411–12. Quṭb al-Dīn does not mention this point specifically, but his explanation implies it.

The final point worthy of note is the source of instigating perceptions. Ibn Sīnā and all of the commentators on the text mention three sources: (a) estimation (*wahm*), (b) imagination (*khayāl*), and practical reason (*al-ʿaql al-ʿamalī*).²⁰² In the epistemological framework of the Falāsifa, animals possess both the five perceptive faculties (sight, touch, smell, etc.), each of which deals with a particular kind of object, as well as inner faculties of common sense (*ḥiss mushtarak*), estimation (*wahm*), imagination (which itself possesses two aspects), and memory (*ḥāfiẓa*). Human beings, in addition to these faculties, possess the power to reason (both theoretical and practical). Among the internal faculties, there are various functions: one group deals with sensible forms (*ṣūra*), while some deal with intentions (*maʿnā*) that are extra-sensible. For instance, common sense coordinates the data it receives from different senses about an object and unifies them into one picture. The jar is touched through the power of touch and seen by the power of sight, and all of this distinct data is unified by the common sense to perceive a single object (jar). However, not all that we perceive is sensible. Ibn Sīnā, distancing himself from Aristotle, introduces a distinct faculty called estimation (*wahm*), which deals with particular extra-sensible intentions. The classical example that Ibn Sīnā uses is the fear that a sheep feels at the time of seeing a wolf or the love that a mother feels for her child. What is most pertinent for understanding the theory of action is that estimation concerns intentions and not sensible forms, even if, in reality, its function could be directly related to data from the senses, such as in the case of seeing the wolf. Also, the estimative intentions are always particular, and do not deal with the universal and generic intentions that reason comprehends. In addition, humans possess the power of imagination that has both the power to keep the data it receives from the common sense, usually called retentive imagination (*khayāl*), as well as the power to manipulate and combine forms and intentions together, compositional imagination (*mutakhayyila*). Memory serves to keep intentions and make them available to the individual when needed.²⁰³

202 For more information on practical reason in Islamic philosophy, see. Deborah Black, "Practical Wisdom, Moral Virtue, and Theoretical Knowledge: The Problem of the Autonomy of the Practical Realm in Arabic Philosophy", in *Les philosophies morales et politiques au Moyen Âge*, ed. Bernardo Carlos Bazán et al. (Ottawa: Legas, 1995), 451–64.

203 A pressing question arises as to why the Falāsifa only mention estimation, imagination, and practical reason as the sources of instigating perception, excluding external powers such as sight or hearing. To understand their perspective, we must clarify the content or object associated with each of these faculties. Estimation deals with specific intentions, such as fear of a particular wolf. Imagination combines particular forms with other forms or even combines particular intentions with forms. For example, Bakr could imagine

5 (2) Desire (3) Firm Determination (Will) (4) Moving the Body Parts

When an individual perceives, through estimation, imagination, or reason, that something is beneficial or pleasurable, or conversely, detrimental or unpleasant, a desire (*shawq*) is aroused, compelling one to take action. If the desire is aimed towards acquiring the pleasant or beneficial object, it is called appetite (*shahwa*), whereas if it is aimed at repelling (*dafʿ*) what is unpleasant or harmful, then it is called anger (*ghaḍab*). Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī informs us that there were some thinkers who criticized the necessity of this step. They held that appetite (*shahwa*) is nothing but an instance of a firm will (*irāda jāzima*) to achieve what is pleasant, and similarly, anger (*ghaḍab*) is a firm will to repel.²⁰⁴ If a distinction is to be made between the two, it is necessary to show how one could occur without the other. Ṭūsī offers the example of a person who performs an action without desiring it – for instance, swallowing a bitter medicine. Conversely, people sometimes refrain from pursuing things they genuinely desire.²⁰⁵ Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī gives the example of someone who longs for forbidden pleasures but whose modesty keeps him from acting on that desire.²⁰⁶ If will and desire were identical, neither could arise without the other. He further clarifies that desire is distinct from instigating cognition, as sometimes one perceives an object without feeling any desire for it.

After desire comes will or determination, the state in which one has no doubt (*shakk*), indecisiveness, or reluctance (*taraddud*) to take action. Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī writes that some thinkers questioned the necessity of this step for all actions.²⁰⁷ They held that in animals the mere comprehension of usefulness

his room with a different wall color, and that imagined image incites him to take action. Finally, practical reason enables the derivation of specific applications from universal and general principles in relation to a particular situation. For instance, upon encountering a poor person, one may derive the statement “It is good to give money to this poor person” from the general statement “It is good to give to the poor.” In such cases, sensory data is incorporated in different ways into these faculties. If we see an apple in front of us that instigates us to eat it, what truly occurs is that estimation (*wahm*) utilizes memory to recall that an apple is pleasant. Thus, the external senses become integral to the function of estimation and other forms of perception. The object of action is not something already existing, leading us to perceive that eating an apple is pleasant. Although we may perceive the apple with our eyes, the perception of pleasantness or usefulness in eating the apple is achieved through the power of estimation, not solely through the senses. In other words, what compels us to take action is our understanding that something is pleasant, harmful, or beneficial, and this is not something perceptible by the senses.

204 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. II, 319.

205 Al-Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. II, 412.

206 Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥākamāt*, vol. II, 411–12.

207 Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. II, 319.

or harmfulness results in the triggering of the muscles, which results in action. Without addressing Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's point about the critics of a determinate will, Ṭūsī asserts that *irāda jāzima* is a firm conviction, coming after one was in the state of neutrality, between initiating or abandoning an action.²⁰⁸ Quṭb al-Dīn also writes that it is possible for an individual to have desire towards an action but not be firm enough in his decision to will it. Therefore, a 'firm will' is a distinct and necessary condition for any action.²⁰⁹

Before turning to the theory of action's final stage, two points must be clarified. The first is the distinction between "will" and "desire," which the commentarial tradition on *al-Ishārāt* explains in terms of the absence of hesitation. In the state of desire, one may still remain undecided about whether to act, even while wanting the object of action. By contrast, in the state of will, one is resolute and free of hesitation. This point is crucial, because neither the text nor its commentaries distinguish desire from will by appealing to the faculties of the soul. As we will see in the commentarial tradition on *Tajrīd al-ʿitiqād*, one reading of the relation between the two (the view of Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī) makes desire out to be a natural inclination connected to the animal powers of the soul and will to be a volitional inclination, related to the faculty of reason. Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī further contends that the differentiation between desire and will is founded on intensity: when desire becomes intense, it transforms into an instance of will.

The second point concerns the commentators' examples meant to distinguish desire from will, yet these very examples undercut the four-stage theory they seek to uphold. To clarify the distinction, they offer two scenarios: (1) an action performed without desire – for example, swallowing a bitter medicine – and (2) a strong desire that does not lead to action, as when someone craves a forbidden object but abstains out of modesty. The first case is problematic because it implies that an action can occur without any desire at all, suggesting that desire is not a necessary precondition for action.²¹⁰ The second example is equally challenging, especially if will is understood as an intensified form

208 Al-Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. II, 412.

209 Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥākamāt*, vol. II, 411–12.

210 The idea here is that there are instances where, at least outwardly, it seems a person acts without having a desire for the action. For instance, Bakr is told to drink an extremely bitter medicine. It is reasonable to assume that he might not desire to consume it, yet he drinks it for the sake of the benefit he perceives in the medicine. The point here is that commentators on the *Ishārāt* have pointed to such cases to demonstrate that desire and will are distinct. However, this creates a problem for their theory because it suggests that it is possible to act (e.g., consume medicine) without any desire. This implies that desire would not be a prerequisite for voluntary actions.

of desire. If this is the case, these philosophers must explain why an ascetic refrains from committing a prohibited act despite experiencing intense desire for it. In other words, the condition for the occurrence of will (intense desire) is present, and yet no action follows. The commentators on *Ishārāt* address the difference between desire and will in terms of the absence of hesitation, which might allow them to bypass this issue. However, their discussions still lack sufficient clarity and leave room for further elaboration. Dawānī himself highlights this issue in his commentary on *Hayākil al-nūr*, where he observes that no one before him has adequately articulated the subtle distinction between the two concepts.²¹¹

The final step concerns the power that permeates (*munbaththa*) the muscles. Once an individual firmly resolves to act, this power engages the muscles to bring about the intended action. A subtle point here is that this power is not reducible to bodily organs; rather, it is a governing force that sets the muscles in motion while remaining intimately linked to them. Quṭb al-Dīn Rāzī places this power in the nerves (*aṣāb*), which are connected to the muscles and, through them, to the body parts. These nerves facilitate the expansion and relaxation (*bast, ishtirkhā*) of the muscles as well as their contraction and spasm (*qabd, tashannuj*).²¹² Tūsī highlights the uniqueness of this power, noting that Bakr may move his muscles even without a conscious desire or will to do so.²¹³ A more illustrative example is a car-accident victim: although such a person still desires and is intent on moving, paralysis prevents the action.²¹⁴

6 Theory of Action in *Tajrīd al-ʿitiqād* and Its Commentaries

Tajrīd al-ʿitiqād is one of the most significant works of Islamic philosophy, extensively studied across the Ottoman Empire, Persia, and, to a lesser degree,

211 I am not claiming that there is not a way for Ibn Sīnā, and the commentators of his text, to clarify these obscurities. My main purpose is to point to a tension in the text and show how it led to the debate between Dawānī and Dashtakī.

212 Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥākamāt*, vol. II, 411.

213 Fakhr Rāzī writes that some thinkers denied this power and said that this power is nothing above and beyond the humors (*mizāj*), which are in the state of balance (*muʿtadil*). The Falāsifa rejected this view arguing that humors are of the nature of heat (*ḥarāra maskūra*) and coldness (*burūda maskūra*). If the power for moving the muscles were to be the same as the humors, it would have to express the same qualities such as heat and cold. But we observe that the power in the muscles does not have these qualities (*kayfiyyāt*), and therefore cannot be identified with the humors.

214 Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *Muḥākamāt*, vol. II, 411.

the Indian subcontinent. A recent study on its reception identifies over two hundred commentaries, glosses, and super-glosses, underscoring its pivotal role in shaping and disseminating philosophical thought throughout the Islamic world.²¹⁵ The earliest commentary on the text, *Kashf al-murād*,²¹⁶ was authored by Ṭūsī's student, Ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī (d. 1325), in 1297. Despite its value in clarifying Ṭūsī's terse statements, the work did not gain widespread popularity and it was not until the 19th and 20th centuries that it saw a resurgence of interest, particularly among Shī'ī scholars in Iran. The next major commentary is *Tasdīd al-qawā'id* by Shams al-Dīn Maḥmūd Iṣfahānī (d. 1348), commonly known as the "Old Commentary." This work inspired numerous glosses and super-glosses, the most significant of which is Sharīf Jurjānī's (d. 1413) gloss, itself a magnet for further super-glosses.²¹⁷ Despite this extensive tradition of commentary and meta-commentary, the question of human action does not emerge as a central focus. Upon examining the text of *Tasdīd al-qawā'id*,²¹⁸ Jurjānī's gloss,²¹⁹ and Khaṭīb Zāda's (d. 1496) super-gloss,²²⁰ I found that their treatment of human action remains rather thin, limited to basic explanations of the root text without delving into objections or further inquiries.

The next highly influential commentary on *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, commonly known as the "New Commentary," was composed by the renowned Timurid astronomer-philosopher 'Alā' al-Dīn Qūshjī (d. 1474).²²¹ Numerous thinkers wrote glosses on this text, but two sets stand out. The first, known as *al-Ṭabaqāt al-jalālīyya wa-l-ṣadrīyya*,²²² was penned by the celebrated Shirazi philosophers Jalāl al-Dīn Dawānī and Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī, who, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, engaged in heated debates over a wide range of philosophical questions. Shams al-Dīn Khafrī (d. 1550) also wrote two glosses on the "New Commentary," one on the section on "general metaphysics" (*al-umūr*

215 'Alī Ṣadrā'ī Khū'ī, *Kitābshināsī-yi tajrīd al-i'tiqād* (Qom: Sitāra, 2003).

216 For the discourse on voluntary actions, see, Ibn Muṭahhar al-Ḥillī, *Kashf al-murād* (Beirut: Mu'assisat al-'alamī li-l-maṭbū'āt, n.d.), 106.

217 Among them the most notable super-gloss is by Muḥyī al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm Tāj Khaṭīb Zāda al-Rūmī (d. 1496).

218 Shams al-Dīn al-Iṣfahānī, *Tasdīd al-qawā'id*, ed. Khālīd 'Adwānī, vol. 11 (Kuwait: Dār al-ḥiyā', 2012), 511–12.

219 Mīr Sharīf al-Jurjānī, *Hāshiyā 'alā l-Sharḥ al-qadīm* (Tehran, Majlis Shūrā-yi Islāmī, MS 13556), 195–96.

220 Khaṭīb Zāda, *Hāshiyā 'alā Hāshiyat al-Jurjānī 'alā al-Sharḥ al-qadīm* (Tehran, Majlis Library, MS 1745), 126.

221 Al-Qūshjī, *Sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Zārī'ī Riqdā'ī, vol. 1 (Qom: Rā'id, 2014), 615–25.

222 Despite the importance of the *Ṭabaqāt*, a critical edition of these texts is still lacking.

al-‘amma), and another one on the section on “theology” (*al-ilāhiyyāt bi-l-ma’nā l-akhaṣṣ*).²²³ In particular, the latter sub-commentary attracted much attention, inspiring numerous subsequent *ḥawāshī*. The most widely distributed and studied of these in Persia was the gloss by Āqā Jamāl Khwānsarī (d. 1713).²²⁴

The significance of *Tajrīd al-i’tiqād* and its commentators for understanding the theory of action lies in the fact that Dawānī’s discussion of the topic in his commentary on *Hayākil al-nūr* presupposes familiarity with the discourse on the topic in *Tajrīd al-i’tiqād* and its commentaries. As such, I will begin by summarizing the debate between Dawānī and Dashtakī in their respective “Old Glosses” on *Tajrīd al-i’tiqād* before turning to the text of *Hayākil al-nūr*.

In the root text of the *Tajrīd*, in a section titled, “how actions come about by us” (*Kayfiyyat ṣudūr al-aḥwāl ‘annā*),²²⁵ Ṭūsī summarizes the theory of action succinctly in two sentences. We are told that there is a need for (1) a particular conception which individuates the action, after which there will be (2) desire, (3) will, and (4) movement of the muscles. Qūshjī, in his commentary, makes four comments on Ṭūsī’s concise statement.²²⁶ First, he states that an action does not occur from a universal concept (*taṣawwur*). This is because the relationship between a universal and its instances is neutral,²²⁷ whereas an action is always a particular, concrete occurrence. Therefore, if we were to accept that an action arises solely from a universal concept, it would imply the occurrence of an effect without a specific, determinate cause – an impossibility.²²⁸ Secondly, he addresses the distinction between desire and will, arguing that the two are distinct, because one can will something, such as consuming bitter medicine, without having an appetitive desire for it.

Thirdly, building on this discussion, he argues that voluntary actions in most cases (*binā’ alā l-aḡhlab*) unfold in four stages, though not invariably. This acknowledges the possibility of actions occurring without desire, which, according to Qūshjī’s assessment, presents no problem.²²⁹ Finally, he

223 For more information regarding Khafīrī’s glosses and their reception see, ‘Alī Ṣadrā’ī Khū’ī, *Kitābshināsī-yi tajrīd al-i’tiqād*, 97–125.

224 See, *ibid.*, 125–30.

225 I am not sure if the title is part of Ṭūsī’s original text, but this is the title given to this chapter in later commentaries.

226 Qūshjī addresses other matters – such as the problem of motion from place A to place B and the mechanics of continuous action – but because these topics are not central to the topic under discussion, I have left them aside. It is also noteworthy that the structure of his treatment generally mirrors the major themes on human action found in the *Ishārāt*, except that it omits every point concerning the voluntary motions of the celestial spheres.

227 The idea is that a universal has an equal relation to all its instances, and in the absence of an additional individuating cause, it cannot necessitate a particular action.

228 Al-Qūshjī, *Sharḥ Tajrīd al-i’tiqād*, vol. 1, 616.

229 *Ibid.*, 617–18.

encapsulates Fakhr al-Dīn Rāzī's objection and Ṭūsī's response as presented in their commentaries on the *Ishārāt*.²³⁰ The crux of the objection lies in the claim that making a particular concept a prerequisite for voluntary action creates a vicious circle: the action must exist for us to conceive of it as a particular, yet it cannot exist until it is first conceived and acted upon. Qūshjī asserts that it is sufficient to imagine the particular action in order to act upon it; its actual existence in the extramental world is not a necessary condition for initiating the action.

Dawānī, in his *Old Gloss* on Qūshjī's commentary, makes several arguments: he asserts that Qūshjī's argument that action has four stages in most cases is apt for rhetorical contexts, but that such an explanation is hardly acceptable in philosophy.²³¹ Next, Dawānī turns to the distinction between desire and will. In this context, he refers to the first gloss of Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī on *Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*. On Dawānī's account, Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī holds that desire is a natural disposition that is not within one's control, whereas will is under human power. That is the reason why, according to Islamic law, human beings will not be held responsible for their desires, but only for what they will with their power.²³² Dawānī, in contrast, asserts that the distinction between desire and will could be a difference of degrees, in the sense that, when the desire becomes strong, then it turns into conclusive decision (*ijmā'*).

Furthermore, he remarks that Bahmanyār's position in *al-Taḥṣīl*²³³ aligns with this view and, directs the reader to his own commentary on *Hayākil al-nūr*, where he claims to have composed a precious (*naḥṣ*) discourse, which will be examined next.

7 Dawānī on Desire and Determination in *Hayākil al-nūr*

Dawānī's discourse on the distinction between desire and will occurs in the section on the powers of the animal soul in *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*.²³⁴ In this context, Suhrawardī speaks of two kinds of animal powers that contribute to voluntary actions: the power of desire (*al-quwwa al-shawqiyya*) and the agentive power

230 See al-Ṭūsī, *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, vol. II, 421–22.

231 See al-Dawānī, *al-Hāshiyā al-qadīma 'alā Sharḥ al-Qūshjī 'alā Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, published in al-Qūshjī, *Sharḥ Tajrīd al-i'tiqād*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Zārī'ī Riḍā'ī, vol. I (Qom: Rā'id, 2014), 616.

232 Ibid.

233 For Bahmanyār's discourse on desire in the context of human voluntary actions see, Bahmanyār, *al-Taḥṣīl*, ed. Murtaḍā Muṭaḥharī (Tehran: Tehran University Press, 1996), 541–43.

234 Al-Dawānī, *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, 144–47.

that operates the movements of the muscles and the body parts (*al-quwwa al-fāʿila al-mubāshira li-l-taḥrīk*). The first one has two branches: appetitive (*shahwāniyya*), whose nature is to attract what is compatible (*mulāʾim*), and irascible, the nature of which is to ward off what is incompatible. These are all standard divisions that we have encountered before. What is unique in this passage is the way in which Dawānī interprets the division. He argues that, since Suhrawardī does not mention determination (*ʿazm*) as a power of the animal soul, conclusive decision (*ijmāʿ*) is nothing but an intensified desire (*shawq muʾakkad*).²³⁵ In this view, the desire grows in intensity until it transforms into *ijmāʿ*.²³⁶ Therefore, there is no animal power in the human soul that corresponds to conclusive decision (*ijmāʿ*) and could serve as the basis for it. Dawānī first summarizes the views of *Ishārāt* commentaries on the difference between desire and will, then engages a view he had earlier attributed to Ṣadr al-Dīn Dashtakī in his gloss on *Tajrīd al-iʿtiqād*, and finally presents his own position.

Concerning the distinction between desire and will, the commentators on the *Ishārāt* observed that individuals may will something they do not desire – such as choosing to drink bitter medicine – or they may desire something without willing it, as when one yearns to commit a sinful act but refrains from doing so. Dawānī begins by summarizing Dashtakī's perspective: desire and will are fundamentally distinct because desire is a natural inclination (*mayl ṭabīʿī*) that arises without deliberation (*rawiyya*), whereas determination (*ʿazm*) or will is a voluntary inclination that emerges after reflective thought. This distinction, according to Dashtakī, is self-evident. Furthermore, he argues that even when desire reaches its highest intensity (*kamāl al-shawq*), determination (*ʿazm*) may still be absent. For instance, an ascetic, despite being overwhelmed by passion, refrains from willing prohibited pleasures. Although he experiences strong passions and the allure of forbidden pleasures, he does not act upon them. Thus, determination is not simply the perfection (*kamāl*) or heightened intensity of desire.²³⁷

Dawānī's response to Dashtakī's view unfolds in two parts: First, he begins by rejecting the distinction between desire and will, challenging the notion that desire is merely a natural inclination (*mayl ṭabīʿī*). The soul's desire for a voluntary action always occurs only after a belief is formed concerning the benefit of the action. Sometimes, the belief is estimative and does not involve an act of reflection, and sometimes, it is based on a thought (*fikrī*)

235 In this context, *irāda*, *ijmāʿ*, and *ʿazm* are used interchangeably to denote human volition.

236 Ibid., 145.

237 Ibid.

and reflection (*rawiyya*). In both cases, however, one cannot say that the inclination that comes about after such beliefs is natural (*ṭabīʿī*) since something that is of the nature of consciousness and understanding (*amr shuʿūrī*) and preceded by a cognition cannot be natural. He writes that there is no quarrel between us when it comes to using different terms. Dashtakī can call one inclination natural and the other voluntary insofar as the meaning is clear that the distinction between the two is simply that one involves a thought and the other involves an estimative cognition. However, this is not sufficient to prove that the two are distinct in kind.²³⁸

Secondly, regarding the example of the ascetic who refrains from willing prohibited acts even when his desire is claimed to have reached its utmost intensity, Dawānī challenges the assumption, arguing that the desire in such a case has not truly reached its highest level. He identifies two flaws in the opponent's argument. First, Dashtakī assumes that the ascetic's desire, opposing his will, has reached its peak. If this were true, it would be impossible for the ascetic to have a desire for the action as two conflicting desires cannot coexist within a single state. Second, if Dashtakī's claim were valid, desire would cease to be a necessary condition for voluntary actions. Instead, voluntary actions would rely on a will fundamentally opposed to the nature of the desire, thereby undermining the relationship between desire and voluntary action.²³⁹

The opponent might respond by stating that it is not impossible to assume that, while there might be a strong desire for acting upon the desire for prohibited act in our example, there is still a weak desire in congruence with the will that seeks to abandon the prohibited act, and in this sense, desire is still a prerequisite of voluntary actions.²⁴⁰ Dawānī offers two counterarguments. First, he contends that there is no evidence to support the existence of such a desire, and if the opponent insists that it exists, the burden of proof lies on the opponent, not on him. Second, he observes that the opponent defines desire as a natural inclination, a characterization that is conspicuously absent in the weaker sense of desire. This suggests that, in the case of the ascetic who refrains from committing prohibited acts, the weaker desire opposing the intense desire for prohibited pleasures cannot be considered a natural inclination. Here, the natural inclination would align with the pursuit of prohibited pleasures, rendering the weaker desire incompatible with the very notion of natural inclination.²⁴¹

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid., 146.

Dawānī's own view is that human volition does not exist as something distinct from desire (*tashawwuq*). Instead, he argues that the perquisite in any voluntary action is a general inclination, provided that it both overcomes (*ghalaba*) the individual and becomes deeply rooted (*rusūkh*) within him or her. Imagine encountering a desirable object.²⁴² This initial perception triggers an inclination (henceforth inclination 1) toward the object. At this point, two outcomes are possible: (a) if nothing within us opposes the act, we proceed with the action; or (b) alternatively, we engage in reflection (*rawiyya*), realizing that our well-being (*maṣlaḥa*) would be better served by refraining from the action. Through this reflective process, a new inclination arises, one contrary to inclination 1 (henceforth inclination 2).²⁴³

Now, with two opposing inclinations in play, there are two possible outcomes: (i) Inclination 1 may dominate, leading the individual to act in accordance with it. For example, consider a person, Bakr, with an insatiable appetite whose avarice (*hirs*) overwhelms his judgment. Such a person consumes food he knows is harmful, acting on inclination 1 even though inclination 2, born of reflection, remains present but ineffective. (ii) Alternatively, inclination 2, the inclination resulting from reflection, may prevail. An example of this scenario is someone adhering to a strict diet (*muḥtāmī*), who resists eating a desired food despite a strong craving for it. Here, inclination 2 overrides inclination 1, allowing the individual to act in accordance with reasoned restraint, even while the desire for the forbidden food persists.²⁴⁴

Dawānī concludes his discourse with three general observations. First, he asserts that the relationship between the two types of inclinations mirrors the relationship among rational, estimative, and imaginal judgments. In fact, these inclinations rely on (*mustanad*) such judgments for their formation.²⁴⁵ Secondly, he observes that, in every case, whichever inclination dominates, the power that moves the body parts acts in obedience to it. Finally, he argues that if one inclination is termed "determination" (*ʿazm*) and the other "desire" (*shawq*), neither would qualify as a requisite for voluntary actions, as it is possible to act without either. What is shared by the two inclinations is a generic inclination and this generic inclination is a perquisite of action when accompanied with the condition of overcoming the person (*bi-sharṭ al-ghalaba ʿalā l-nafs*).

²⁴² Ibid., 147.

²⁴³ Ibid., 146.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

8 Mir Zāhid: Restating Will as a Necessary and Distinct Step for All Voluntary Actions

In contrast to Suhrawardī and Dawānī, Mir Zāhid treats volition as a distinct principle indispensable to every human voluntary act. Moreover, he distinguishes desire from determination by the particular objects toward which each is directed. To fully grasp his perspective, it is essential to situate it within the broader framework of Mir Zāhid's engagement with Dawānī's theory of voluntary action as outlined in *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*. Mir Zāhid's analysis seeks to probe the limitations of Suhrawardī and Dawānī's theories, identifying scenarios their frameworks fail to address, and using these gaps as a foundation to articulate his own position. A case in point is the following passage:

[Mir Zāhid] Concerning his statement “know that voluntary actions have principles ...,” the principles of voluntary movements are either three or four. As for the principles of voluntary rest (*sukūn*), they are either two or three.²⁴⁶

In this passage, Dawānī outlines two competing theories of voluntary action discussed in the root text: Suhrawardī's framework, later expanded by Dawānī himself, and the standard four-stage model introduced by Ibn Sīnā and further refined by Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī and Quṭb al-Dīn al-Rāzī. Mir Zāhid, however, brings a fresh perspective to the debate by introducing a concept previously overlooked: voluntary rest (*sukūn*). He investigates whether voluntary rest can be classified as a type of voluntary action and, if so, to what extent. From this brief discussion, it appears that Mir Zāhid considers voluntary rest to be a form of voluntary action, even though it involves no physical movement, thereby excluding the final stage of voluntary human action – bodily movement – from the theory. One might object that this dual stance on the principles of voluntary action risks conflicting with the philosophical aim of establishing universal rules for phenomena. Such an objection parallels Dawānī's critique of Qūshjī, who said that while human voluntary action generally involves four stages, it does not always follow this framework. Dawānī found it problematic

²⁴⁶ All references to Mir Zāhid's *ḥāshiya* are from *Shawākil al-ḥūr fī Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr wa-ma'āhu minhuwāt al-shāriḥ al-Jalāl al-Dawānī* [wa] al-Ḥawāshī al-zāhidīyya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil li-l-'allāma Mir Zāhid al-Harawī, ed. Muḥammad Rajab 'Alī Ḥasan (Amman: Dār al-fath, 2023). Henceforth, I refer to it as *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*. I consulted two additional manuscripts to establish the text: *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ al-Hayākil* (MS 1422) held at the King Saud Library, and *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ al-Hayākil* (MS 2355) housed at the Khudabakhsh Library in Patna. See, Mir Zāhid, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 237.

for a philosophical explanation to exclude certain cases without a clear justification. However, Mīr Zāhid's position is distinct from Qūshjī's. Whereas Qūshjī argued that the same voluntary action might sometimes occur in three stages and at other times in four, Mīr Zāhid aims to distinguish between two categories of voluntary action: one that entails physical motion and another that does not. By making this distinction, Mīr Zāhid addresses a conceptual gap in the existing theories while formulating his own view on voluntary action.

Next, Mīr Zāhid examines the meaning and scope of each step involved in human action. He begins with instigating awareness, analyzing its role and importance in voluntary actions:

[Dawānī] Know that voluntary actions have principles, which are arranged in order. Among them the most remote from physical movement is the cognitive faculty, which consists of imagination, and estimation (*wahm*) among animals, and practical reason – by mediation of these two – among human beings. This is because voluntary movements depend first on conceiving the action and considering the benefit that it brings about or the harm that it fends off. This is the case because it is impossible for someone to intend to achieve something that one is not aware of. Moreover, a voluntary action is necessarily impossible without making a judgment – or something that has a similar property to a judgement (*mā huwa fī ḥukm al-taṣdīq*) – about its benefit. Subsequently, desire comes next since it arises from the perception that something is compatible or incompatible. And it [i.e. the faculty of desire] is the chief among the faculties of motion just as estimation (*wahm*) is the chief among the faculties of cognition.²⁴⁷

[Mīr Zāhid] Concerning his statement “or something that has a similar property to a judgement (*mā huwa fī ḥukm al-taṣdīq*),” this means imaginal or estimative judgments, and the truth is that what is necessary in a voluntary action is considering its goal (*mulāḥaẓat ghāyatihi*), whether it is a simple consideration as in actions where there is an instinctive inclination (*mayl gharizī*) towards their end, or a consideration which is accompanied by an assent (*taṣdīq*), or what is equivalent to it, as in other cases. Then, the goal (*ghāya*) may be the end of the motion as in the case of reaching a [certain] destination, or it may be something else, like meeting the beloved (*liqā' ḥabīb*), or it could be the very motion itself. And in this latter case, there will be a consideration of the action

247 Al-Dawānī, *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr [Thalāth rasā'il]*, ed. Ahmad Tūysarkānī (Mashhad: Majma' al-buḥūth al-islāmiyya, 1990), 144.

and not a consideration of something besides the action. Ibn Sīnā said in *al-Ta'liqāt*: “the goal can either be the action itself or a consequent benefit [from the action], for instance, walking can sometimes be the goal, while at other times, training (*irtiyād*) [the body] may be the goal.”²⁴⁸

In this paragraph, Dawānī establishes instigating perception as the necessary first step in all voluntary actions. As previously noted, Dawānī maintains that every human action begins with an awareness of the action itself and the benefit it brings or the harm it avoids. This is because it is impossible for a person to pursue something of which one is entirely unaware. Furthermore, Dawānī argues that beyond simply considering the action and its potential benefit, one must also form a judgment affirming its benefit or its ability to prevent harm. This judgment can take various forms. Sometimes it is estimative or imaginal, addressing particular intentions or forms, and other times it involves a rational universal principle – for example, ‘It is always good to help the needy’ – which is applied to a specific case through the mediation of imagination or estimation. Dawānī introduces these distinctions in response to Dashtakī’s critique. Dashtakī had attempted to differentiate between desire and will by asserting that desire is a natural, non-voluntary inclination, whereas will is a voluntary inclination. Dawānī counters this argument by pointing out that any inclination preceded by a conscious state cannot be considered natural in the ordinary sense of the term. Instead, he argues that what Dashtakī refers to as a ‘natural inclination’ is, in reality, an inclination originating from an estimative or imaginal judgment.

Mīr Zāhid finds Dawānī’s explanation lacking. He challenges the assumption that all voluntary actions require not only a conception of the goal but also a judgment about the action’s benefit, arguing that this notion is untenable – particularly in cases driven by instinctive inclinations. For instance, take the example of a thirsty Bakr who wants to drink water to quench his thirst. According to Mīr Zāhid, it is enough for the person to simply consider (*mulāḥaẓa*) the goal – quenching thirst – to form the desire to drink water. In other words, Mīr Zāhid argues that it is epistemically burdensome to presume that a judgment about the benefit of an action must precede every single voluntary act. Ordinary experience, he contends, demonstrates the validity of his counterargument, as many actions seem to arise directly from the perception of a goal without the need for a deliberate judgment about its benefits.

²⁴⁸ Mīr Zāhid, *Hāshiya ‘alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 238. Cf. Ibn Sīnā, *al-Ta'liqāt*, ed. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān Badawī (Qom: Maktab al-i‘lām al-islāmī, 1984), 17.

Instead, Mīr Zāhid argues that desire can stem from either a simple act of imagining (*al-takhayyul al-mahḍ*) the goal of an action or from imagining accompanied by an assent affirming the action's benefit or suitability. On this basis, he concludes that the only prerequisite for voluntary action is the consideration (*mulāḥaẓa*) of the action's goal, which may be either simple or compound. A simple consideration involves only imagination, while a compound consideration includes an assent affirming the action's appropriateness. By 'simple act of imagination,' Mīr Zāhid refers to the function of the compositional imagination (*mutakhayyila*), which combines forms from perception or memory to construct a coherent image of the action's goal.

An additional point merits closer examination: the implications of negating the requirement for assent in voluntary actions. As discussed in the analysis of voluntary actions in the commentarial tradition on the *Ishārāt*, there is a direct connection between pleasure, the perception of a goal's benefit, and the emergence of desire. Islamic philosophers²⁴⁹ have argued that pleasure arises from perceiving compatibility – specifically, the recognition that a given entity brings a power of the soul from potentiality to actuality. Dawānī's theory elucidates this relationship by emphasizing that assent to the benefit of an action, or the harm it prevents, ensures an awareness of this connection. However, it is unclear whether merely imagining the goal of an action is sufficient to establish such a connection. Put differently, in the absence of explicit awareness of the compatibility between the action and its intended goal, it is not clear how desire for the goal could arise. One possible solution might be to propose that an implicit assent occurs in such cases. However, this interpretation goes against the apparent wording of Mīr Zāhid's text, which suggests that he does not consider any form of assent, whether implicit or explicit, to be necessary in every instance of voluntary action.

Next, Mīr Zāhid examines another dimension of instigating perceptions: their particular nature. By now, it should be clear that for an action to occur, it must be a specific, individuated action. A universal thought, in its abstract universality, cannot directly serve as the basis for a particular action, as it remains neutral with respect to all its potential instances. For a universal thought to result in action, something additional is required – such as the perception of a specific individual or a particular memory – to individuate that universal idea and render it the target of a particular action. In this passage, Mīr Zāhid addresses an objection to this position: the possibility that an action might be

249 More specifically, those who sided with Ibn Sīnā.

initiated directly from a universal thought without reliance on imagination or estimation:

[Mir Zāhid] Objection: Sometimes an action is arranged based on perceiving a certain benefit or harm, and yet the soul perceives them without the mediation of imagination or estimation for they correspond to numerous benefits and harms. Response: this is an unspecified individual (*fard muntashir*) that the soul perceives through the instrument [of knowledge]. This is because it corresponds to the many by way of substitution (*‘alā wajh al-badaliyya*), whereas the criteria for being universal is that something corresponds to the many collectively (*‘alā wajh al-ijtimā‘*), as we described in *Ḥāshiya Sharḥ al-Mawāqif* and *Ḥāshiyat al-Tahdhīb*.²⁵⁰

Then, Mir Zāhid anticipates his opponent raising the following concern. It is reasonable to imagine a scenario where the altruistic Bakr intends to donate blood to save lives. With this noble aim in mind, he might leave his apartment without deciding on a specific hospital. Thus, it appears plausible that he takes the initial action of leaving his apartment to pursue the praiseworthy goal of saving lives, even though this action corresponds to multiple potential outcomes, as there are numerous hospitals he could choose from. In response, Mir Zāhid argues that such a scenario does not reflect a universal thought but rather an unspecified particular thought. An unspecified particular, he explains, is a singular entity that holds the potential to be substituted by other instances within the same category. This is distinct from a universal, which applies collectively to all instances of a given class at once. Therefore, Mir Zāhid contends that Bakr’s intention to help patients through blood donation is an unspecified particular, as it pertains to one hospital at a time rather than all hospitals simultaneously. As such, the act of aiding patients is necessarily individualized, highlighting the specific nature of Bakr’s intention in this case.

Following the discussion on the nature of the instigating perception, it is fitting to turn to Mir Zāhid’s take on desire. In this context, Mir Zāhid addresses the question of where the power of desire resides. In *Shawākil al-hūr*, Dawānī argues that Suhrawardī’s claims in *Hayākil al-nūr* and other works conflict with Ibn Sīnā’s position in the *Qānūn*. In this book, Ibn Sīnā categorizes human faculties into three groups. The animal faculty is the source of life, preparation for sensory reception (*i’dād qabūl al-ḥiss*), and motion, with its locus in the heart. The natural faculty governs nutrition, growth, and reproduction, and is

²⁵⁰ Mir Zāhid, *Ḥāshiya ‘alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 237.

located in the liver. The psychological faculty, which encompasses perception and voluntary action, is situated in the brain. Desire, being a faculty associated with voluntary action, is thus located in the brain according to Ibn Sīnā's framework. Suhrawardī, however, diverges from this view and assigns the locus of desire to the heart:

[Mīr Zāhid] His statement "This is contrary to what is in *al-Qānūn*" because in *al-Muṭāraḥāt* he places the source of desire in the heart, whereas in *al-Qānūn*, it is [located in] the brain since he considers brain to be a principle for voluntary actions, including desire.²⁵¹ Perhaps, the view of *al-Muṭāraḥāt* is closer to the truth, since the brain is cold while the source of appetite (*shahwa*) and irascible power (*ghaḍab*) should be hot as sound intuition (*ḥads ṣā'ib*) indicates. And if one reconciles the two by saying that what is meant by a principle in *al-Qānūn* is a source in general (*muṭlaq al-mabda'*) – even if it is a remote source – and [what is meant] by sense perception and voluntary actions is their sum as a whole, and [what is meant] by principle is the shared principle between the two, then the faculty of desire necessarily will not be among the three powers. And this is an inadequate explanation, so reflect.²⁵²

Mīr Zāhid begins by identifying *Muṭāraḥāt* as the work in which Suhrawardī articulates his view on the locus of desire. Furthermore, he sides with Suhrawardī on this issue, arguing that the brain, due to its cold nature, is less suited to be the source of appetite and irascible power, which are more appropriately linked with heat. In this passage, Mīr Zāhid also rejects any possibility of reconciling the views of Suhrawardī and Ibn Sīnā. One might propose that the two positions are compatible by interpreting Ibn Sīnā's reference to a 'principle' in the *Qānūn* as a general source, which could include a remote source, and by understanding 'voluntary action' and 'sense perception' as referring to a shared principle between them. However, Suhrawardī explicitly assigns the natural power to the liver, the power of desire to the heart, and cognitive powers to the brain in *Muṭāraḥāt*. Thus, if one were to argue that Ibn Sīnā's placement of the source of cognition and voluntary action in the brain refers to a shared principle, this would leave out desire as a distinct power of the soul. Consequently, desire can no longer be regarded as an independent principle

²⁵¹ Al-Suhrawardī, *al-Muṭāraḥāt* in *al-Ḥikma al-ishrāqiyya*, ed. Muḥammad Malikī, vol. vi (Tehran: Adiyān wa madhāhib, 2019), 401 [henceforth cited as *Muṭāraḥāt*].

²⁵² Mīr Zāhid, *Ḥaṣhiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 236.

for voluntary actions. After establishing the locus of the faculty of desire, Mīr Zāhid proceeds to examine the nature of this power within the soul:

[Dawānī] Beware that it is a point that needs further consideration as to whether the faculty of desire is singular – sometimes called irascible (*ghaḍabiyya*) from an aspect and appetitive (*shahwāniyya*) from another aspect – or whether it is manifold. And the phrasing of the author in this treatise and others does not explicitly favor one over the other, even if it appears to point to singularity. And the same is true of [Ibn Sīnā's] phrasing in *al-Najāt*.²⁵³

[Mīr Zāhid] Concerning his statement “beware that it is a point that needs further consideration as to whether the faculty of desire is singular ... or ... manifold,” reflection leads one to uphold their plurality, since desire and anger (*ghaḍab*) are two opposing inclinations and as such, they must possess distinct sources, considering their origins. And the appearance of Suhrawardī's expression in *al-Muṭārāḥāt* points to this when he says, ‘the faculty of desire (*shawqiyya*) is divided into appetitive (*shahwāniyya*) and irascible (*ghaḍabiyya*)’;²⁵⁴ but also the wording of this treatise. Therefore, what appears from the twofold division is that they are distinct.²⁵⁵

In *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, Dawānī identifies two functions of the faculty of desire: (a) repelling harm faced by the individual and (b) attracting what is compatible with one's nature. He questions whether these two functions represent distinct sub-powers within the faculty of desire or simply different aspects of the same power. While he acknowledges that Suhrawardī's language does not explicitly support either interpretation, Dawānī suggests that it subtly leans toward the idea of a single unified power. He also points out a similar ambiguity in Ibn Sīnā's phrasing in *Najāt*. Mīr Zāhid, however, challenges Dawānī's interpretation, arguing that Suhrawardī draws a sharp distinction and recognizes a plurality within these dimensions. He refers specifically to Suhrawardī's statement in *al-Muṭārāḥāt*, where the faculty of desire is described as “divided” (*tanqasimu*) into the appetitive and the irascible, with the notion of division implying distinct powers. Philosophically, Mīr Zāhid further contends that it is problematic to suggest that the inclinations of appetite and anger could arise

253 Al-Dawānī, *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, 144; Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, ed. Majid Fakhry (Beirut: Dār al-āfāq al-jadīda, 1985), 197.

254 Al-Suhrawardī, *Muṭārāḥāt*, 400.

255 Mīr Zāhid, *Ḥaṣhiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 236.

from a single unified source, as this would lead to the implausible conclusion of opposing properties originating from the same principle.²⁵⁶

Whether we side with Dawānī or Mīr Zāhid, the most relevant aspect of the debate for our current investigation lies in how Mīr Zāhid engages with Suhrawardī's writings to challenge Dawānī's interpretation. This is particularly significant because, although Mīr Zāhid disagrees with Suhrawardī on the issue of human volition, he demonstrates a close reading of Suhrawardī's texts, ultimately rejecting Dawānī's interpretation – despite the latter's alignment with Suhrawardī on volition. A similar case can be observed in Mīr Zāhid's preference for Suhrawardī's position on the locus of the faculty of desire over Ibn Sīnā's view in *Qānūn*. When considered alongside Mīr Zāhid's stance on the distinction between determination and desire, it becomes evident that the notion that the Ishrāqī tradition exhibited a wholesale adherence to Suhrawardī's philosophy is simplistic and insufficient for understanding the complexity of the reception of his philosophy in India. In contrast, Mīr Zāhid's approach reveals a multifaceted engagement: he rejects certain aspects, accepts others, and reinterprets a third to formulate his own perspective. This complexity underscores the need for a nuanced, case-by-case analysis of Suhrawardī's reception in India before making broader claims about his influence in Mughal intellectual thought. With this perspective in mind, Mīr Zāhid's analysis of the relationship between desire and determination merits a particular attention, a discourse which he opens with a synoptic overview of debates among his predecessors:

[Mīr Zāhid] Concerning his statement “they distinguished between desire and determination,” in sum, eating and abstaining from it are

256 Mīr Zāhid raises a similar concern concerning the power of movement that executes the action. Some philosophers said that it has two distinct branches: will (*irāda*) and aversion (*karāha*) and there was a debate whether two are distinct powers or not: [8] [Dawānī]: The fact that cognitions occur without desire indicates that desire is distinct from cognition. Between [desire] and the power of movement that executes the action (*al-muḥarrika al-fā'ila*), some established another power called will (*irāda*) or aversion (*karāha*), which is the source of conclusive decision (*ijmā'*), and determination (*ʿazm*). And that is for someone to be in the state of unwavering resoluteness after one was hesitant (*taraddud*). [8.a] [Mīr Zāhid]: The same point is [expressed] in *Sharḥ al-Ishārāt*, and other texts. This warrants further investigation, as willing an action is distinct from having an aversion (*karāha*) to its opposite, even though the former might imply the latter in repelling the harm, as inner experience attests. How could this be when what is necessary for an action is determination, which is [found] in the first case and not the second? Except it can be said that referring to will as distaste hints at the fact that volition is of two kinds, a will to attract the beneficial, and a will to repel the harmful.

both voluntary actions, and will and aversion²⁵⁷ (*karāha*) can occur in relation to them without the presence of desire. Some objected that this would imply that desire is not a principle of voluntary actions. The Commentator of *Tajrīd* (Qūshjī) responded by saying that considering four principles is based on the majority of cases (*bināʿan ʿalā l-aghlab*). And you are aware that the property of occurring in most cases conflicts with being a principle. A better response would be to say that the one who distinguishes the two seems to hold that desire is an instinctive inclination, whereas determination is a non-instinctive inclination. In reality, either of the two is a principle not in its specific form. However, in its specific form, it is a principle [only] according to appearance. And what has been said concerning their difference that determination cannot belong to two opposites, yet an individual can desire two opposite things is incorrect, for it is possible for volition to be a dominant desire without belonging to two opposites.²⁵⁸

Determination sometimes occurs without the outward presence of any kind of desire. This leads to the undesired result that desire will not be among the necessary prerequisites for voluntary actions. To solve this issue, Qūshjī stated that human voluntary actions have four principles in most cases. But according to Mīr Zāhid, this conflicts with something being a principle, since a necessary cause for a phenomenon cannot be an occasional pre-requisite for it. He then introduces Dashtakī's solution as a more viable explanation: desire is an instinctive inclination whereas determination is not. However, this, too, is not a satisfactory explanation as Dawānī showed that neither of them in their specific form can be a principle for action. This means that if one understands desire to be a natural inclination and determination to be a voluntary inclination, it is possible for an action to occur in the absence of both. Finally, Dashtakī's critique of Dawānī's perspective is mentioned in passing: determination cannot constitute an intense desire since one can desire opposing sides of an action to various degrees, yet one cannot be determined to act and abandon the act at the same time. Concerning this issue, Mīr Zāhid points to Dawānī's solution according to which human will is an intense desire with the condition that it dominates the human soul. If one accepts determination as an intense desire dominating the soul, similar in role to volition in Dashtakī's objection, it cannot be applied to two opposite desires because the condition of being "dominant" precludes both of them from being present at

²⁵⁷ In this context, aversion (*karāha*) simply means willing not to initiate an action.

²⁵⁸ Mīr Zāhid, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 239.

the same time in the soul. In other words, it is not possible for two opposite desires to dominate the soul simultaneously. Next, Mīr Zāhid turns to his own theory of voluntary action. Understanding his perspective, in my view, can be best achieved in three stages: clarifying Mīr Zāhid's understanding of the relationship between Dawānī's and Suhrawardī's theory, an exposition of how his understanding of determination (*ʿazm*) differs from that of Dawānī, and finally details of how Mīr Zāhid touches on unexplored facets of Dawānī's theory. As I mentioned earlier, in the root text of *Hayākil al-nūr*, there is no mention of a separate power of the soul pertaining to will. Dawānī interprets this exclusion of the power of this desire to mean that according to Suhrawardī, volition is nothing above and beyond an intense desire. To further substantiate Dawānī's claim, Mīr Zāhid points to the exact place in *al-Muṭāraḥāt* where Suhrawardī introduces his view:

Concerning his statement "the author (Suhrawardī) contested this view ...," in *Muṭāraḥāt* he said: "they said that at times desire is weak, then it grows stronger until it turns into volition. As a result, some established a power of conclusive decision (*quwwa ʾijmāʿiyya*), distinct from the power of desire. And it was argued that sometimes desire can exist without [resulting in] will. However, someone might object [to the view] that conclusive decision (*ijmāʿ*) is a distinct power from the power of desire, instead claiming that conclusive decision (*ijmāʿ*) is the perfection of desire (*kamāl al-shawq*)."²⁵⁹

Although this passage from the *Muṭāraḥāt* leaves room for speculation as to whether Suhrawardī is presenting his own view or someone else's, Mīr Zāhid interprets it as clear evidence that Suhrawardī indeed upheld this position. Building on this, Mīr Zāhid introduces his own theory in response to Dawānī's formulation of human volition. As previously noted, Dawānī defines will as an intense desire that dominates the soul. For his theory to hold, Dawānī must account for situations in which an individual experiences intense desire without acting on it – for instance, when an ascetic refrains from pursuing forbidden pleasures despite the persistence of intense desire. To address this, Dawānī argues that in such cases, the desire has not reached a state of perfection or intensity because, for him, perfection of desire entails the complete domination of the soul. The very fact that no action occurs, according to Dawānī, indicates that the desire has not fully matured. To challenge this

²⁵⁹ Mīr Zāhid, *Ḥāshiya ʿalā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 239; Suhrawardī, *Muṭāraḥāt*, 400.

understanding, Mīr Zāhid must explain how his theory accounts for these scenarios. He introduces his perspective in the following passage:

An investigation (*tahqīq*) of this point [reveals] that sometimes the perfection of desire—whether instinctive or non-instinctive – for an object occurs and yet determination to [attain] it does not occur, and thus no movement towards [the object] comes about. [Conversely,] there are times when a weak desire towards [the object] exists, but volition to [obtain the object] arises, resulting in a movement. Therefore, it [namely, will] is not from the category of desire. Its detailed exposition (*tafṣīl*): After considering the goal of an action, a desire and inclination toward that goal arise. It is clear that the motive power (*quwwa muḥarrika*) does not operate merely on that basis. Rather, it is necessary for another entity (*ma'nā*) to be present, one that pertains to the action itself. That [entity] is conclusive decision (*ijmā'*), determination (*'azm*), and will (*irāda*). For instance, after imagining water, a desire arises in a thirsty person to enjoy it. Then, a will arises for that specific action, which is drinking. The words of the Shaykh (Ibn Sīnā) [also] points to this when he says in *al-Ta'līqāt*, “when we make resolution to act, that volition comes into being in us only after we conceive the compatible object (*al-mulā'im*). Then we are affected by it, meaning, we find pleasure in it. Subsequently, an [instance of] will or a desire arise in us from it [i.e. that perception], followed by another [instance of] will (*irāda*) to attain it.”²⁶⁰ In sum, when we turn to our inner self, we find a state associated with action which is different from the previous state, which belongs to the goal.²⁶¹

Mīr Zāhid presents two similar scenarios to those mentioned by Dawānī to argue that volition is distinct from intense desire. First, he points out instances where one experiences desire at its peak, yet no action follows. Conversely, there are cases where one acts despite weak or even no palpable desire. These observations suggest that desire and will are fundamentally distinct. However, this argument alone does not suffice to refute Dawānī's theory. According to Dawānī, the “perfection of desire” refers to a desire so dominant that it controls the soul, thereby explaining both scenarios. Thus, Mīr Zāhid's examples by themselves fail to dismantle Dawānī's theory.

To strengthen his critique and articulate his own position, Mīr Zāhid introduces a distinction between the objects of desire and will. Desire, he explains,

²⁶⁰ Ibn Sīnā, *Ta'līqāt*, 22.

²⁶¹ Mīr Zāhid, *Ḥaṣhiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 239–40.

is directed toward the *goal* of an action, whereas volition concerns the *action itself*. Consider his example of a thirsty person: when Bakr pictures water, he realizes that drinking will quench his thirst. At that moment, desire arises because he sees that the act (drinking) secures the goal (relief from thirst). Yet this desire attaches to the goal, not to the act. Will, by contrast, attaches to the act of drinking. Put differently, desire aims at quenching thirst, while will commits the agent to the means – raising the cup and drinking. Accepting this distinction reveals that no matter how intense desire may be, it remains categorically distinct from determination. Therefore, the idea that determination is simply the perfection of desire becomes untenable.

Finally, Mīr Zāhid expands on Dawānī's theory by including scenarios that Dawānī overlooked. Dawānī often uses examples in which the first instigating awareness is based on an imaginal or estimative cognition, which is then followed by a second reflection concerning the harm of the action. A desire arises on account of each instigating cognition and the more dominant one will be the basis for the action. This distinction though helpful does not capture a variety of cases that one faces in ordinary experience. For instance, Bakr might first see a piece of milk chocolate and desire to consume it until he sees some dark chocolate that he prefers to milk chocolate. The action then occurs in accordance with the second inclination. However, this case is different from Dawānī's example because the second inclination is not based on rational analysis or thought, but instead relies on an imaginative or estimative perception. To account for all different scenarios, Mīr Zāhid thus writes:

Concerning his statement "when we conceive of a pleasant object," similarly, when we perceive an object in which there is benefit (*maṣlaḥa*), we find within ourselves an inclination toward it, an inclination that is not opposed by another inclination arising from a different benefit (*maṣlaḥa*), which would lead one to abstain from it. Alternatively, another inclination opposes it, whether it overcomes the individual or not. Therefore, here there are six possibilities.²⁶²

We are told in this passage that six possibilities are conceivable. First, it is possible that there is only an instinctive inclination, such as in the case of eating a piece of chocolate. Some other times, there is only a non-instinctive rational inclination, for instance, a desire arising from the awareness that exercise

262 Mīr Zāhid, *Ḥāshiya 'alā Sharḥ al-Hayākil*, 244.

will improve one's health. Next, it is also conceivable that one would have an instinctive and then a non-instinctive desire, or vice versa it is possible that one first has a non-instinctive desire then followed by an instinctive desire. An example of this is in the case of someone who desires to exercise but is swayed away from it by seeing some food on the table, which is bad for his health. Finally, it is also possible that both inclinations are either instinctive or non-instinctive, which brings the total number of possibilities to six.

To conclude this section, I would like to recapitulate Mīr Zāhid's theory of action. Mīr Zāhid, like Ibn Sīnā and unlike Suhrawardī and Dawānī, holds that there are four principles for a human voluntary action: (a) instigating perception, (b) desire, (c) will, and finally (d) the power that operates the movement of the body parts. The content of the instigating perception is merely a consideration of the goal of action, but sometimes this consideration is accompanied by an assent concerning the benefit of the action or the harm that it avoids. Subsequently, a desire that targets the goal of the action arises from this cognition. Depending on the source of the instigating perception, the desire that is a prerequisite of an action can take different forms, either instinctive or non-instinctive. Desire is a principle for action, with the condition that it dominates the soul and that there is no desire of equal or greater strength opposing it. This will then lead to volition which belongs to the action itself. Finally, the motive power moves the body parts, and the action takes place.

9 Concluding Remarks

To conclude, this study has explored the influence of Suhrawardī's thought in India, focusing on the concept of human voluntary actions as analyzed in Mīr Zāhid Harawī's commentary (*ḥāshiya*) on Dawānī's *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*. To contextualize Mīr Zāhid's engagement with Suhrawardī, the paper began by outlining the key pathways through which Suhrawardī's ideas entered Mughal India. Two significant intellectual currents from Iran facilitated this transmission. The first wave came through the works of Dawānī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, and their students, who played a central role in disseminating Suhrawardī's ideas. The second wave emerged through the writings of Mīr Dāmād and, more prominently, Mullā Ṣadrā, whose *Sharḥ Hidāyat al-ḥikma* became a foundational text in the *Dars-i Niẓāmī* curriculum during the 18th century.

Next, I examined the question of human voluntary actions. Ibn Sīnā, in *Ishārāt*, succinctly outlines that human voluntary actions occur in four stages:

instigating awareness, desire, will, and the movement of body parts. For example, Bakr realizes that drinking water will quench his thirst. This realization triggers a desire to drink, followed by a determination to act, culminating in the physical act of drinking. To distinguish these stages, interpreters of *Ishārāt*, such as Rāzī and Ṭūsī, explored how one phenomenon can exist without necessarily leading to another. For instance, to differentiate desire from volition, they argued that a person may desire something without acting on it, or conversely, may act without desiring the action – such as when someone consumes a bitter medicine. My analysis revealed that this interpretation undermines the theory because it leads to the conclusion that desire is not a prerequisite for voluntary actions. To address this issue, Qūshjī proposed that the theory applies to most cases but not all, a response that failed to satisfy thinkers like Dawānī.

In *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, Dawānī addresses this issue by arguing that, since Suhrawardī's works do not include a distinct faculty of volition for the soul, 'will' is nothing more than an extension of desire. To further elaborate, Dawānī developed a multi-layered account of volition in response to Dashtakī's criticism. Dashtakī had proposed that desire and volition represent two distinct faculties of the soul, claiming that desire reflects a natural inclination, whereas volition signifies a voluntary inclination. Dawānī rejected this idea, arguing that desire cannot be considered a natural inclination because it is always preceded by an instigating awareness. He explained that desire may arise either from an estimative awareness or from a rational reflection, with the resulting action ultimately following the stronger of the two desires. Thus, Dawānī concluded that volition is an intensified form of desire that dominates the soul. In response to this explanation, Mīr Zāhid introduced a distinction between the objects of desire and volition. He argued that desire is directed toward the goal of an action, whereas volition is directed toward the action itself.

This brings us to the question of Suhrawardī's legacy in South Asia. Specifically, can Mīr Zāhid be considered an Ishrāqī thinker based on his views on voluntary action? At first glance, the answer might seem to be "no," as Mīr Zāhid disagrees with Suhrawardī and Dawānī's interpretations of voluntary actions and instead aligns with Ibn Sīnā's position. While this response appears reasonable, the issue becomes more complex upon closer examination.

First, Mīr Zāhid's critique is shaped in response to Dawānī's elaboration of Suhrawardī's perspective, particularly in the *Muṭārahāt*. In this sense, his engagement demonstrates a clear influence from Suhrawardī's arguments. Second, and more significantly, certain elements of Mīr Zāhid's theory align explicitly with Suhrawardī. For example, on the question of the faculty of desire, Mīr Zāhid agrees with Suhrawardī that desire, due to its warm nature, is more

appropriately associated with the heart rather than the brain. Finally, there are instances where Mīr Zāhid criticizes Dawānī's interpretation of Suhrawardī and develops his own alternative interpretation, which he incorporates into his broader theory of action – for instance, his distinction between will and disgust.

This complex picture shows that Mīr Zāhid was not only a meticulous reader of Suhrawardī but also drew on Suhrawardī's ideas in shaping his own theory of voluntary action. This raises an important question: what does this analysis imply for our understanding of Ishrāqī thought in South Asia? First, it means that it is insufficient to conceptualize Ishrāqī thought as a framework requiring philosophers to fully or even largely adhere to Suhrawardī's perspective. Philosophical reflection in the Islamic intellectual tradition is grounded in rational argumentation and critical analysis. It would be highly unusual, if not implausible, for an entire intellectual tradition or line of thinkers to engage with a philosopher – no matter how influential – without any disagreement.

Second, I argue that conceptualizing Ishrāqī thought requires focusing on how Islamic philosophers responded to the core arguments in Suhrawardī's works. As I demonstrated earlier, this engagement occurs in multiple layers: some philosophers reference Suhrawardī's ideas, others interpret them, and still others critically engage with them to develop new perspectives. Just as it would be mistaken to evaluate the post-Avicennan turn in Islamic philosophy by focusing solely on those who adhered fully to Ibn Sīnā's worldview, it would also be limiting to define Suhrawardī's legacy in such narrow terms. Instead, studying Ishrāqī thought requires close case studies to explore the varied and complex ways in which Islamic philosophers engaged with Suhrawardī's arguments.

In this paper, I also provided a preliminary list of major issues in which Suhrawardī's views were discussed in South Asia. While much of Suhrawardī's legacy remains unexplored, future studies will enable a more comprehensive understanding of his influence. Once this foundation is established, two critical steps can follow. First, we can examine how Islamic philosophers in South Asia used the term Ishrāqī and explore its semantic range. In different contexts, whose arguments were identified as representative of Ishrāqī thought? Does the term refer exclusively to Suhrawardī, or does it extend beyond him to include later authors like Dawānī or Mīr Zāhid, as well as his commentators, such as Shahrazūrī and Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī? Second, with a clearer picture of these dynamics, we can analyze whether overlaps exist between these discourses and develop an informed framework for discussing Ishrāqī thought in South Asia. Achieving this objective will require extensive studies, but I hope that this paper serves as an initial step toward that larger goal.

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