

The Khuṭba al-Jiddah (Sermon at Jeddah) of Sayyid `Alī Muhammad, the Bāb (d. 1850 CE).

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Muslim Pilgrims at Mecca

وَفَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَجَّ بَيْتِهِ الْحَرَامِ، الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً لِلنَّامِ، ... جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ
عَلَمًا، وَلِلْعَائِدِينَ حَرَمًا، فَرَضَ حَجَّهُ، وَأَوْجَبَ حَقَّهُ، وَكَتَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَفَادَتَهُ فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ:
وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حَجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا ...

“And He hath ordained for you the Ḥajj (Pilgrimage) unto His sanctified House (baytihi al-ḥarām) which He made the Qiblah (Point of Adoration) for all humanity... He (God), glorified be He, established it as a distinctive emblem (‘alam^{an}) for Islam and something sacrosanct (ḥaram^{an}) for such as seek asylum. He thus made it [pilgrimage] a binding obligation and stipulated regarding its dutifulness (ḥaqq). Wherefore did He direct that you fulfill this charge. Thus, He said, glorified be He [in the Qur’ān]: “And for the sake of God is pilgrimage to the House (ḥajj al-bayt) incumbent upon humankind, for those, that is, who can afford the journey thither... (Qur’ān 3:96a cited Imam `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, Nahj al-balāgha, Khuṭba No. 1, p. 47).

“God hath ordained for you the Ḥajj (Pilgrimage) and the `Umrā (Sacred Visitation) . So perform your deeds after the manner which hath been stipulated aforetime by God in His Book” (The Bāb, Qayyūm al-asmā’ Sūrat al-Aḥkām, CV: 418; cf. Qur’ān 2:196).

“He [the messianic Qā’im] will stay in Mecca...then he wil go to Medina” (ḥadīth from al-Mufaḍḍal ibn `Umar al-Jū’fī cited Shaykh al-Mufid, trans Howard, 551).

The roughly twelve page Arabic **خطبة الجدة** Khuṭba al-Jidda (Sermon at Jeddah; henceforth Kh-J) of Sayyid `Alī Muhammad Shirazi, the Bāb (executed

Tabriz 1850 CE), is one of the most important of his writings composed in the course of his extended, almost ten (Gregorian) month Islamic pilgrimage journey lasting from (September) 1844 until (early July) 1845 viewed as commencing from (and ending at) Shiraz-Bushire, going to Mecca and Medina via the ancient port city Jeddah (now in Saudi Arabia).¹

It is from Jeddah that this literary khuṭba (sermon) derives its name, though it is much more than a sermon in the Christian sense of this somewhat inadequate translation of the word khuṭba. Just prior to his Islamic pilgrimage which commenced proper at Mecca on 12th December 1844 (= 1st Dhu'l-Hijjah 1260), the Bāb most likely spent several days in Jeddah. After his pilgrimage he stayed there from 24th-27th February 1845 (= 16th-19th Safar 1260) and a few supplementary days awaiting embarkation.² Though the Kh-J derives its name from Jeddah, it is indicated in the Bāb's writings that it was composed in the course of his journey from Jeddah to the Arabian port city of Muscat (Arabic:

¹ Today the vastly populated (around 2 million) Arabian pilgrimage port city of Jeddah is situated roughly 72km / 55 miles from Mecca and 419 km / 260 miles from Medina. It was chosen by the Caliph `Uthmān as the port city for Mecca in 26/646. Correctly spelled Judda (meaning `roadway' or `lane'), Jeddah (also spelled Jiddah) is popularly related to the word jadda ("grandmother") taken as indicating the first woman Eve (Ar. Hawā). She is believed to have been buried near this city after her fall from Paradise with Adam (cf. below Kh-J VII:14b). See EI² article 'Djudda' on the history and present status of this ancient city as well as the relevant books selectively listed in the bibliography.

² The three days at Jeddah on the return journey were supplemented by about five days in Jeddah (near the the boat?) awaiting embarkation on the 24th of Safar 1261/ March 4th 1845 (see Kh-J text and translation VII:15).

مسقط = Masqaṭ; now in the Sultanate of Oman) towards the beginning of Rabī al-Awwal 1261 AH/ around the middle of March 1845. ¹ If composed at this time it would date to about ten months after the Bāb's initial Shiraz located messianic disclosure (declaration) on May 22nd 1844 before his first disciple Mullā Ḥusayn Bushrūī (d. 1848).²

Though the Khuṭba al-Jidda contains important historical, biographical and theological materials, it has been neglected by scholars and historians of Bābī doctrine and history because of the scarcity, textual difficulty and unavailability of the few extant manuscripts. No complete critical edition, printed text or reliable copy is currently available. This paper will be a tentative attempt to bring a few

¹ See Afnan, 2000: 79-80 (cf. 84-6, 88) referring to various letters of the Bāb. Afnan also notes the existence of a mss. associating the Kh-J work with Bushire (Afnan, `Ahd, 474 fn. 18). If accurate this would date it to the time of the Bāb's post-pilgrimage sojourn in Bushire (May-June 1845 CE) though the Muscat dating seems preferable. No chronological details are given subsequent to the embarkation from Bushire and journey to Muscat which took twelve days (P-Bayan 4:16).

² According to the Kh-J itself and related sources the pilgrimage journey of the Bāb commenced from the Persian cities of Shiraz (his birthplace and early place of residence) on September 10th 1844 (= 26th Sha`ban 1260 AH) then continued from Bushire. It terminated at these two cities on his return to Bushire around 15th May 1845 (he remained in Bushire about one month) then on to Shiraz where he arrived around July 5th 1845/ 1st Rajab 1261 AH (see MacEoin, Early Shaykhi Reactions, 23 fn.90; Sources, 47-49). This extended pilgrimage journey of the Bāb, reckoned from Shiraz to Shiraz, thus lasted for almost ten (Gregorian) months or 9 months and 25 days (totaling around 300 days). On the Islamic lunar calendar it lasted almost one year from Sha`bān 1260 until Rajab 1261. At the present time most Bahāī historical and related sources dealing with the pilgrimage or early years of the Bāb fail to take proper account of the chronological data in the Kh-J and related primary Bābī sources.

aspects of this fascinating and striking theological, cosmological and biographical work into the universe of contemporary discourse and to provide a semi-critical text and tentative English translation. ¹

The Kh-J of the Bāb throws important light upon the earliest activity of this young Persian Sayyid and messianic claimant who was destined to found a short-lived though influential Shī'ī rooted "pure religion" (al-dīn al-khāliṣ) which paved the way for the now globally established Bahā'ī religion. The Kh-J is infused with eschatological excitement and theological-chronological precision. As the text makes clear, the Bāb was not just performing pilgrimage but was acting in accordance with a predestined divine plan.

On his pilgrimage journey the Bāb was constantly revealing verses as expressions of his power of inspired revelation (waḥy) through communication with the Dhikr (Remembrance) or Hidden Imam. His pilgrimage was a messianically charged event heralding, prefacing and all but disclosing the long-awaited advent of the promised messianic Mahdī (Rightly Guided One) or Qā'im ("Arise"). It had been predicted in sacred traditions (ḥadīth) that the Islamic messiah would appear in Mecca and there initiate events that would renew Islam, change the world, and precipitate the earthly manifestation of the kingdom of God. In, for example, the Kitāb al-Ghayba of al-Nu'mānī and the Biḥār al-anwār

¹ The semi-critical text can be found on my personal Website. See bibliography ,Lambden URL.

of Muhammad Bāqir Majlisī, traditions such as the following centering on Mecca and the future role of the Qā'im are relayed from the fifth Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir (d. c.126/743):

... until a Herald from heaven (munād min al-samā') cries out. So when he cries out then quickly hasten along [to join him]. By God! It is as if I perceive him (al-Qā'im) [in Mecca] between the pillar [corner of the Ka`ba] (al-rukṅ) and the [nearby] locale ["station" of Abraham] (al-maqām). He will spread out his arms in initiating a new Cause (amr jadīd), [offering] a new book (kitāb jadīd), and [instituting] a new sovereign rule from heaven (sulṭān jadīd min al-samā'). His eternal banner (rāyat abadā^{an}) will be not be layed down until [the time of] his death" (Nu`mānī, K-Ghayba, 2003: 363; Majlisi, Bihar, 2nd ed. vol. 52: 235, 293).¹

O Ḥusayn! He [the Qā'im] is among thy progeny although there is no descendent (ibn) like unto him. He will be made manifest between the two pillars (rukṅayn) [of the Ka`ba]... Blessed be such as attain his era and witness his days!" (al-Nu`mānī, K-Ghayba, 2003:385; Majlisi, Bihar 52:244, relayed from Imam `Alī).

¹ See further Nu`mānī, Ghayba, 2003: 394ff; al-Ṭūsī, Ghayba, 152, etc; Majlisī Bihar, vols. 51-53, index; Sachedina, 74-77. There exist many further, perhaps more than fifty traditions in Shī'ī sources alone, accociating the Mahdī-Qā'im with Mecca and Medina. (see for example, al-Nu`mānī, K-Ghayba, 2003: 377, 394ff; Shakh al-Mufīd, Kitāb al-Irshād, index; Turner, 2001:223ff). Note that in his his Epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Baha'u'llah cites a tradition relayed from Mufaḍḍal ibn `Umar al-Ju`fī, (d. c. 762-3), a companion of Ja`far al Ṣādiq, "The Qá'im will lean His back against the [Meccan] Sanctuary, and will stretch forth His hand, and lo, it shall be snow-white but unhurt. And He shall say: 'This is the hand of God, the right hand of God, that cometh from God, at the command of God!'"(Baha'u'llah, ESW: 112)

When the Qā'im appears he will summon people unto a new Cause (amr jadīd) just as the Prophet [Muhammad] summoned [people] unto one. Islam began strange (gharīb^{an}) and will return strange (gharīb^{an}) just as it originated. So Blessed be the strangers (al-ghurabā')! (al-Nu`mānī, K-Ghayba, 2003: 462; Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 52:366).

The Khuṭba in Shī'ī Islam and the religion of the Bāb.

The Arabic word khuṭba has a range of senses in Islamic literatures. It is only loosely and inadequately defined by the western Christian terms “sermon”, “homily” or “oration”, etc. Within Islamic literary history khuṭba can indicate a much favored oral discourse or related literary form and contain weighty cosmological, theological, prophetological and other materials. Within Imāmī Shī'ism the seminal Nahj al-Balāgha (“The Path of Eloquence”), ascribed to the cousin and son-in-law of the prophet Muhammad, the first Shī'ī Imam `Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (d. 40/661), is a major compendium including over 230 khuṭbas (“sermons”) compiled in the 10th-11th century CE by Abu'l-Ḥasan Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Mūsāwī, Sharīf al-Raḍī (d. 406/ 1015).

The Nahj al-Balāgha opens with a deeply theological oration like certain other more heterodox sermons attributed to Imam `Alī including the Khuṭba al-Ṭutunjiyya (which is not included in the Nahj al-balagha).¹ The eloquent author

¹ The first khuṭba of the Nahj al-Balāgha was well-known to the Bāb. It opens as follows: “Praise belongs to God, the measure of whose Glory (midḥat) can never be befittingly articulated by such as speak forth (al-qā'ilūn), whose Bountifulness (na`mā') can never be justly estimated

of the above first sermon in the Nahj al-Balāgha dwells upon the genesis of creation and associated aspects of angelology and prophetology including reference to the first man Adam and to Islamic pilgrimage (see the citation above). These lofty khuṭbas are at times echoed in the Kh-J.

For the Bāb the divinely revealed khuṭba ("sermon") was a centrally important expression of divinely inspired eloquence. In his Persian Ṣaḥīfa-yi `adliyya (summer 1845 CE) he speaks of inspired Islamic (and indirectly his own) khuṭbas in very elevated terms :

“Among the categories of the sanctified levels of such [exalted imams] are [the production of] khuṭbas (“sermons”) characterized by the most elevated words (bi-a`lā kalimāt) of the people of pristine Arabic fluency and clarity (ahl-i faṣāḥa va bayān) which are of the Pen of supernal Eloquence (qalam-i aṣḥal) registering everything (az kull-i shay’), such as have flowed forth from his [Imam `Alī’s] hand” (S-`Adliyya, 7)

As the eschatological `Alī (Muhammad Shirazi), his literary output reflects the numerous khuṭbas ascribed to the historical Imam `Alī seen as the primogenitor of Imami history, literature and gnosis. The Bāb wrote khuṭbas throughout his six

by such as take account”. Certain early cosmological sentences within sermon No. 1 are echoed the KH-J (see below on KH-J I:1ff) while in his Sahifa-yi `Adliyya, for example, the Bāb appears to make special notice of the apophatic theological teaching towards the beginning of this first Khuṭba (S-`Adliyya, 17f). The often reprinted and widely circulated Indian translation of this first sermon by Syed Ali Raza (see bib. below) is inadequate though the excellent recent (though incomplete) translation of Reza Shah Kazemi is very much better (2006: 208-212).

year prophetic ministry (1844-1850 CE) and regarded this literary form as one of the five or six modes (shu`ūn) into which he divided his revealed writings. ¹

The literary form of the khuṭba was especially significant during the earliest period of the Bāb's writings (1844-1846) and continued to have a significant place in such later works as his Saḥīfa Riḍawiyya which contains fourteen (1846) and the Kitāb-i panj sha`n ("Book of the Five [Revelational] Modes") dating to the latter period of the Bāb's imprisonment in Adhirbayjan (1848-1850). During the course of his extended pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina (1844-1845) the Bāb most likely composed more than twenty khuṭbas. The Kh-J itself mentions seventeen "mighty sermons" (khuṭab) reckoned to be unique texts stolen on February 19th 1845 in the sacred Mecca-Medina region. They were inimitable texts beyond reproduction even among "pure-blooded Arabs (a`rab al-`urabā)" or such as are among "the most noble of eloquent ones (al-fuṣaḥā)" (see Kh-J IX: 18-19).

Twelve khuṭbas including the Kh-J are listed in the Kitāb al-Fihrist (Book of the Index) of the Bāb all dating prior to June 21st 1845 when this work was

¹ The five (or more) categories into which the Bāb divided his writings are (1) Āyāt (Qur'ānic style verses), (2) Munājāt (devotional pieces; prayers, supplications...), (3) Khuṭbas (Sermons, Orations, Homilies) or alternatively, (3) Suwar-i `ilmiyya ("Surahs expressive of divine knowledge") (4) Tafāsīr (sing. Tafsīr or "Exegetical commentaries") and (5) Fārsī or Persian language revelations (see Persian Bayān III:17; VI:1; IX:2).

written.¹ Later khuṭbas of the Bāb include his Khuṭba al-qahriyya (the "Sermon of Wrath") written in stern admonishment of the prime minister of Fath `Alī Shāh (r. 1797-1834), Ḥajjī Mīrzā Āqasī Erivanī (d. 1848CE). Few if any of these khuṭbas of the Bāb were ever orally delivered. Most, like the Kh-J., contain weighty theological, historical and other disclosures.

Manuscripts and printed citations of the Khuṭba al-Jiddah

Manuscripts of the Khuṭba al-Jiddah are uncommon and difficult to obtain. At least three are currently known to exist: (1) INBA mss. 5006C, 332-3; (2) 3036C, 494-6 and (3) INBMC 91: 60-73.² Only very small portions of the Arabic Kh-J have been published in a few Persian language Bahā'ī publications including `Abd al-Ḥamīd Ishrāq Khavarī's Muḥāḍarāt (rep. vol. 2:729-31) where this writer insightfully interpreted aspects of the difficult dating schemata within the Kh-J), and the same writer's annotated Bābī-Bahā'ī chronology entitled Taqwīm-i tārikh-i

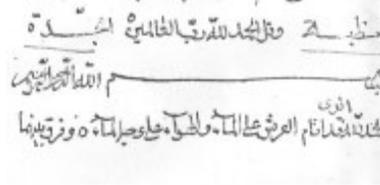
¹ See K-Fihrist, INBA mss. 6006C, 347; 5014C, 593, etc (cf. MacEoin Sources, 51). The Kitāb al-Fihrist (Book of the Index) of the Bāb was written at Bushire on the 15th Jumada II 1261 AH or June 21st 1845 CE before his return to Shiraz. It lists many of his writings dating from prior to this time. In the column listing the khuṭbas (up to) twelve are mentioned in the mss. : "two khuṭbas in Bushire, a Khuṭba in Banakān; a Khuṭba in Kanakān; a Khuṭba for `Īd al-Fiṭr (the Feast of Breakng [the Ramaḍan fast]); the Khuṭba al-Jidda (Jedda); a Khuṭba on the suffering (muṣibat) of [Imam] Ḥusayn (d.61/680); three Khuṭbas on the way (tarīq) to Mecca [Medina]; a Khuṭba for Mullā Ḥusayn on the ship and a Khuṭba on the `Ilm al-Ḥurūf ("the science of letters") mentioning Ja`far al-akbar (the Greatest Ja`far) or Āqā Sayyid Ja`far ibn Abī Ishāq Kashfī Darābī (d.1267/1850-1).

² See MacEoin, Sources, 52, 63,187, 243. On the abbreviations INBA and INBMC see the note in the bibliography.

amr (see p. 24). Muhammad `Alī Fayḍī cited the Kh-J a few times in his now thirty year old Ḥaḍrat-i Nuḡṭa-yi Ūlā (“His Holiness the Primal Point”) on the `Life of the Bāb’ (1987 rep. pp. 143-145) and, finally, the late Abu'l-Qasim Afnan cited a few paragraphs (with significant variant readings though without indicating mss. sources) in his book about the mission and writings of the Bāb entitled `Ahd-i A`lā... (The Sublime Covenant) (see pp. 86-87). Though several of the mss. and printed citations of the Khuṭba al-Jiddah have obvious copyist errors and textual difficulties, a reasonable semi-critical Arabic text with a fairly small percentage of uncertain readings has been provisionally established and is translated below. It is largely based upon the mss. lying behind INBMC 91: 60-73.

TRANSLATION OF THE KHUṬBA AL-JIDDA (SERMON AT JEDDAH).¹

Translation Stephen Lambden (Ohio University), 2005 revised 2007.



[1]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate.

[1] Praised be to God! Who raised up the Celestial Throne (al-`arsh) upon the watery expanse (al-mā') [2] and the atmosphere (al-hawā') above the surface (wajh) of the watery expanse (al-mā'). [3] And He separated between these two through the word "Benefits" (الآلاء) alā'). [4] Then he divided the firmaments from the sphere of the theophanic Cloud (`ālam al-`amā'). [5] Betwixt these twain a division (ḥifẓ^{an}) suggestive of the (Arabic) letter "H" (al-hā' = هـ). [6] And from this atmosphere (al-hawā') there emerged the Sinaitic Tree (shajarat al-sīnā'), its subtle graciousness overshadowing the ocean of laudation (baḥr al-ghanā') nigh the watchtower of the Light of radiant Glory (li-maṭla` nūr al-bahā') above the crimson Thrones (sarā'ir al-hamrā'). [7] This that all might hearken through the Dawning-Place of the Snow-white Script (khatt al-bayḍā) at the black Horizon

¹ A semi-critical Arabic text based on the mss. eventually privately published (mid. 1970s) in INBMC 91:60-73. and further detailed notes on the text can be found on my personal Website at : ADD. This will be revised as more mss. and data become available. Neither the versification nor the headings marking the successive paragraphs (I- X) of this translation are from the Bāb. They are inserted for the sake of commentary and clarification.

(`ufuq al-sawdā') [8] unto the Call of the crimson leaves (waraqāt al-ḥamrā') upon the Green Tree (al-shajarat al-khudrā'), [saying] [9] `God, there is no God except Him, the Lord of the Celestial Throne (al-`arsh) and of the heavenly realm (al-samā')'.



The Divine Theophany and the Tripartite Reality and the Bāb.

[1] So be assured of that Divine Artistry (ṣana`) which is expressive of His Wisdom (ḥikmat), the fullness of the Divine Handiwork evident in all things (kull shay'). [2] This to the end that every tongue might assuredly acknowledge the purpose of His Power (qudrat) actualized through the theophanic manifestation (zuhūr) of His Self-revelation (tajiliyyat) within the Blessed Tree upon Mount Sinai (ṭūr al-sīnā') disclosing thereby but a token of the Crimson Pillar (rukn al-ḥamrā'), 'God, no God is there save Him'. [3] And He caused to be made manifest through His Power what is evident in the essential realities of all existing things (dhawāt al-mawjūdāt) at the Midmost-Heart of Pre-Existence (min buḥbūḥiyyat al-qidam) ¹according to the deep gnosis of that Essential Reality (ma`rifat al-dhāt) which is expressive of the Divine Essence by virtue of the essential detachedness [from the Divine Essence] of the Divine Names and Attributes (`an al-asmā' wa'l-ṣifāt). [4] This to the end that the realities of the inmost hearts might diligently persevere with their coming to realize the intention of the providential purpose of the Divine Will (ni`at al-mashiyyat) expressed by virtue of the Logos-Word of creative Genesis, "God, there is no God save Him" (lā ilāha illā huwa).

[5] And He did subsequently stipulate, on account of the realization of the foreordained scheme (al-muqaddar), the knowledge of the Ocean of the Divine

¹ II:3 The mss. reading here (INBMC 91:61, line 8) seems corrupt.. For من بحبوية القدم. I have read من بحبوية القدم "at the Midmost Heart of Pre-Existence" (min buḥbūḥiyyat al-qidam).

Foreordination (al-muqaddar) through the surging waves of triplicity (ṭamṭām al-tathlīth) expressive of the multiplicity of the waves upon the oceanic expanse of the crucifix (abḥār al-ṣalīb). [6] This did this cause the Christians to unhesitatingly perceive the upright letter "A" (alif al-qā'im) positioned betwixt two streams (al-nahrayn) on account of His [the Bab's] likeness being even as twofold Images (al-mithlayn) in the form characterized by dual [alphabetical] counterparts (shakl fī'l-ukhtayn). [7] And this was such that they might assuredly come to realization respecting the Dawning-Place of the breezes of the Sinaitic Morn [the Bab] which are expressive of the [truth of the] multiplicity of the waves in the watery Expanse (al-mā'). [8] Persons would thus assuredly come to glorify God, the Lord of the cosmic Ocean, despite the issue of the multiple waves of the brackish Abyss (al-lujjat al-ujāj) which lie beyond the Snow-white Logos-Word (kalimat al-bayḍā'), situated within the hollow depth of the seventh Sea (qa`r yamm al-sābi`) which emerges from the Green Ocean. God, no God is there except Him.



Renewed Creation and the Eschatological Theophany.

[1] Then came to pass, subsequent to the decree of the divine Destiny (ḥukm al-qadar), the Sea of the Divine Foreordainment (al-qidā') through the "Letter" (locus) of the Creative Genesis (bi'l-ḥarf al-badā').. [2] This such that the inmost hearts of all existing things might of a certainty be made to sparkle brilliantly through the watery Expanse (al-mā') which sprinkles forth from this fiercely billowing, yet brackish Sea (al-baḥr al-mawwāj al-ujāj). [3] This indeed that all existing microcosmic entities of the world of creation (kull dharrāt al-khalq) might rise ascendant nigh the glorious transfiguration of that crimson Light (ʿind tajallī nūr al-ḥamrā') which is expressive of the Justice of God and His Wisdom. [4] Wherefore shall there assuredly be a speaking forth through proximity to the glorious transfiguration of the Snow-white Light; a primordial declaration (kalimat al-dharr) distinct from that of the microcosmic entities (al-dharr), namely, `God,

no God is there save Him. So glorified be God, the Creator, the Wondrous, the Separate, the Living, the Self-Subsisting, the Pre-existent.'

[IV]

[1-4]



The Folly of the Ishrāqī sages, followers of Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191).

[1] It was the case that the Ishrāqī sages (ḥukamā' al-tashrīq) described the depth of the fourfold [world of nature] (al-tarbī') subsequent to the Divine Foreordainment (al-qidā') of [the authority of] the Divine Will (al-mashiyya) through the decree of the threefold Reality (ḥukm al-tathlīth) and its counterpart (= the Bab). [2] They [the Ishrāqī sages] thus speculated regarding the principle of materiality (al-turāb) which [they regarded] as something other than what God destined for hellfire (al-nār). They supposed that the realities of the Divine Attributes (ḥaqā'iq al-ṣifāt) are other than the knowledge [sanctioned] in the Book (al-kitāb). And they [further vainly] supposed that they are ones well-situated on the Path of God and persons who have attained a great restraint. [3] And upon this rock-strewn [Ishtāqī] path and tortuous road these [Ishtāqī] sages (ḥukamā') went astray, being ones fit for hellfire according to the dictates of Fate (ḥukm al-qadr) and according to an extent predestined.

[4] So they [the Ishtāqī philosophers] ultimately attained a position contrary to the decree of God (ḥukm Allāh) in the realm of things veiled away (arḍ al-mustatir). They taught that they stood upright in the shadow of the Sun and the Moon. Nay, on the contrary! for thy Lord testifies to the fact that they are indeed wayward and are to be numbered among such dubious sophists (al-mushubbahūn) as are reckoned among the untruthful.



Sound theology and the followers of Mullā Ṣadrā (d. 1050 /1640).

[1] Say: God, the Lord of Creation is the supreme Creator (abda`) of everything (fī kull shay'), One beyond anthropomorphism (ḥadd al-tashbiyya) and utterly abstracted from fragmentation (al-taqīf), perchance some soul might calumniate in the Presence of the Countenance of God (tilqa' wajh Allāh) through an [inappropriate] expression of union [with Him] (al-waṣl). [2] He hath ever been One known on account of [His] Justice (bi'l-`adl) as is evident in the loci of the Cause (mawāqī` al-amr) on the level of the Divine Bounty (al-faḍl). [3] This although the sight of the Ṣadriyyīn [followers of Mullā Ṣadrā' d. 1050/1640] hath been blinded to the gnosis of the Lord (ma`rifat al-rabb). [4] They scattered abroad the scriptural Tablets (al-alwāḥ) that were sent down in the Qur`ān and failed to progress with the assistance of the custodians of the Truth (ahl al-ḥaqq). [5] They [acquired naught but] what they had themselves written in their tablets (alwāḥ) such as the [Kitāb al-] Mashā`ir ("[Book of] Metaphysical Penetrations") and its like relating to the intricacies of speculative knowing (daqā`iq zakwān) [?],¹ issues complex (ajrad) and impenetrable (khushn).

[6] Yet glorified be God! It is as if they fail to register the [clear] guidance of the Qur`ān (ḥukm al-Qur`ān) and proved unable to comprehend the dictates of the custodians of clear exposition (ahl al-tibyān). [7] They make judgments respecting the gnosis (ma`rifat) of their Lord that are even as a judgment

¹ **V:5b** The text and translation of **دقایق زکوان** (daqā`iq zakwān) as "the intricacies of speculative knowing" are both uncertain. Zakwān appears not to exist! I have translated it as if it relates to an Arabic root Z-K-N indicative of conjecturing and knowing etc (cf. Steingass entry, **زکن**). Without other mss. of the Kh-J for comparison It would be too speculative to read **اکوان** (akwān = "all existence") instead of **زکوان*** though this would make much better sense.

regarding the [existence of] water in trees (al-mā' fi'l-ashjār)! [8] So exalted be God above what is a calumny respecting the Beneficent Power of His Word (al-muḥsin fī kalāmihī) and with respect to His not encompassing every minutiae within the knowledge of God! [9] They even strike a similitude about the Divine Essence (al-dhāt) [to the effect that] there is a negation of the All-Glorious [Godhead] (ka-nafy al-abhā) within the "waves" (al-amwāj) [of the ocean of existence] or [an analogy] of "water" (al-mā') subsumed nigh the alluring effect of "ice" (ta`āyn al-thalj) on account of their similarity. [10] God and the angels observe these philosophers (al-ḥukamā') who have anthropomorphized themselves as signs of the Creator (āyāt al-khalq) in the gnosis of the Divine Essence (bi-ma`rifat al-dhāt). And they [furthermore] subsume within themselves the [authority of] the Imams for they make decrees contrary to the decree of God in the Qur`ān.

[VI]



The Twin exponents of Shī`ī Islamic wisdom, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā`ī (d. 1241/1826) and Sayyid Kāẓim Rashī`ī (d. 1259/1843).

[1] Since they were unaware of the decree issued by the people of clear exposition (ahl al-bayān) many of the [Shī`ī] `ulamā' (divines) imitated them [the Mullā Ṣadrā philosophers] in their pursuit of good deeds (bi'l-iḥsān). [2] This until the Day dawned forth in splendour (ḍiyā') and the "sun" and the "moon" shed illumination on account of the verdict of recreation (ḥukm al-inshā'). [3] [It was

then that] These twain [= Shaykh Aḥmad and Sayyid Kāzim] expounded for thee [the truth respecting] the [Shīṭī] family of God (Āl Allāh) established in the gnosis of the regeneration (ma`rifat al-ibdā`) and discoursing at the very pinnacle of abstraction (sadd al-inqitā`), [in ways] all but beyond impenetrability (qaṭa` al-imtinā`)!¹

[4] And these twain [Shaykh Aḥmad and Sayyid Kāzim] acquired the Persona of their [the Shīṭī family of God's] gnosis (haykal al-ma`rifatihā) as accords with whatsoever God had willed respecting their twofold Reality (ḥaqq). [5] And these twain [Shaykh Aḥmad and Sayyid Kāzim] did write with their two hands something of the import of the Qur`ān [in the form of] scriptural Tablets (alwāḥ), such as the Tablet setting forth the Fawā'id ("Observations") (lawḥ fi'l-fawā'id) and the Lawāmi` ("Brilliances") among their writings (lawāmi` āthārihi). [6] This such that the inmost hearts of the people might be established through the deep observations implicit in their verses (min fawā'id al-āyātihi) and the radiance of the realities of the brilliances implicit in their writings (min lawā'mi` āthārihi).

[7] And persons did follow these two in line with the dictates of destiny (ḥukm al-qadr), the people of innermost mystery (ahl al-mustansir) who thereby returned unto their pristine, God-bestowed human condition (fiṭrat Allah) as stipulated in the Qur`ān, on the level of that which is foreordained (fī sha`n al-muqaddar). [8] So all such persons acquired for themselves their [foreordained] destiny (naṣīb) as accords with the decree implicit in the Book.

¹ VII:1-4 read here ما من not من in the first line and in verse 4 add the missing (cf. INBA mss. p.66 line 2) الستين (= "sixty") in the spelling of the year with Ishraq Khavari, M 2:729, Faydī, Nuqta, 143 and Afnan `Ahd., 86. The phrase شهر رمضان "month of Ramaḍan" in VII: 4b is most probably a scribal gloss or addition as it does not occur in the Ishraq Khavari, M: 2:730 or Faydī text (1987 p. 143) though it is present in Afnan, `Ahd: 86).

[9] And these latter-day persons (al-ākhirūn) did bear the calumny (bi'l-iftirā') surrounding these twain [Shaykh Aḥmad + Sayyid Kāẓim] as accords with that destiny which was other than something encompassed by the knowledge that concerns what is preordained (ʿilm al-wāḍi'). [10] This was after the likeness of such as did slacken, bereft of knowledge, before the chosen ones of God (awliyā' Allāh). [11] They failed to [pay due attention to] a Manifest Book (kitāb mubīn) such that the letter "K" in the locus of the [Real] Cause (al-kāf fī maḥall al-amr) returned unto the sphere of His Decree (minṭaqat ḥukm) and the Cycle of Cycles (dawr al-adwār) [was initiated] with the onset of the Day of God (li-yawm Allāh) in a manner revolutionary (fī sha`n badī').

[12] This when the Lights (al-anwār) did configure according to a transcendent mystery (sirr manī) for these Lights (al-anwār) dawned forth through the knowledge of the realm of the Divine Cloud (min ʿilm al-`amā'). Then [also] did the Sinatic Tree (shajarat al-sīnā') cry out in the Ocean of Laudation (baḥr al-thanā') when there was made manifest the Word of Glorification (kalimat al-tasbīḥ) in the Crimson Land (arḍ al-ḥamrā').

[13] Wherefore, O people of the inmost heart (ahl al-fū`ād), did the Tree of Creative Potency (shajarat al-ṣāni`) dawn forth with the ascendant, deeply secreted mysteries (al-mustansirrāt ṭalāyi`) along with the Brilliant Sun and the Irrefutable Name (al-ism al-qāṭi'), this Light (al-nūr) which beareth the letter "H" (ḥarf al-hā') in the land of the inmost heart (arḍ al-fū`ād). [14] There emerged from the boundary of the letter و "w" (ḥadd al-wāw) through the Pen flowing with Ink (qalam al-midād), the Dhikr-Allāh ("Remembrance of God") who was in receipt of revealed verses in the language of God (lisān Allāh) [= Arabic], one crying out with Proofs to the end that all humanity might know the locale of their [destined] drinking-place (ḥadd al-mashrab) and the decree respecting this Snow-white watery Expanse (al-mā' al-bayḍā'). [15] And this to the end that all tainted with the sin of the most depraved utterance (kalimat al-suflā) might bear whatsoever hath been decreed [for them] in a Tablet which expresses something even more contemptible (lawḥ aw adnā').

[16] Thus was it that God did send down the verses of the Sinaitic Mount (āyāt al-ṭūr) from the Most Transcendent Abode (mustaqarr al-a`lā) to the end that all might be cognizant of His Cause (al-amr) and expound its branches (mufāri`), that all might hear and appreciate the words of Paradise (kalimat al-quds) in the Tablet of Holiness (lawḥ al-quds) and the verses which descend from [the realm of] the dusky zones of the Divine Cloud (mukfahirrāt al-`amā') in the very shadow of Paradise.

[17] This that all the Luminaries (al-anwār) might bestow life through the Water of Life (mā' al-ḥayawān) which cometh from the crashing crests of the surging waves that are of the watery expanse of Camphor (mā' al-kāfūr) as accords with the decree of the Book. [18] This took place that He might unveil all mysteries through the Crimson watery Expanse (mā' al-ḥamrā') from this Snow-White Ocean (al-baḥr al-bayḍā'), the watery Expanse that is purified on account of the Decree of God through the Word of the Book.

[VII]



The Pilgrimage Journey and the Islamic Pilgrimage of the Bāb

[1] So unto God be the Praise, the Grandeur and the Laudation for there are none that encompass His knowledge save whomsoever He wills. He, verily, no God is there except Him. [2] God, no God is there except Him, the Living, the Elevated. [3] God, no God is there except Him, the Independent, the Bountiful.

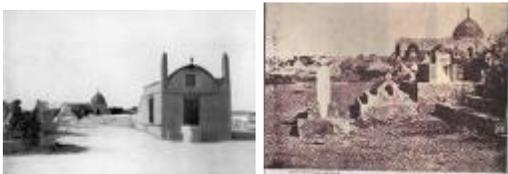
[4] The Word of His servant [= the Bāb] was transported (cf. Q. 17:1) from the land of His birth (Shiraz), in the year 1260 of the sacred Ḥijra reckoning, on the 6th day of the third decad (= the 26th) of the month preceding the month which is the sacred month of God (al-shahr Allāh al-ḥarām) in which He sent down the Qur'ān [= 26th Sha`bān which precedes the month of Ramaḍān = September 10th 1844] for thereon He enabled him (the Bāb) to attain unto the shore of the Ocean (jazīrat al-baḥr) (= Bushire) on the day which is the sixth of the sacred month, the month of Ramaḍān (= 19th September 1844) on which He instituted that Destiny (al-qadr) as accords with the Decree of God (ḥukm Allāh) enacted on that Night (layla) which is better than 1000 months apart therefrom (cf. the laylat al-qadr in Qur'ān 97:1ff).

[5] So He indeed raised him [= the Bāb] up through His Bounty upon an oppressive ship (fulk al-musakhir) [sailing] upon the water on the day which was the ninth day of the second decad (= 19th) of the sacred month, the month of God on which He instituted fasting (al-ṣiyām) (= the 19th of Ramaḍān = October 2nd 1844). [6] And he (the Bāb) attained unto the Mother of Cities [= Mecca] (umm al-qurā), the sacred House of God (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) on the first day of the sacred month of the month of God (= 1st of Dhu'l-Hijjah = December 12th 1844) which is the month wherein He instituted the decree of Pilgrimage (al-ḥajj) for the people of Islam and completed it with hastening to and fro between Ṣafā and Marwa and what he decreed regarding circumambulation and rising up. [7] And He also decreed [the completion of the events with] the ceremonial sacrifices (manāsik) consonant with the `Umra (the 'Sacred Visitation') and the Ḥajj (= Pilgrimage) on the third day of the second decad (= the 13th) of the selfsame sacred month which precedes the month of God (= the 13th of Dhu'l-Hijjah = December 24th 1844).¹

¹ **VII:7** The Arabic word meaning "second" (=الثانى) in "second decad" العشر الثانى is actually "third" in the mss. behind INBMC 91 (mss. p. 66 line 12). The undoubtedly correct reading "second decad", however, is found in Ishraq Khavari, Muhadarat, 730; Faydi, Nuqta, 144 (line 6) and Afnan, `Ahd: 86.

[8] Then he enabled him to advance unto the land of His Beloved One (ḥabīb) [= Medina], Muhammad, the Messenger of God (rasūl Allāh), may the blessings of God be upon him and his family, the seal of the prophets (khātam al-nabiyyīn), from the onset of this day which is the seventh day of the year 1261 of the sacred Hijra calendar, on the sacred month [= 7th of Muḥarram = January 16th 1845], the month of God whereon was killed [the one who embodied] the Glorification of God (tasbīḥ= subḥān-Allāh' , "Glorified be God") and the Hallowing Testimony (taḥlīl = lā ilāh ilā Allāh, "there is no God but God"), through the killing of [the embodiment of] the very Word of the Magnification of God (kalimat al-takbīr = Allāh akbar, "God is greatest") and of the Laudation of God (tamḥīd = al-ḥamd li-llāh, "Praise be God"), namely, the Forefather (ʿAbī) of the servant of God (ʿAbd-Allāh) [= the Bab], the [third Imam] Ḥusayn (martyred ʿĀshūrā' = the 10th Muḥarram 61/680), upon him be peace!

The tomb of Eve in Jeddah



[9] So unto God belongs the Destiny and the Grandeur for He protected him (the Bāb) in the sacred sanctuary (Mecca-Medina region) for twenty-seven days between the two stupendous months (= from 7th of Muḥarram until the 4th Ṣafar = 27 days). [10] And unto Him be the Glory and the Grandeur at the onset of the departure (from Medina) on the fourth day of the last month after the sacred month of God (= Safar after Muḥarram : 4th Safar = 12th of February 1845) from amongst His chosen ones (awliyā') [in Mecca-Medina] [proceeding] unto the rest of the created realm (kull al-khalq) [11] through the fulfillment of the stipulation of the sacrificial killing after dawn time (kalimat al-qaṭ' ba`d al-fajr), in line with the knowledge of the family of God (ma`rifat Āl Allāh) (may the peace of

God be upon them), with the completion [of pilgrimage through] the hindering [of Satan] (muhtahā al-man`). And to Him [God] belongeth the Glory and the Beauty.¹

Pictures of Old Jeddah



[12] From the day of the departure (from Mecca - Medina) until the day of the arrival in the land of Jeddah, may the blessings of God be upon its indescribable and innumerable inhabitants, there transpired twelve days on the road (4th Safar + 12 = 16th Şafar = February 24th). [13] This after the manner of the decree of departure (al-nuzūl) from the Glorious Sanctuary [Mecca] (ḥaram al-jalīl) unto the Fount of Salsabīl (‘ayn al-salsabīl) [= Zamzam?]. [14] Then there came about the decree of the Book (ḥukm al-kitāb) regarding halting in the land

¹ VII:11 The translation of منتهى المنع (mss. p.67 line 9) as “with the completion [of pilgrimage] through the hindering [of Satan] (muhtahā al-man`)” makes sense as indicating one of the final (muntahā) acts of pilgrimage through the `warding off' or `hindering' (man`) of Satan with the ritual stoning of the three pillars. An alternative reading at this point of منتهى المنى (muntahā al-minā) meaning “through the completion [of pilgrimage] at Minā [about 4 miles from Mecca]” suggests itself though this has no support in the mss. (or printed text citations) I have consulted it would make very good sense in the light of the final pilgrimage rituals (animal sacrifice) associated with Minā which is visited towards the end of the Muslim pilgrimage. These two aforementioned readings could easily result from an unpointed Arabic text in the Bāb’s cursive hand. Worth noting is that Bābī tradition registered in the Dawn-Breakers of Nabil-i Zarandi / Shoghi Effendi (pp. 132-3, here Minā is spelled colloquially as Muná) makes specific mention of the Bāb’s performing Islamic ritual sacrifice at Minā during the latter days of his pilgrimage (as the Kh-J VII: 11 implies).

of Eve (bi'l-wuqūf fī arḍ al-ḥawā') (= Jeddah) for a period amounting to three days (16th + 3 = 19th Safar = 27th February 1845).

[15] So glorified be God and Praised be to God Who gave permission unto His servant on the fourth day of the [second] decad (= the 24th)¹ of the month which follows the sacred month (= 24th of Safar after Muharram = March 4th 1845) for the embarkation upon the ship of oppression (al-fulk al-musakhir), upon the water, upon an ark (safīnat) on which he commenced the journey on the day of his departure unto the sacred house of God [in Shiraz] (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām).

[VII]

Divine Foreordainment and the Episode of the Theft

[1] So unto God be that praise which is scintillating (sha`sha`aniyya an), glittering (mutalāma` an) and sanctifying (mutaqaddas an) by virtue of the very sanctity of God Himself (bi-taqdīs Allāh) and of His Bounty which passeth beyond all created things. [2] And unto Him be the Praise and the Grandeur like that lauded by His people, a praise which giveth bounty unto all things like unto the Bounty of God (faḍl Allāh) vouchsafed unto His Own Logos-Self (li-nafsihi). He, verily, no God is there except Him. There is nothing like unto Him for He is One Elevated and Mighty.

[3] So glorified be God, the One, the Self-Subsisting, the Unique, the One Served, Who cried out through His Remembrance on the day of the embarkation marked by a laudation of His Logos-Self and a remembrance of the pathway of

¹ VII: 15 Here in INBMC 91 (p. 68 line 1; as well as Faydi, Nuqta, 145 and Muhadarat, 731) the phrase **العشر الثالث** ("the **third** decad") should read **عشر الثاني** "the second decad" (as in Afnan, AA: 86) and has been emended accordingly.

his journey in visitation unto His House (ziyārat baytihi) and unto the manifestations of His Power, Muhammad and his family, [who constitute] the Treasury of the Divine Grandeur (ma`dan al-`azimat) a quintessence of His Cause (muntahā amrihi) and of His Bounty. [4] This for the instruction of every soul towards an awareness of the days of his journey as accords with the decree of foreordained Destiny (ḥukm al-qadr) and its mystery. [5] This in order that every possessor of spirit [may be aware that] the days of his journey are consonant with the decree of the divine Throne and of the celestial Chair (ḥukm al-`arsh wa kursī), as well as the motion of the spheres (al-aflāk) within the concourse of the divine Names and Attributes. [6] This such that all might enter the sacred House of God (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) through the mighty verses revealed within these Snow-white scriptural Tablets (al-alwāḥ al-bayḍā'), [7] that they might assuredly fall prostrate in the mosque just as they did aforetime and thereby wreak an utter destruction (li-yutabbirū) upon that which is upstanding" (mā `alaw tatbīr an) (see Qur'ān 17:7b).

[8] So glorified be He Who made decree respecting the Path of his [pilgrimage] journey just as He had decreed for all of the Gates (al-abwāb) of the past. [9] And he saw in the Path of God all of the suffering caused by the people of infidelity and blasphemy for such is the practice of God. [10] Relative to the past I did not find any change in the practice of God [see Qur'ān 48:23] nor any modification respecting the condition of anything.

[11] And there was not found any change relative to the decree of God even respecting a single letter until there occurred the theft of the thief in the land of the two shrines (al-ḥaramayn) (the region of Mecca and Medina) at the [third] halting place (fī manzal al-thalith) [thus removing] all that God wrote along the Path. [12] This [theft] took place on the first night of [the second decad] (= the 11th) in [the year] 1261 (AH) of the second month after the month of the Ḥajj (pilgrimage = Dhū'l-Ḥijja, thus the 11th of Ṣafar [1261 AH] = February 19th 1845) for such was [in accordance with] the decree issued from primordial times

(sunnat al-awwālīn). [13] And I did not find any change relative to any aspect of the way of God (li-sha`n Allāh) regarding anything decreed by God.

[14] This although, O people of the Concourse (al-mala`!), Fate itself acted in accordance with the decree about the [stolen] verses (al-āyāt) for the thief stole outside of any clear knowledge (‘ilm mubīn) [of the divine plan]. [15] Among them [the stolen writings] were verses expressive of the inner dimension of the foundational alphabetical script (bāṭin al-saṭr) which was scribed by the hand of the Remembrance (yad al-dhikr) in crimson ink upon eleven snow-white leaves. [16] They were gilded with liquid gold and inscribed round about in crimson script expressive of dual dimensions of the secreted mystery which is veiled up within the greatest mystery in accordance with the inner dimension of the Qur`ān (bāṭin al-Qur`ān). [17] From the outset [this material was of such sacredness that] no one aforesaid had even touched it (cf. Qur`ān 56:79 etc), nor shall anyone in later times ever encompass its knowledge. [18] Such was revealed in a scriptural Tablet from heaven containing deeply secreted verses (āyāt mustasirrāt) and established expositions (bayyināt muḥkammāt) from God, the Lord of the heavens and of the divine Throne, over all the worlds.

[19] Wherefore indeed is it that whoso finds a portion thereof shall fail to unravel even a letter thereof in reciting its wisdom, save, that is, with the permission of He Who revealed it unto him. [20] Such is in accordance with the stipulation of the Qur`ān for they are the Supreme Treasuries (khazā'in al-kubrā) in that "the inmost heart (al-fū'ād) lieth not about what it [he] sees" (Qur`ān 53:11). [21] So do you suppose that they see this after the manner of his [visionary] seeing? [22] For there was indeed revealed therein [the inmost heart] the wisdom of thy Lord in the "Garden of the Abode" (jannat al-ma'wā) (Qur'an 53:15) pertaining to that which was decreed in the divine Throne (‘arsh) or [as a result of] Our [visionary] insight! [23] And whoso lieth about Our Most elevated verses, We shall decree for him [on] the Day of Resurrection (yawm al-qiyāma) [a place] within Our nethermost, blazing hellfire of Jaḥīm.

[IX]



The Revealed Writings of the Bāb and the Episode of the Theft

[1] Then fear ye God, O people of ecstasy (ahl al-wijdān)! for these [revelations] were sent down in [the manner of the disclosures] of the custodians of the Exposition (rijāl al-bayān) [twelver Imams?]. [2] And God is not restrained by the ways of all the worlds. [3] This is indeed the Book which hath differentiated in line with the decree of the inner dimension of the Tablet [of Destiny] (ḥukm bāṭin al-lawḥ) as revealed from One Mighty and Wise.

[4] And there was furthermore, a [stolen] Book [of the Bāb] which was distinguished after the fashion of the "Throne Verse" (āyat al-kursī) (= Qur'an 2:255) in accordance with the decree of thy Lord, into two hundred Sūrahs, every one of which hath been allocated twelve verses among the verses of the inner dimension of the Qur'ān. [5] It is a guidance and a mercy from before Us unto the people who bear witness for this is something revealed on Our part in line with Wisdom.

[6] And there was, furthermore, a [stolen] Book [of the Bāb] in four hundred verses, as accords with the decree of thy Lord, within forty well-established Sūrahs (sūrat muḥkamat), and [commenting upon] the [poetical] data which the Spirit (al-rūḥ) sent down upon the heart of [Sayyid] al-Ḥimyarī (qalb al-ḥimyarī) (d. c. 173/789) [containing] deeply secreted, incomparable verses the like of even a letter of which no eye shall ever see for it was revealed from the realms of the veiled secret (sarā'ir sirr al-muqanna'). [7] Thus hath it been characterized by mystery sublime (sirr al-mujallil) [inscribed] in the

primordial script (bi'l-saṭr al-awwāl), in the threefold state (bi'l-ḥall al-thālith) as regulated through the fourfold Talisman (ṭilasim al-rābi`) and revealed through Us for such people as do hearken.

[8] And there was, furthermore, a [stolen] Book [of the Bāb] concerning the Niche (al-mishkat) aside from the Lamp (al-miṣbāḥ), yet both from the Lamp (al-miṣbāḥ) which is the Lamp (al-miṣbāḥ) and in the Lamp (al-miṣbāḥ) of the Glass (al-zujāja) of the Glass (al-zujāja) then [again] the Glass (al-zujāja) within the Glass (al-zujāja) which are the [four] Gates (al-abwāb) above that which shines forth from the Dawn of Eternity (subḥ al-azal). [9] At every orient-dawn (al-mashriq) there were indeed established there from radiant leaves (waraqāt) ignited through the Blessed Tree (shajarat al-mubāraka) neither Eastern nor Western, but with verses (āyāt) expressive of the mysteries of the Divine Realm (asrār al-lāhūt) and expressive of the clear expositions of the Book of thy Lord about the dictates of the Kingdom (aḥkām al-mulk) and of the Empyrean heaven (al-jabarūt). [10] They were sacred, radiant scriptural Tablets (alwāḥ) from the Sinaitic Tree (shajarat al-sīnā') upon the Mount (al-ṭūr) that were revealed through the decree of radiant Glory (bahā'). God, no God is there save Him. [11] It was indeed a Book from before Us, Powerful and Guarded. [12] And that which was sent down therein expressed the parameters of the inner dimensions of the Qur'ān, a Guidance and a Glad-tiding for such people as are believers. [13] So whomsoever is ignited through the Light of the decree which was revealed therein are certainly among the rightly guided.

[14] And there was, furthermore, a [stolen] Book [of the Bāb] about the dictates of the Qur'ān (ḥukm al-Qur'ān), about the second portion of the Surah [the Sūrat al-Baqara, Qur'an, 2] covering what God revealed therein unto its conclusion, verses which came from God including expositions of the inner dimension of the ta`wīl (inner sense), a revelation on Our part for the people given to contemplation

[15] And there was, furthermore, a [stolen] Book [of the Bāb] which was set forth through mine own Self whilst upon the ocean, in a Saḥīfa (Scroll) about

Du`ā' (Supplication) in fifteen sections (abwāb) consonant with the command. It was revealed in seven dialects of literary style (alsun al-sab `at fi'l-inshā') after the likeness of purified verses replete with allusions revealed by Us for the people given to prostration.

[16] Then, furthermore, was a [stolen] Saḥīfa (Scroll) [of the Bāb] written on the Path of the Ḥajj (Pilgrimage) something decreed by he who intended [to visit] the family of the Sanctuary of God (ḥaram Allah) with Justice (`adl) according to the mode which has not been encompassed by the heart of any human being aforesaid nor sent down through the instrumentality of a servant (`abd) [of God]. [17] It was in fourteen assured sections all containing expository verses from God for the people of contemplation.

[18] Then, furthermore, were [stolen] seventeen mighty sermons (khuṭab) cried out from the hallmark of the judgment assured within Mount Sinai (al-ṭūr al-sīnā'). God, no God is there except Him. [19] They were delivered such that nobody was capable of producing the likeness of but a letter thereof even among the pure-blooded Arabs (a`rāb al-`arabā'), or, indeed, any soul among the most noble of eloquent ones (al-fuṣaḥā').

[20] Then, furthermore, among the [stolen materials] were assured letters (kitāb muḥkamat) twelve [of them] after the manner of the verses of the Qur`ān. [21] It was, in truth, sent down unto the Persian and `Arab ulamā' (`ulamā' al-a`jamīn wa'l-`arabīn), verses of clear exposition from God unto the people given to intellectual activity.

[22] Then praise be unto God who is informed of the truth of His verses and the destiny that was sent down for His Gate (al-bāb). [23] So by the Lord of the House (rabb al-bayt) Who, no God is there except Him. [24] There is nothing in either the heavens or upon the earth that can evaluate [the veracity of] even a letter thereof for it is a revelation from a Manifest Imam. [25] None can estimate the truth of these verses except Him for He, verily, is One Gentle and Wise.



The Final Address and Benediction

[1] Wherefore, O thou Concourse! The stealing of [revealed] materials from God took place within the domain of Justice (mulk al-`adl), the land of the Sanctuary of God (ḥaram Allāh) [Mecca]. [2] There was nothing about it in line with justice for it consisted of the treasures of the inhabitants of the heavens and of the earth. [3] And God is witness to [the truth of] that which I relate, for God, in this respect, is sufficient [witness] along with whomsoever recites the decrees of the Qur'ān in an informed manner. [4] And if God thy Lord should will it He would assuredly, in very truth, bring His verses to light for He, verily, no God is there except Him. [5] And He is One Hearing, Knowing. [6] So praised be unto God, Lord of the heavens and of the earth above that which they suppose. [7] And peace be upon the Messengers and praised be to God, the Lord of all the worlds.

Select textual and exegetical notes

Notes and Select Comments on on the Khuṭba al-Jiddah. ¹

Kh-J I :1ff - In the beginning...

The opening cosmological paragraph (I:1ff) of the Kh-J commences with the standard Islamic *basmala* ² which opens most of the sūrahs of the Qur'ān and is widely utilized in Islamic literary, devotional and ritual contexts. The text then echoes certain cosmological assertions made towards the beginning of the first sermon of the Nahj al-Balāgha (Path of Eloquence) and the Khuṭba al-Ṭutunjiyya (loosely "Sermon of the Gulf") :

He [God] generated creation through a genesis (inshā') and originated it with an origination (ibtidā')... Then He, glorified be He, cleft asunder the firmaments (fatq al-ajwā') and separated the margins of the heavens (shaqqa al-arjā') and the uppermost levels of the atmosphere (sakā'ik al-hawā'). Then He made a watery expanse (mā') to flow therein in tumultuous surging waves" (Nahj, 2002: 36, 37).

Praise be to God! Who hath cleft the firmaments asunder (cf. Q 21:30), split up the atmosphere, suspended the margins of the heavens (Q. 69:17), caused the solar luminary [sun] (ḍiyā') to shine forth,

¹ The translation below divides the Kh-J into paragraphs indicated by Roman numerals (I-X) and verse numbers (which are not a part of the original text). The Arabic text and further detailed notes will in due course be set forth on my personal Website.

² By the *basmala* is meant 'Bismillāh al-Raḥman al-Raḥīm' which is usually translated 'In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate'. The Bāb later altered this into a new theologically apophatic form, 'Bismillāh al-Amna` al-Aqdas', In the Name of God, the Unapproachable, the Most Holy' and utilized hundreds of theologically interesting variants.

quicken the dead and made the living to die” (Kh-ṭutunjiyya cited Rajab al-Bursī, Mashāriq, 166).¹

At its very outset and apart from the above, Kh-J I:1² reflects the Hebrew Bible at Genesis 1:2b (and related verses) as well as those verses of the Arabic Qur’ān which several times speak of the celestial Throne of God (al-`arsh) being situated above or upon a cosmic watery expanse (al-mā’) (see Q. 7:54; 10:3; 11:7; 13:2; etc). These opening verses (Kh-J I:1-3) are based upon biblically rooted qur’ānic cosmology which pictures the personal, transcendent God, the “Lord of the Throne” (Q. 85:15; 27:26) as One who might sit in authority upon a celestial Throne (`arsh) set up upon, above or beyond an expanse of primordial cosmic water (al-mā’) which rests upon a solid but luminous “firmament”, vault or “sky”.

Kh-J I:2 mentions an “air” or “atmosphere” (hawā’) which exists above the “face” or “surface” of the cosmic watery expanse (al-mā’) and I:3 seems to link the separation of the Throne (al-`arsh) and the lower watery expanse (al-mā’) through the power of the alphabetical primogenitor of the letters, the first letter

¹ Believed to have been delivered by Imam `Alī between Kufa and Medina, the Khuṭba al-ṭutunjiyya (“Sermon of the Gulf”) was very highly regarded by Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāī and Sayyid Kāzīm Rashī the twin founders of the 19th century Shīī movement that came to be known (after the former) as al-Shaykhiyya (= “Shaykhism”). The Bāb quite often cited this complex khuṭba and came to comment on a number of its verses.

² There are other khuṭbas and writings of the Bāb which begin or contain passages very similar to the opening sentences of the Khuṭba al-Jidda. See, for example, the ‘Second Khuṭba written near the staging post of Ṣafrā’ in INBMC 91: 46-7 and the Khuṭba al-Dhikr (see bib.).

“A” which perhaps symbolizes the power of revelation through the Divine Word. It is this letter “A” which occurs at the beginning of the four letter Arabic plural **الاء** (ālā') meaning “benefits” (or “blessings”, “favours”, etc.; the sing. **الى** ilan) and this explains why the Bāb chose this term. The transcendent celestial realities were separated when the first, primordial and archetypal letter of singularity, the letter “A” (orthographically a single upright straight line **ا** alif = with abjad numerical value of one) came to bear upon the realms of creation resulting in organization and differentiation.

Sunnī and Shī'ī Islamic traditions have it that the young Jesus (a two-month old baby in one Shī'ī version!) miraculously defined this first letter of the Semitic (Hebrew-Arabic) alphabets (as the initial “A” of the *abjad* mnemonic system) before his bewildered Jewish school teacher. He stated that “A” signified the “Benefits of God” (ālā'-Allāh).¹ This foundational understanding of this first letter (“A”) of the alphabet is developed in the

¹ There are many Sunnī and Shī'ī examples of the story of Jesus' first day at school and of his miraculous explanation of the basmala or of the Hebrew/ Arabic alphabet set out by means of the (Arabic) abjad system. A Sunnī example can be read in some versions of the *Qiṣaṣ al-'anbiyā'* of Muhammad b. 'Abd-Allāh al-Kisā'ī (fl. 10th/11th cent. CE?) such as the edition of Ṭāhir ibn Sālimah (Tunis, 1998 p. 373; cf. Eisenberg ed. 1922 p. 306, trans. Thackston Jr., 1978, p. 332). A Shī'ī version transmitted through Abū Ja'far or the 5th Imam Muhammad al-Bāqir (d. c.126/743) is contained in the *Biḥar al-anwār* of Majlisī (Bihar, 2nd ed. Vol. 14 pp. 286-7). In both these versions Jesus states that “the Letter “A” (Alif) signifies the “Benefits of God” (ālā' Allāh). Note also the repeated qur'ānic affirmation of such benefits in the Surat al-Raḥman (the All-Merciful, Q. 56:16ff).

cosmological symbolism of early Shaykhī exegetical gnosis. In his *Sharḥ āyat al-kursī* (Commentary on the Throne Verse, Q: 2:155), for example, Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī (d. 1259/1843) states:

And the [letter] “A” (al-alif) indicates the **الإاء الله** “Blessings” of God (ālā’ Allāh) unto His creation through the Benediction (al-na`īm) of the primordial wilāya (imamocentric divine “providence”) (bi-wilāyat al-ūlā) for such is the acme of existence (itmām al-wujūd) and its perfection (kamāl). Its total wholeness (al-jummā`) is an entirety (ajma`) which is all inclusive (al-jamī`) relative to the Qur’ān and the Book (al-kitāb), as well as the “horizons” (al-afāq) and the “selves” (al-anfus) since the “Yea Indeed!” (al-na`m) with which God (exalted be He) assented [to creation] is that by which He created you, provided for you, then caused you to die and raised you up to life. And (likewise) all Existence (al-mawjūdāt) according to three modes in three worlds, the world of the Empryeon (‘ālam al-jabarūt), the world of the Kingdom (‘ālam al-malakūt) and the world of the earthly dominion (‘ālam al-mulk)” (Tafsīr āyat al-kursī, mss. 1141. item No. 8 p.22 [pagination supplied]).

According to KhJ 1:4-5 the cosmogonic process continues with the division of the firmaments from the realm of “the theophanic Cloud” (‘ālam al-`amā’). There was again a division (ḥifẓ^{an}) suggestive of the Arabic letter “H” (al-hā’) which in one of its graphical forms **هـ** exhibits something of a duality.¹ The dual ‘channels’ hinted at in the letter “H” seem to have been understood by the Bāb

¹ In this connection one is strongly reminded of the ‘Great Shaykh’ Muḥyi al-Dīn Ibn al-`Arabī’s cosmological discussion of the relationship between the letters “W” **و** wāw and “H” **هـ** al-hā’ in his *Kitāb al-Mīm wa’l-wāw wa’l-nūn* (ed. Charles Andre Gilis, Paris: al-Bouraq Press), pp. 66.

on cosmic and ethical lines.¹ The word Bāb (“Gate”) also has an abjad value of five which corresponds to the numerical value of this letter “H” which is sometimes depicted as a pentalpha (☆) and which has a range of meanings in Shīʿī-Shaykhī Islamic mysticism and gnosis (Rashtī, Sharḥ.. ism al-a`zam). It can be viewed as a gateway to realization and a symbol of the reality of the Temple (haykal) of the religion of God in the person of His representative or Messenger.

The sphere, realm or person of the theophanic “Cloud” (al-`amāʾ) is very important and often mentioned within the writings of the Bāb. The non-qurʾānic word `amāʾ (“cloud”) is frequent in the early Qayyūm al-asmāʾ (mid. 1844 CE) and other writings as it is, for example, in the Futuḥāt al-makkiyya (“Meccan Disclosures”) of Ibn al-`Arabī (see Lambden, 1984, Appendix). It became a theological term on the basis of its senses in a well-known Prophetic ḥadīth uttered in reply to the question of Abū Razīn al-`Aqīlī, “Where was God before He created the heavens and the earth?”. One version of the Prophet Muhammad’s reply reads as follows:

“[He was] in a Cloud (al-`amāʾ) with atmosphere [air] (hawāʾ) above it and [air] (hawāʾ) underneath it. Then He created His Throne upon the water” (cited al-Ṭabarī, History, I, 34, trans. Rosenthal, 1:204).

¹ The duality indicated above is sometimes expressed as an ethico-cosmic duality. Following early Shaykhī teaching, the Bāb, often related this to the symbolism of the twin “gulfs” (ṭutunjayn) or waterways. They have to do with “Paradise” and with the realm of “Hell” presided over by the Imam or divine representative.

For the Bāb the transcendent inner sphere of realization and of the divine theophany is the divine “Cloud”. In his writings it is sometimes a personification of the divine Will (al-mashiyya) reflected in the theophanic person of his exalted manifestation. It is symbolic of the maẓhar-i ilāhī (“Manifestation of God”) who is also symbolized by the Sinaitic Tree (al-shajara). Within this theophanic “Tree” the Divine as His radiant Logos-Persona (nafs) can be related to and (indirectly) visioned. The radiant glory of His beatific transfiguration is reflected in His divine and sometimes beclouded intermediary. Such is indicated in beautiful language in Kh-J I: 6-7.

The complex symbolism in Kh-J I:7 seems to indicate that the Person of the Manifestation of God is the source or “Dawning-Place” of divine revelation expressed through what is written in “snow-white script” on the black horizon of existence. The Call of God unto humankind is voiced through the verdant or “Green Tree” of Prophethood which celebrates the authority of God over the realms of creation.

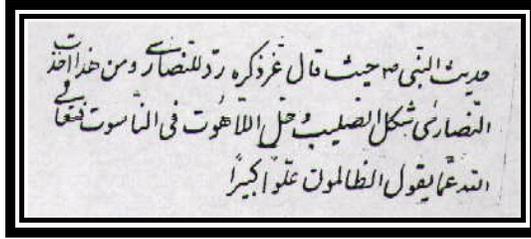
Kh-J II : Divine Theophany and the Tripartite Reality of the Bāb.

Kh-J paragraph II expresses similar theological themes to those articulated in cosmological terms in the opening paragraph. The divine handiwork or artistry (sana`) is evident in all existing things (dhawāt al-mawjūdāt), such that realms of creation might hearken to His being but be aware that the maintenance

of the divine transcendence is paramount. The Bāb repeatedly stressed the transcendence and unknowability of God. God is only ever indirectly made manifest. The “Divine Essence” is indirectly made known through His intermediary manifestation (*tajallī* or *ẓuhūr*) because there is an “essential detachedness of the Divine Names and Attributes (*al-asmā' wa'l-ṣifāt*)” from the exalted “Divine Essence”. The gnosis of His Essence (*ma`rifat al-dhāt*) is never an understanding of His Ultimate Reality.

After the shift from cosmic unicity and duality, variously spoken about in Kh-J (I-II), comes the decree of multiplicity or triplicity (*tathlīth*). This seems to be interpreted symbolically as the reality of the “threefold” Gatehood of the word Bāb. ¹ Kh-J II: 4-6 presupposes various cosmological traditions of the Imams about the Divine potencies generating creation and a prophetic tradition (*ḥadīth*) in which the Arabian Prophet commented upon the Christian failure to acknowledge the strict oneness of God on account of forms of the doctrine of the trinity understood tritheistically as encapsulated in the *shakl al-ṣalīb* or “form of the cross”. One citation of this prophetic tradition by the Bāb reads as follows:

¹ The doctrines of the “third entity” (*al-shay' al-thālīth*) as the mode of the God-humankind link in Ibn al-Arabī's *Inshā' al-Dawā'ir* (“The Generation of the Cycles”) may be profitably compared with these statements of the Bāb (see Arabic text and Takeshita, 1982).



The ḥadīth of the Prophet [Muhammad]... in refutation of the Christians: `And from this the Christians took the form of the cross (shakl al-ṣalīb) and the descent (ḥall) of the Divinity (al-lāhūt) into the human sphere (al-nāsūt). But exalted be God, Lofty and Mighty, above that which these transgressors assert (trans. from the Bāb, Q-Zawara, INBMC 69: 425).

Many of the Bāb's major and several minor works contain Qur'ān-like refutations of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity".¹⁼² Commenting on Q. 2:111 in his early Tafsir sūrat al-baqara (Q. 2) the Bāb denies Jews and Christians a place in Paradise on account of their various forms of *shirk* (associating gods with God). Christians will not enter paradise if they associate themselves, Jesus or God in a haykal al-tathlīth, a "tritheistic configuration" or "trinitarian persona"

2. See, for example, T-Baqara, f.254f (on Q. 2:1-2) cf. f.12, 264 (on 2:116); Qayyūm al-asmā' (henceforth QA) 61:245; 91:365; 72:250; T-Tawhid [INBMC 69]:2-13[10ff]), T. Basmala, f.339(b); T-Kawthar, f.19b T-Aṣr: f 84ff,98; T-Hā' (1):4, 238f, 257f; T-Akhī 14: f.414; Q- Mahfuz : f.79-80; Untitled: INBMC14:163-80.; Sahifa Ja`fariyya INBMC 96:51). The use of the Syriac loan words lāhūt and nāsūt for "divinity" and "humanity" in this tradition have a long history in Islamic trinitarian discussions as can be seen in the use of these terms by the Zaydī al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm, in his Radd `alā al-Naṣārā, 317ff; Mansur al-Ḥallāj and al-Shahrastānī in the section of Christians in his al-Milal 2:220 where a Christian opinion is expressed to the effect that Jesus' ascension involved awareness of al-lāhūt (Divinity) in/through al-nasūt (the humanity).

that confounds the pristine Divine Oneness. For the Bāb God is not "a fourth among four" or the "third of three" (cf. Q. 5:77, etc). His Oneness precludes any direct link between his Essence and his creation (T. Baqara, f.254f).

The Christian cross ¹⁼² was often viewed by the Bāb in the light of the above prophetic tradition as an essentially threefold form suggestive of heretical forms of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity (tathlīth). In Kh-J II: 5ff, however, instead of denouncing a tritheistic Christian heresy, he seems to interpret this triplicity on positive lines by viewing the tripartite nature of the "cross" as something suggestive of the three Arabic letters making up the word Bāb (باب = [1] "B"+ [2] "a"+ [3] "b"). The word Bāb has a central "A" and the two adjacent letter "B"s, acting as alphabetical counterparts of each other.

When reference is made to "the upright letter "A" (alif al-qā'im) positioned betwixt two streams (al-nahrayn), the mention of "two streams" strongly suggests the "two gulfs" (ṭutunjayn) mentioned in the Khuṭba al-Ṭutunjiyya (Sermon of the Gulf"). Like the upright letter "A", the first Imam `Alī himself stands over (wāqif `alā) two dimensions of reality. This is interpreted in messianic terms by Sayyid Kāẓim Rashfī and the Bāb himself. Like Imam `Alī, the expected Qā'im, in the eschatological age, presides over the two "gulfs" of a new existence. The central

² A cross is basically the intersection of two lines transverse to each other which became a widespread symbol of life in pre-Christian antiquity. From the 2nd cent. CE the cruciform became an important symbol of the Christian religion on account of Jesus' death by crucifixion.

letter “A’ is certainly indicative of the promised Qā’im in early Shaykhī thought and certain writings of the Bāb. ¹

When in Kh-J II: 7-8 the Bāb states that the forgoing materials were given such that persons might come to a realization regarding “the Dawning-Place of the breezes of the Sinaitic Morn”, he is almost certainly once again alluding to his messianic position as the Gate (Bāb) to the Hidden Imam and fountainhead of inspired verses. Detailed comments upon such motifs as “brackish Abyss” (al-lujjat al-ujāj), “Snow-white Logos-Word” (kalimat al-bayḍā’), “hollow depth of the seventh Sea” (qa`r yamm al-sābi`) and “Green Ocean”, are beyond the scope of this introductory and selective commentary. It must suffice to say that these terms have something of a background in Shī`ī gnosis and such texts as the aforementioned Khuṭba al-ṭutunjiyya (Sermon of the Gulf).

¹ Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā`ī taught that the letter “A” at the centre of the threefold letter “W” (wāw) in the inverted letter “W” of the Shī`ī graphical form of the Mightiest Name of God (al-ism al-a`ẓam) has messianic implications (al-Risāla al-Rashtiyya or Trestise for Mullā `Alī ibn Mīrẓā Jān Rashī, written 1226/ 1811 and found in Jawāmi` al-kalim, 1:103ff). In his Sharḥ ism-i a`ẓam (“Commentary on the [Graphical form of] the Mightiest Name [of God]” Sayyid Kāẓim Rashī gives the seventh graphical item (the inverted letter و “W” or Arabic wāw) within `Imam `Alī’s poetical depiction of the Mightiest Name of God, a messianic significance. He states that it “alludes to the [messianic] Proof (al-ḥujjat), the son of Ḥasan [al-Askarī, the 11th Imam, d. c. 260/874]”. The central (hidden) letter “A” (alif) of the three letters of wāw when spelled out in full (in three letters و او = w + a+ w) represents the Qā’im or Shi`i messianic “Ariser” as one “stationed between the two gulfs (ṭutunjayn), the isthmus (barzakh) between the two worlds”. The letter “wāw” is thus a triplicity of messianic import.

Kh-J III : Renewed creation, the covenant and the eschatological theophany

Allusion is made in Kh-J III:1f to the pattern of seven successive *khiṣāl* (hypostatic divine “potencies”) spelled out in various traditions of the Imams, including one key tradition related from Abī `Abd-Allāh, Ja`far al-Ṣādiq (d. c. 148/765) which was frequently drawn upon by the Bāb. The seven “potencies” listed in this tradition form a major and often determinative aspect of the Bāb’s vocabulary. It reads,

"There is not a single thing in the heavens or on the earth but came to be through these seven potencies (*khiṣāl*) : [1] *mashiyya* ("the divine Will"); [2] *irāda* ("the divine Intention"); [3] *qadar* ("the divine Foreordainment"); [4] *qiḍā'* ("the divine Accomplishment"); [5] *idhn* ("the divine Authorization") [6] *kitāb* ("the [Universal] Book") and [7] *ajal* ("the divinely allotted Time"), (Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:149).¹

When in Kh-J III:1 reference is made to “the decree of the divine Destiny (*ḥukm al-qadar*)” (No. 3) then to the “Sea of the Divine Accomplishment” (*yawm al-qiḍā'*) (No. 4) following previous references to cosmic unicity, duality and triplicity, one catches a glimpse of the influence of this foundational ḥadith text. Creation is unfolded to the end that all existing things rise up “nigh the glorious

¹ The sixth Imam added after this listing that “whoso claims to be able to violate this unitative schemata is assuredly an infidel” (Kulaynī, *al-Kāfī*, 1:149).

transfiguration (tajallī) of that crimson Light (nūr al-ḥamrā')” which is expressive of the “Justice of God” (ʿadl) and His “Wisdom” (ḥikmat).

Kh-J III: 3-4 also contains allusion to a renewed eschatological version of the primordial covenant which all potential beings (kull dharrāt al-khalq) uttered in pre-eternity through their positive voicing of the “Yea! Verily! We do indeed testify” (see Q.7:172 in Sufi Tafsīr). This in acceptance of the Divine purpose or primordial covenant (ʿahd) (see Bowering, 1980). The Bāb seems to allude to a second testimony evoked by a pristine eschatological theophany in “Snow-white Light” which not only includes a testimony to His Oneness (tawḥīd) (cf. the shahāda) but a glorification of His Reality through six key Divine Names : [1] al-Bārī (the Creator), [2] the Badi` (Regenerator), [2] the Single (al-Witr), [4] al-Ḥayy (the Living One), [5] al-Qayyūm (the Self-Subsisting) and al-Qadīm (the Pre-existent). The Single, Transcendent, Self-Subsisting Deity is a regenerative Creator capable of bringing forth a new creation.

Kh-J IV : The folly of the Ishrāqī philosophers, followers of Shihab al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (d. 587/1191).

In preparing his contemporaries for the fast approaching era of messianic fulfillment and for the advent of the realized eschatological age, the Bāb thought it fit to dismiss the role and authority of all kingly, clerical and other authorities. He centered attention on the guidance of the hidden Imam and himself as his

representative. As the kingdom of all things was “returning to God” (al-mulk li-lāhī) the theologians, ulamā’, philosophers, pre-Islamic religionists (ahl al-kitāb = Jews, Christians, etc) gnostics and mystics of all kinds were strongly criticized for their inadequate theological convictions and philosophical speculations. This is especially marked in highly esoteric language in the Qayyūm al-asmā’ (mid. 1844 CE) and other early writings including many of the khuṭbas delivered in the course of the pilgrimage journey.

Two of the most important religio-philosophical thinkers, especially famous in the Shī‘ī world, were the massively influential Shaykh al-Ishrāq (Master of Illumination) Shihab al-Dīn Abū’l-Futūḥ Yaḥyā ibn Ḥabash ibn Amīrak Yaḥyā al-Suhrawardī (c. 549-587 AH = c.1154-1191 CE) and the Safavid era acme of Shī‘ī polymatic philosophical gnosis, Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Shīrāzī (d.1050/1640), commonly known as Mullā Ṣadrā. Both of these important Persian thinkers in various ways upheld an affirmative stance respecting mystical insight and rationalistic philosophy or discursive reasoning. The Bāb viewed their philosophical theories and religious perspectives (especially as promulgated by his contemporaries) as incompatible with a strictly apophatic Shī‘ī-Shaykhī theology. Their viewpoint, in the estimation of the Bāb, was incompatible with Qur’ānic and twelver Imamī guidance. It was inappropriate at the time of the onset of the era of messianic fulfillment.

Suhrawardī and the Ishrāqī philosophers.

The folly of the Ishrāqī sages or historical and contemporary (Shiraz located?) philosophically minded followers of al-Suhrawardī ¹ is clearly indicated in the Kh-J and elsewhere (cf. the ahl al-anwār or “people of lights” in the QA; see QA 104,108, etc). Best known as the author of the weighty Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq (Wisdom of Illumination), Suhrawardī wrote many important philosophical and mystical texts most of which remain in manuscript and little studied.

That the Bāb underlined the folly of the early Qajar period Ishrāqī thinkers who gave religious and philosophical weight to al-Ḥikma al-falsafa al-ishrāqiyya (‘Illuminationist philosophy’) indicates his rejection of the intellectual and spiritual philosophy derived from the orally transmitted teachings and writings of Suhrawardī and his many disciples and followers. The theology and metaphysical philosophy of Suhrawardī were centered in an ontology of Light with God as the ‘Light of Lights’ (nūr al-anwār) in whom quiddity or “essence and existence are uniquely merged” (māhiyya `ayn al-wujūd) (Kitāb al-Mashārī`, 395 trans. Netton 1989: 258).

¹ Full biographical details cannot be given here. Note though that Suhrawardī who was known as al-Shahīd (“the Martyr”) al-Maqtūl (“the Executed”) came from a village near Zanjān in north-eastern Persia and came to be executed at Aleppo (in Syria) in 1191 CE by the order of the famous `Ayyubid leader Saladin (Salāḥ al-Dīn). Suhrawardī wrote a great deal aside from his well-known Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq (“The Philosophy of Illumination”). Many of his philosophical writings await adequate publication and detailed analysis.

Though space prevents an adequate account of such teachings, they were viewed by the Bāb as theologically suspect. He appears to criticize Ishrāqī devotees for being overly concerned with mundane philosophical issues centering upon the fourfold world of nature (al-tarbī; cf. the four elements). This despite the fact that the Bāb had appeared as the mouthpiece of the Divine Will (al-mashiyya) in the threefold configuration of his Gatehood (see above on Kh-J II:5f).

Ishtāqīs, the Bāb contends, are occupied with a philosophy centered on things other than God and His representative. This as persons distracted from the presence of the theophanic locus of the Divine Will operative through him. Their theological and personal plight is further summed up at Kh-J III: 3-4. These Ishtāqī thinkers entertained erroneous ideas surrounding something as theologically basic as the “realities of the Divine Attributes” (ḥaqā'iq al-ṣifāt). Such ideas were inadequate compared to the strictly apophatic theology of the Bāb through whom the eschatological promises were about to be realized. ¹

¹ Though the Bāb did not have a high opinion of the Ishtāqīs of his day both he and Baha'u'llah were influenced by Ishtāqī rooted terminology, as well. to an ever greater degree, by that of Ibn al-'Arabī and his 'school'.

Kh-J V: Sound theology and the errors of the followers of Mullā Şadrā (d. c.1050/1641).

Having judged Ishrāqī philosophers in a critical way, the Bāb next passes critical judgment upon the followers of the prolific and polymathic Muhammad ibn Ibrāhīm Şadr al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d.1050/1641) ¹ who was influenced by many streams of Islamic mystical and philosophical thought, including that of the abovementioned Suhrawardī and the great mystic Ibn al-`Arabī (d. Damascus, 638/1240).

Influenced by Suhrawardī, Mullā Sadrā reformulated aspects of his Ishrāqī thought.² He developed and critically commented upon the works of many foundational Islamic philosophers and mystical thinkers, including the Persian born Abū `Alī Ibn Sīnā' (or Avicenna, d. 428 /1037) and Ibn al-`Arabī whom he quite frequently cited. After emphasizing the wide range of senses that waḥdat al-wujūd (loosely, “existential oneness”; not a phrase used by Ibn al`Arabī himself) came to have, Hossein Ziai has written that “waḥdat al-wujūd is a

¹ Mulla Şadrā was one of most original and influential of Islamic philosophers. Much has been written about him (see bib. and Morris, 1981:3; Zia'i, 1996; Rizvi, 2001,5; Kalin, 2003). His pupils (and sons-in-law) included the Sufi inclined Shī'ī thinkers `Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī (d.1072/1661) and Muhammad Muḥsin Fayḍ al-Kāshānī (d. 1091/1680). Today there are numerous Iranian and other students of his philosophy. Continuing attempts are made to fathom his magnum opus and principal work, the massive al-Ḥikmat al-Muta`āliyya fī'al-asfār al-`aqliyya al-arba`a (“The Transcendent Wisdom in the Four Rational Journeys”).

² Mullā Şadrā wrote succinct glosses on Avicenna's Shifā' (in his Ta'liqāt al-Ilāhiyyāt, ‘Glosses on the Metaphysics’) and on Suhrawardī's Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq.

cornerstone of Ṣadrain metaphysics without which his whole world view would collapse” (1996: 647). Though markedly influenced by the thought and terminology of Ibn al-`Arabī, the Bāb strongly criticized the shirk (“polytheism”) of his allegedly heretical waḥdat al-wujūd. That Mullā Ṣadrā has a close relationship to the thought of Ibn al-`Arabī was perhaps enough for the Bāb to critique him as is indicated in his response to a question of Mīrzā Muhammad Sa`īd Zavāraī (= Q-Zavaraī, see bib. and below p. ADD).

The deep philosophical and theological teachings spelled out in scores of complex Arabic and Persian writings of Mullā Ṣadrā were studied anew in early Qajar Persia and the wider Shī`ī Middle East. They remain seminal and very important in numerous philosophical and theological circles in Iran today. Numerous Iranian and other students of his many faceted theological philosophy have attempted to fathom his magnum opus and principal work, the massive al-Ḥikmat al-Muta`āliyya fī l-asfār al-`aqliyya al-arba`a (“The Transcendent Wisdom in the Four Rational Journeys”) (see F. Rahman, Elr II: 744-747).

For the Bāb, Mullā Ṣadrā's complex ontological philosophy and theology again compromised his apophatic theology of Divine transcendence. In his view it failed to inspire Sadrian devotees to seek for truth appropriately on the eschatological Day of God. In KH-J V:1ff the Bāb set out a sound theology warning against any wayward notion of union (al-waṣl) with the Supreme Creator

and Ultimate Godhead who is One Wholly Other. The Mulla Ṣadrā devotees are not only blind “to the gnosis of the Lord” (ma`rifat al-rabb) but cast aside the guidance of the Qur`ān. The Ḥikmat al-Muta`āliyya (“Transcendental Wisdom”) they espoused profited them but little. The Bāb held that they championed naught but what they themselves treasured in such works as Mullā Ṣadrā’s (Kitāb) al-Mashā`ir (the “[Book of] Metaphysical Sciences” or “Prehensions”) which largely centers upon complex ontological and related theological-philosophical issues.

As a young man resident in Shiraz, the Bāb may also have had direct contact with the Ṣadrian philosophers of this beautiful city. The Shiraz-located Khān Madrasa was built by the nobleman Allāhwirdī Khān for Mulla Ṣadra himself at the time of Shāh `Abbās (d. 1038/1629). It was there that “Sadra composed his major works and trained his choice students” (Ziai, 1996, 637; Kalin, 2006:132). Whether or not the Bāb actually had any personal contact, he remained unimpressed with the gnosis or level of insight of the followers of Mullā Ṣadrā.

The Bāb was doubtless aware of and influenced by the al-Mashā`ir of Mullā Ṣadrā through the detailed and vehement refutation of this work made by

Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā'ī (d. 1241/1826) (see below on Kh-J VI).¹ Around the time of the Bāb, Qajar thinkers such as Mullā `Alī Nūrī (d.1246/1830), were moved to comment upon the Asfar and to study other writings of Mullā Ṣadrā. In Shīrāz and elsewhere some busied themselves with the subtleties of Mullā Ṣadrā's ontological philosophy, with issues associated with wujūd ("existence"), mahiyya ("quiddity") and the like. For Mullā Ṣadra, ontological and related theological-philosophical questions touching upon "existence" (al-wujūd) were the very "foundation of the principles of wisdom" (assas al-qawā'id al-ḥikmiyya) (al-Mashā'ir, 3). The Bāb, however, saw the eschatological urgency of Qā'imīyya (or "Gatehood" al-bābiyya) as of much greater moment than concern with Ṣadrian ontological theories centering on the "principality of quiddity" (aṣalat al-mahiyya). Ṣadrian concern with mahiyya ("what is to be") paled in importance in the mind of the Bāb before the issues centering upon *what is to be and who is to come* at the eschaton.

¹ Shaykh Aḥmad's Sharḥ al-Mashā'ir ("Commentary on the Metaphysics") has several times been published in lithograph and other editions though this was a decade or more after the death of the Bāb who would have known it through his association with Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī and other Shaykhis from the early 1840s.(see below on Kh-J VI). The work was first published in the original and a French translation by Henri Corbin (see bib.) and has recently become available in a revised edition with English translation by Morewedge (for details see bib.). Shaykh Aḥmad wrote critical commentaries upon several of Mullā Ṣadrā's works including his al-Mashā'ir and al-Ḥikmah al-'arshiyya ("The Wisdom of the Throne") which were also published in lithograph and later edition(s) after the lifetime of the Bāb (see bibliography below).

Within a number of Mullā Ṣadrā's more than fifty works¹ there are passages which came to be viewed by some among the non-philosophically minded and orthodox thinkers as theologically inadequate from certain strictly tawḥīd (Divine Oneness) or apophatic theological vantage points. Such passages were noted and commented upon in detail by al-Aḥsā'ī in his *Sharḥ al-Mashā'ir*. At the very outset of this critical commentary he refers to al-Mashā'ir of Mullā Ṣarā as being "putridly corpulent" (al-ghathth min al-samīn) and sets out to clarify and purify things in the light of the clear guidance of the Imams who are the "people of Truth" (ahl al-ḥaqq) (Sh al-Mashā'ir, 1). In particular, the implications of Mullā Ṣadrā's celebrated maxim, "The basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa ("Simple Reality / "Simplicity of] Reality") is [contains] all things (kull al-asha')" (Mashā'ir, 1992: 63, etc) when articulated in certain theological contexts, invited misgivings². In this

¹ See bibliography below and personal Hurqalya URL. In addition to the *Kitāb al-Mashā'ir* note also the following important works of Mullā Ṣadrā, *al-Shawāhid al-rubūbiyya* ("Lordly Witnesses"); *al-Mabda' wa al-ma'ād* ("The Genesis and the Culmination"); *Mafāṭīḥ al-Ghayb* ("The Keys to the Hidden Realm"); *Risalat al-Hashr* (Treatise on Resurrection); *Risālah fī al-ḥuduth* (Treatise on the Generation [of the World]); *al-Ḥikmah al-'arshiyya* ("The Wisdom of the Throne"); *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-kaīm* ([Incomplete] Commentary on the Qur'ān) and *Sharḥ Usūl al-kāfi* (Commentary on [Kulayni's] Sufficient Foundations").

² Though a master of 'irfān (mystical gnosis) and one with Sufi sympathies, Mullā Ṣadrā, according to Rizvi, only came to be accused of takfīr ("heresy") a long time after his passing in the unreliable, late 19th century *Qīṣaṣ al-'ulamā'* of Tunakabūnī (see Rizvi, 2002: 189-191). In criticizing the followers of Suhrawardī and Mullā Ṣadrā in the *Khuṭba al-Jidda*, the Bāb may also be repeating popular anti-Sufi or anti-philosophy notions rather than easily substantiated criticisms of these great philosopher theologians. This, of course, in order to focus attention on the immanent eschaton and away from all human modes of discourse and authority.

respect we may note, for example, the following statement “the Necessary Existent [= God] (al-wājib) is the *basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa* (“Simplicity of Reality”) from every point of view... each *basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa* is, on account of its unity, the totality [of entities]” (al-Mashā’ir, [1992] 59, 62-3, etc).

Similarly, in Mullā Ṣadrā’s celebrated *Ḥikmat al-`Arshīyya* (loosely, “Wisdom of the Throne”), we read, “All that exists is the *basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa* which in its [His] Oneness (*waḥdat*) is everything (*kull al-ashyā`*)” ([ed. 2000] p.13). Again, in the magnum opus, *al-Ḥikma al-muta`āliyya*: “all [levels of] existence are simple Ipseities [entities] (*al-wujūdāt huwiyyāt basīṭa*) (vol.1:50) for “He, exalted be He, is the *basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa* (“Simplicity of Reality”) (vol. 6:100ff). Examples could be greatly multiplied (see Dagheim, 1:188-192).

Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā`ī wrote lengthy and detailed commentaries upon Mullā Sadra’s *Kitāb al-mashā`ir* and (*Kitāb*) *Ḥikmat al-`arshīyya*... (“The Wisdom of the Throne”), details about which cannot be registered here.¹ In these works he strongly criticized the Safavid sage for compromising the transcendence and unity of God and straying away from the guidance meted out by the infallible Imams as encapsulated in authoritative *hadīth*. He was unconvinced that the allegedly all-inclusive genitive phrase *basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa* could be a unicity including

¹ The multi volume *Sharḥ al-ḥikma al-`arshīyya* (“Commentary upon the Wisdom of the Throne”) of Shaykh Aḥmad is a weighty commentary on the *al-Ḥikma al-`Arshīyya* of Mullā Ṣadrā which was completed in Kirmānshāh in 1236/ 1820-1 (Pub: Tabriz, 1271 [+ 78-9] /1854/61-2; see *Fihrist* 53; cf. Corbin, 1982, index Ahmad Aḥsā`ī; Morris, 1981).

all levels of being and reality. The Bāb followed al-Aḥsā'ī's example in Kh-J V and elsewhere and around twenty-five years after him Baha'u'llah penned several detailed scriptural Tablets (alwāḥ) commenting on the implications of the Basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa ("The Simplicity of Being") concept (see bib.).

The Bāb himself directly commented at some length on the basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa and related concepts in his reply to one of the questions posed by Mīrzā Muhammad Sa'īd Zavāra'ī (Q-Zavara'i in INBMC 69: 422-425). He first noted that this maxim is mentioned among the [Ṣadrian and other] ḥukamā' (philosophers), then straightway adds that it is a futile affirmation that involves the attempt to demonstrate an existential relationship (al-wujūd) between al-mūjjid ("the Creator") and that which is al-mafqūd ("the non-existent"). He states that such speculation is indistutably "worthless" (bāṭil) in the estimation of such as have a disposition of "perfumed musk laden with equity" (rā'iḥat al-misk min al-inṣāf) or are numbered among those of intelligence (al-'aql) who testify to the fact that the Eternal Divine Essence (al-dhāt) has ever been alone and without associated "Divine Attributes" (al-sifāt). Theology, the Bāb indicates in this writing, really only relates indirectly to the Divine Logos-Persona (nafs), for the "Existence of the Eternal [Godhead]" (wujūd al-azal) is nothing other than what pertains to His Logos-Self (nafs). Having said this, the Bāb adds, apparently arguing against both Ibn al-'Arabī and Mullā Ṣadrā', who both utilized concepts of 'ayān al-thābita ("fixed entities") as follows:¹

¹ On Ibn al-'Arabī's concept of the 'ayān al-thābita ("fixed entities") see, for example, Chittick 2005[7], 40-42. He writes, "One of Ibn al-'Arabī's best known technical terms is 'ayn thābita, "fixed entity". The fixed entities are things of the universe as known by God for all eternity... The entities are "fixed" because, despite their nonexistence in themselves they are

He who has disrupted the ḥukamā' (philosophers) in mentioning `ayān al-thābita ("fixed [archetypal] entities") in the [Divine] Essence (al-dhāt) and mentioning the basīṭ al-ḥaqīqa ("Simple Reality/ Simplicity of Being") [Ibn al-`Arabī and Mullā Ṣadrā'] are among the establishers of His knowledge (ithbāt `ilmihi)—exalted be His Ways—since they say that knowledge (al-`ilm) is eternally before Him as something known (al-ma`lūm) although when knowledge (al-`ilm) is established so too is the existence of multiplicity within the [Divine] Essence (wujūd al-kathirāt). Their error (dhanb) is thus among the greatest of conjectures (ajall al-qiyās) for they desire to comprehend the [Divine] Essence after the likeness of the realms of creation (bi-mithl khalq al-mumkināt)" (Q. Zavaraī, 423).

The above argument is again closely related to the apophatic theology of the Bāb, frequently spelled out in numerous of his major and minor writings. In, for example, the Saḥīfa-yi `adliyya (part III) he, in very precise and clear fashion, writes,

The basis of religion (aṣl-i dīn) is the ma`rifat Allāh (knowledge of God). And the perfection of the ma`rifat Allāh (knowledge of God) is tawḥīd (the divine Unity). And the perfection of tawḥīd (the divine Unity) is the negation of the Attributes and Names (nafī-yi ṣifāt va asmā') from His Sanctified Essence (dhāt-i muqaddas). And the perfection of [this apophatic] negation is the attainment of the Abyss of the Divine Unicity (lujjat al-aḥadiyya) through the gnosis of the [apophatic] abstraction (`ilm-i qaṭa')... (S-`Adliyya, III: 15).

It would be rash to assert, without a detailed investigation of primary sources, that the wondrous though abstruse universe of Mullā Ṣadrā's thought was without direct or indirect influence upon Shaykhī or Bābī and Bahā'ī religious thought.¹ It will be seen

eternally known to God" (p.40). For Mullā Ṣadrā's use of `ayn al-thābit, "which is neither existent nor nonexistent" and `ayān al-thābita see Dagheim (1428/2007), vol.1:92-94, 677-8.

¹ In his recent work on Mullā Ṣadrā, Ibrahim Kalin has doubted any significant connection between Mullā Ṣadrā's thought and the emergent Shaykhī movement and Bābī-Bahā'ī religions. He writes, "No compelling case... has been made as to how Sadra's ideas might have influenced

below that Shaykh Aḥmad's Commentary on the al-Mashā'ir probably influenced the language and thought of the Bāb as evidenced in the Kh-J (esp. at Kh-J VII: 2). While the Bāb challenged the theology of Ibn al-`Arabī and Mullā Ṣadrā', he continued to utilize terminology and ideas that were central to their ontological and theological perspectives, e.g. certain uses of the term mash`ar (pl. mashā'ir), itself, loosely, 'sanctum' or 'inner realization'.¹ Further interesting, largely unexplored ramifications of Ṣadrian ideas also exist, for example, in aspects of Bahā'ī beliefs about the 'kingdoms of existence' and human progress in the worlds of the afterlife as articulated by the Bahā'ī leader `Abdu'l-Bahā' (1844-1921) (see Mufavaḍāt / 'Some Answered Questions', index).

or contributed to the establishment of the Shaykhi school. The scanty references to Sadra, his works, ideas or school in the current literature of Babism and Baha'ism are too general and indirect to warrant any reasonable link" (BEIP 2006:133). Kalin's earlier 2003 article is also far from accurate when he writes, "there is no direct reference to Sadra, his works or his school either in the current literature of Babism or Baha'ism" (2003: ADD). The evidence is much greater than Kalin realizes both for the links to the writings of the Bāb and to the Bahā'ī scriptural writings. The Bāb explicitly refers to Mullā Ṣadra and / or his followers in several of his works aside from the Kh-J and the Q-Zavara'ī including, for example, the 'Khuṭba near Medina' in INBMC 91: 42f; and the text in INBMC 86:95-6. as well as his Ṣaḥīfa-yi `Adliyya. He underlined the absence of any direct "link" (rabṭ) between God and the realms of creation and removed talk of attributes from apophatically grounded theological discussions. .

¹ In Qayyūm al-asmā' there are a few sometimes critical addresses to the ahl al-ma`sharayn ('People of the two Ma`shars') which are suggestive (see QA 74-74; 82) as are the passages linking the ma`shar with the fū`ād (Inmost heart) including QA 4; 29; 44; 49-50, 88, etc). In QA 44 (Sūrat al-Ruyā') verse 6, for example, the Bāb states, "And the believers did not bear anything of what God, in very truth, had established above the Divine Throne (al-`arsh), through the inner realization [or sanctum] of the inmost heart (mash`ar al-fū`ād)." (see also QA 4; 29; 44; 49-50).

Kh-J VI : The Twin exponents of Shīṭī Islamic wisdom, Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāṭī (d. 1241/1826) and Sayyid Kāẓim Raṣṭī (d. 1259/1843).

In Kh-J VI:1-18 the focus of attention is on the pivotal eschatological roles of the twin architects of the early Qajar period Shīṭī movement which came to be known as al-Shaykhiyya (Shaykhism) or Kashfiyya (“Unveiling”), namely, the Arab born philosopher-theologian Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsāṭī and his Persian born successor Sayyid Kāẓim al-Ḥusaynī al-Raṣṭī (d. 1259/1843). Both were extremely erudite and polymathic in both Arabic and Persian. They promoted sometimes novel perspectives inspired from the occulted yet “living” (twelver) Imamī fountainheads of guidance with whom they claimed an intimate spiritual relationship.

The first two Shaykhī leaders were very highly regarded by the Bāb as the Kh-J VI:2 makes perfectly clear when they are alluded to as the “sun” and the “moon” at the time of the Islamic eschatological daybreak. During his approximately one year sojourn in Karbala the “Sacred Land” (arḍ al-muqaddasa) in the early 1840s (see the Bāb, cited Muntakhabat, 128, trans. SWB 181), the Bāb imbibed much Shaykhī wisdom direct from Sayyid Kāẓim Raṣṭī and his associates. This to the degree that he referred to Raṣṭī in his early Risāla fī al-sulūk (“Treatise on the Path”) as “my Lord (sayyidī), my firm support (mu`tammadī) and my teacher (mu`allimī) (INBA Mss. 6006C, 74).

The Bāb’s reference to the twin architects of al-Shaykhiyya (Shaykhism) as bestowing guidance at the time of the ḥukm al-inshā’ (“verdict of recreation”)

(Kh-J VI:2b) is almost certainly rooted in the anshā' al-khalq inshā ("He [God] generated creation through a genesis (inshā')" phrase in the (abovementioned) first Khuṭba of the Nahj al-balāgha as developed by Mullā Ṣadrā' at the beginning of his al-Mashā'ir and subsequently interpreted in some detail by Shaykh Aḥmad.

Mullā Ṣadrā wrote in the al-Mashā'ir, "And through His Word (kalimat) by means of which He generated the genesis of the [world of the] hereafter and this normative realm (insha nishātī al-ākhirā wa'l-ūlā)" (al-Mashā'ir, 1). On this Shaykh Aḥmad commented as follows,

"The intention of "His Word" is the Complete Word (al-kalimat al-tamma) [cf. Q. 6:115] which is the Activity of God (fi'l Allāh) - exalted be He - His "Intention" (Irāda), His "Will" (al-mashiyya) and His Creative Powers (abdā') just as [Imam `Alī] al-Riḍā' [d. c. 203 / 818] says, "The Divine Will (al-mashiyya), the Divine Intention (irāda) and the Creative Powers (abdā') are His three Names (asmā') though their meaning is one"... the intention of the two originated realms (al-nasha'tayn)¹ are the two well established modes of creation (al-nasha'tayn al-ma'rūfatān) and whatsoever preceded each one of the [various] worlds (al-`awālim) ... the primordial created realm (nashat al-awāli) was positioned upon the primal watery Expanse (al-mā' al-awwal), the earth as the domain of death (al-arḍ al-mayyita), and upon intellects (al-`uqūl), souls (al-arwāḥ), persons (al-nufūs) and the natural realm as well as the world which is material (al-mawādd) and the one imaginal (al-mithāl). The realm of the hereafter (nashat al-ākhirā) was positioned above all of the aforementioned and above Being (al-kawn) relative to the original [worldly] realm and the

¹ In the above cited line of Mullā Ṣadrā, "the genesis of [1] the [world of the] hereafter and [2] this original realm" (insha nishātī al-ākhirā wa'l-ūlā).

barzakh (intermediary zone) as well as above the two Breaths [of the All-Merciful] (al-nafakhayn)” (Sharḥ al-Mashā’ir, unpaginated).¹

The above and related teachings by Shaykh Aḥmad expressing the Shīṭī “gnosis of regeneration” (ma`rifat al-ibdā`) appear to have inspired the Bāb at Kh-J VI:2f.

The complexity of Shaykh Aḥmad’s writing is also indicated when the Bāb, drawing on statements (aḥādīth) of the Imams about the abstrusity of the Shīṭī “Cause” (al-amr), refers to them as being “at the very pinnacle of abstraction” (sadd al-inqīṭā`) and things “virtually impenetrable” (qaṭa` al-ımtinā`). Specific Qur’ān based expository writings of Shaykh Aḥmad and Sayyid Kāẓim are alluded to when their (all but revealed!) “scriptural Tablets” (alwāḥ) are identified as Fawā’id (“Observations”) and Lawāmi` (“Brilliances”). These two words doubtless indicate the Kitāb al-Fawā’id (“The Book of Observations”) and the commentary thereon (Sharḥ al-Fawā’id) of Shaykh Aḥmad.² There would also seem to be allusion to the Lawāmi` al-Ḥusayniyya (“Husaynid Brilliances”) and / or the Lawāmi` al-Ḥikma

¹ This translation only gives a hint at the details al-Aḥsāṭī sets down.

² Both of these works were published after the Bāb’s lifetime in 19th century lithograph editions (see bib.) The important work of Shaykh Aḥmad entitled al Fawā’id (“Observations”, “Instructions” or the like) dates prior to 1216/1801. It presents twelve ‘lessons’ including one touching on the qur’ānic account of the creation of all things in six days (cf. Genesis 1 etc). His lengthy Sharḥ al fawā’id (Commentary upon the Fawā’id) was completed in 1233/1818 (Fihrist.: 20) and certain of his disciples wrote ḥashiyya (marginal glosses) or commentaries upon it (see *ibid.*).

(“The Brilliances of Wisdom”) of Sayyid Kāzim Rashtī, both of which remain in mss. and await detailed analysis.

For the Bāb, the purpose of such weighty Shaykhī writings was that receptive “hearts” (al-fu`ād) might be initiated into deep truths in preparation for a new age of bāṭinī (“deep”) revelations. It was from the time of the Qayyūm al-asmā’ and the pilgrimage period writings (1844-5) that he announced that he was communicating the bāṭinī and ta`wīl deep inner senses of the Qur`ān.

The foundational eschatological role of the twin founders of al-Shaykhiyya was also celebrated by Baha`u`llah as the following (perhaps 1880s CE passage) must suffice to illustrate:

“Within the bosom of Islam (ṣadr al-islām) many were submerged in the ocean of idle fancies and vain imaginings. Subsequent to the Seal of the Prophets (khātam-i anbiyā’) [= Muhammad] and to the purified [twelver] Imams (a`imih-yi ṭāhirīn) two souls attained unto the reality of Truth (bi-ḥaqq) and were embellished with the ornament of awareness (bi-ṭarāz-i agāhī); the late Shaykh [Aḥmad al-Ahsā`ī] and the Sayyid [Kāzim Rashtī] upon the both of them be the Glory of God, the All-Glorious (bahā`-Allāh al-abhā)... We took refuge with these two and We heard from them both what hath not been realized by any except God, the Knowing, the Discerning” (cited Ma`idih, 4:134-5)

Kh-J VI:7ff seems to express the Bāb’s bemoaning the failure of Shī`ī Muslims to appreciate the two Shaykhī leaders. In some circles a *takfīr* accusation of infidelity against Shaykh Aḥmad was taken seriously. For the Bāb al-Shaykhiyya

failed to produce insightful souls receptive to his eschatological mission. Even though in Mecca at the same time as the Bāb, eminent Shaykhis such as Mīrzā Muhammad Ḥusayn Muḥīṭ Kirmānī, one of the teachers of the sons of Sayyid Kāzīm, failed to respond adequately (MacEoin, Sources, 60-61). This despite the revelation for him of the Ṣaḥīfa bayn al-Ḥaranayn (Epistle Between the Two Shrines[= Mecca and Medina]) in response to his questions ¹ In his Kitāb al-‘ulamā’ the Bāb refers to this important text and to his being near the Meccan Ka`ba : “We sent down in the Kitāb al-Ḥaramayn (Book of the two Shrines) the directive of the Dhikr (Remembrance) nigh the Ka`ba in the Sanctified Mosque (masjid al-ḥaram)” (in INBMC 91: 89). The Bāb had encountered Kirmānī towards the very end of his pilgrimage, only weeks before his writing the Khuṭba al-Jidda. Zarandī specifically records that Kirmānī failed to adequately acknowledge the Bāb’s messianic status though he was in the vicinity of the Ka`ba itself (Dawn-Breakers, 135-137). He was not alone among leading Shaykhis of Karbala and elsewhere in responding negatively to the early claims of the Bāb and offering alternative leadership claims (see MacEoin, Early Shaykhi Reactions)

¹ In his ‘Letter to Mullā Ḥasan Gawhar’, a disciple of Sayyid Kāzīm Rashtī, the Bāb writes, “We indeed sent down a directive (ḥukm) regarding that which [Mīrzā] al-Muḥīṭ [al-Kirmānī] had enquired in the Ṣaḥīfa [bayn al] Ḥaramayn” (Arabic text cited in Afnan, ‘Ahd, 2000: 89; cf. MacEoin Early Shaykhī Reactions, 4-7). See also the ‘Letter to Mulla Ḥasan Gawhar from Bushire in INBMC 91:14-18. mentioning a “book” (Kitāb) (probably the Ṣaḥīfa bayn al-Ḥaramayn) sent down for him in Medina (p.17).

This Shaykhī inadequacy and consequent disappointment of the Bāb is reflected in the Kh-J. It was such that a new era of re-creation was initiated by God when the creative imperative letter "K" (in the qur'anic imperative "Be!" = Ar. Kun) imploded and a new post-Islamic "Cycle of Cycles" (dawr al-adwār) was initiated with the onset of the "Day of God" (li-yawm Allāh).

In early 1845 when Kh-J VI: 11-12 was written, the messianic era of fulfillment was beginning to be realized. Since the theophanic Sinaitic Tree was already calling out through the Hidden Imam via the Bāb, eschatological events were taking place. Though the language is complex, such declarations are somewhat more explicit in Kh-J VI:13ff¹. The messianic Dhikr-Allāh ("Remembrance of God") is revealing verses in the language of God (lisān Allāh) [= Arabic] through the person of the Bāb.

**KH-J VII: The Pilgrimage Journey and Islamic Pilgrimage of the Bāb
Islamic pilgrimage and messianic expectation.**

"At the age of twenty-five I [the Bāb] proceeded to Thy sacred House (bayt al-ḥaram) [Mecca] and by the time I returned to the place where I was born (al-arḍ al-awwālī...) [Shiraz], a year (ḥawl^{an}) had elapsed" (From a supplication of the Bāb in Muntakhabat, 128, trans. SWB 181).

¹ For some background and expository details relating to the Sinaitic motifs and color symbolism see Lambden, 1988; 1998 (see the revised versions in progress on my personal Hurqalya Website).

“I [the Bāb] sojourned for twenty-seven days in the sacred land (arḍ al-muqaddas) [Mecca-Medina region]” (The Bāb, ‘Letter to the ‘Lesser Uncle’ cited Afnan, ‘Ahd, 88).

“GOD, of a truth, revealed unto Me (awḥā ī) in the house of the Ka'bah (bayt al-ka`ba), 'Verily, I am God, no God is there but Me. I have singled Thee out for Myself (li-nafsī) and have chosen the Remembrance (al-dhikr) for thyself (li-nafsika) [the Bāb]. Indeed, whosoever beareth allegiance unto Thee by walking in the way of the Bāb (sabīl al-bāb), for him the recompense of the next world (ajr al-ākhirā) hath surely been prescribed' (QA LXXIX, 321; trans. Selections, 72 [adapted]).

“In the concluding year of this [Islamic] period (1260 =1844 CE) He Who is Himself the Founder of the House (vāḍi`-yi bayt) [the Bāb] went on pilgrimage (ḥajj)... there was a vast concourse of pilgrims from every sect. Yet not one recognized him [as a messianic figure], though he recognized every one of them” (P-Bayān IV: 8 cited Muntakhabat, 62, trans. SWB:91)

The performance of the Ḥajj or pilgrimage is of central importance in the religion of Islam. It is one of the five pillars of Islam. For the Bāb, however, it was much more than an Islamic pilgrimage. It was an act precipitating the inbreaking of the new age, an eschatological event of messianic significance. The Bāb left Shiraz for Mecca, the “sanctified House of God” (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) (Kh-J VII:5) and returned to Shiraz, now itself and in future the new “sanctified House of God” (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) (Kh-J VII:15).¹

¹ In later years according to the Persian Bayan (1848 CE) and other writings Shiraz, the birthplace of the Bāb and the place of the announcement of his prophetic mission, became the

In a state of ritual purity (iḥrām), the Bāb performed the pilgrimage following the Shīʿī directives as spelled out in such texts as the *Jawāhir al-kalām* of the one time (for some) Marja` al-Taqlīd (of the Shīʿī world) Shaykh Muhammad Ḥasan Najafī (d. 1266/1850). It included (full details cannot be spelled out here) the seven-fold counter clockwise circumambulation (ṭawāf) of the Ka`ba at Mecca where, in line with Shīʿī Hadīth (a few are cited above), the Bāb said to have claimed to be the expected Qā'im,¹ the sevenfold hastening between Ṣafā and Marwa (see Kh-J VII:6), the standing (wuqūf) in the plain of `Arafat which lies about ten kilometers east of Mecca (D-Breakers, 132-3) ², the stoning of Satan and the sacrifice at Mina (see Kh-J VII: 11) and (among other

new centre of Bābī pilgrimage. It is to be refashioned in the future like the Ka`ba structure of the Masjid Jāmi`-yi Atīq (‘Old Mosque in Shiraz’) but in accordance with an ideal alchemically influenced vision of perfection, refulgent with diamonds and mirrors etc., This is spelled out by the Bāb in the Persian Bayān and elsewhere (P-Bayan IV:16-19; MacEoin, *Rituals*, 23ff; Browne, *Synopsis*). Baha’u’llah, likewise, made the House of the Bāb in Shiraz one of the future centres of Bahā’ī pilgrimage.

¹ Cf. QA LXXIX cited above; D-Breakers, 134. Shoghi Effendi’s edition and translation of the history of Nabil Zarandī, the Dawn-Breakers, includes a photograph of a `cloth worn by the Bāb when circumambulating the Ka`ba (1974, p. 135).

² “On the day of Arafat the Bab, seeking the quiet seclusion of His cell, devoted His whole time to meditation and worship. On the following day, the day of Nahr, after He had offered the feast-day prayer, He proceeded to Muna [= Mina], where, according to ancient custom, He purchased nineteen lambs of the choicest breed, of which He sacrificed nine in His own name, seven in the name of Quddus, and three in the name of His Ethiopian servant. He refused to partake of the meat of this consecrated sacrifice, preferring instead to distribute it freely among the poor and needy of that neighbourhood” (Zarandī, Dawnbreakers, 132-3).

things) the taking part in the feast of ʿĪd al-Aḍḥā on 10th Dhu'l-Ḥijjah (“The Feast of the Sacrifice”)(Dawn-Breakers, 132).¹

At the end of time the messianic Maḥdī (Rightly Guided One) or Qā'im (Ariser) was expected to appear in Mecca where his new religio-political “Cause” (amr) was to be announced in both supernatural and personal terms in the vicinity of the Ka`ba. It was predicted that the global realization of justice (ʿadl), was to be initiated at Mecca and subsequently from the Iraqī `Atabat (Najaf, Kufa, etc) through proclamatory and other sometimes jihād (holy war) related activities.

The Bāb's decision to go on pilgrimage at the very outset of his prophetic mission was in fulfillment of messianic predictions or expectations. Certain of the ritual devotional aspects of this pilgrimage had already been spelled out in his very early Ṣaḥīfa Makhzūna (or Du`a-yi Ṣaḥīfa in 14 Du`ās).² His very precise cataloging of the stages and course of his pilgrimage is indicative of its paramount importance for him in sealing and confirming his messianic role and identity. It was a 1260-2 / 1844-5 event which was foreordained and echoed in earlier Islamic rituals and in archetypal heiro-history. In the Kh-J VII-VIII no less than eleven very precise datings are given for key pilgrimage and related events,

¹ From Mecca pilgrims go on a short, several day journey to Arafat (9th day of the Ḥajj) through the town of Mina, then back again to Mecca via the valleys of Muzdalifah and Mina.

² On the Ṣaḥīfa Makhzūna or Du`a-yi Ṣaḥīfa (consisting of 14 Du`ās) see Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya, section headed `Ṣaḥīfa al-Ḥujjatiyya' in Afnan, `Ahd: 473; cf. MacEoin, 55, 59-60.

several of these datings being chronologically synchronized with Islamic and pre-Islamic archetypal events, worthies or ritual activities. They are:

- (1) Kh-J VII: 4a. Left Shiraz 26th Sha`bān = September 10th 1844: Qur`ān sent down in the preceding month of Ramaḍān. ¹
- (2) Kh-J VII:4b. Arrived at the “coastline” (jazīrat al-baḥr) in Bushire 6th Ramaḍān 1260 AH = 19th September 1844 : Ramadan includes a “night” (layla) which is better than 1000 months like the laylat al-qadr (night of destiny) in Qur`ān 97:1ff.
- (3) Kh-J VII: 5. Left Bushire on “an oppressive ship” (fulk al-musakhir)² 19th Ramaḍān 1260 AH = 2nd October 1844 : when He instituted fasting (al-ṣiyām). The commencement of a more than two month (around 60-65 day) sea journey to Jeddah.
- (4) Kh-J VII: 6. Arrived at Mecca the “Mother of Cities” (umm al-qurā), and the sacred House of God (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) 1st of Dhu'l-Ḥijjah = December 12th 1844: the month wherein pilgrimage (al-ḥajj) was instituted for the people of Islam.³
- (5) Kh-J VII:7. Completion of aspects of the Ḥajj-`Umrā (Pilgrimage and Sacred Visitation) 13th Dhu'l-Ḥijjah 1260 AH = December 24th 1844.⁴

¹ In the Dawn-Breakers (p. 129.fn.1), Shoghi Effendi refers to Ḥājī Mu`īn al-Saltāna Tabrīzī's history which has it that the Bāb set out on pilgrimage in Shawwal 1260 /Oct. 1844. Shawwal began on 14th October 1844 and lasted until November 11th 1844. At this time the Bāb must have been at sea on his the way to Jeddah.

² See below on VII:5 and VIII:15.

³ Afnan in his `Ahd has the Bab arriving in Jeddah on the 1st of Dhu'l-Ḥijjah 1260 AH though this leaves little or no time for preparations and the half day or more 60 mile journey from Jeddah to Mecca. If, as Zarandī indicates (Dawn-Breakers, 132), Quddus was walking and spent several nights in an “arduous journey” this again was obviously more than half a day. The sources do not seem to spell out exactly when the Bāb first arrived in Jeddah.

⁴ Note that in Kh-J VI:9 and other early writings (see Afnān, `Ahd, 88, ‘Letter to Khāl-i Asghar’ in the Bāb’s hand) the Bāb notes that his extended pilgrimage time in “the sacred sanctuary” of the Mecca-Medina region lasted for “twenty-seven days”. The meaning of `Umra

- (6) Kh-J VII:8. Arrival in Medina 7th of Muḥarram = January 16th 1845 : a place associated Muhammad during a month associated with the martyrdom of Imam Ḥusayn on 10th Muḥarram 61/ 680.¹
- Kh-J VII: 9 Twenty-seven days in “the sacred sanctuary” of Mecca-Medina from 7th Muḥarram until 4th Ṣafar 1261, 16th January - 12th February 1845 : Ḥajj (Pilgrimage) - `Umra (‘Sacred Visitation’) event.
- (7) Kh-J VII: 10. Departure from Medina 4th Safar 1261 = 12th of February 1845 : mention is made here of the completion of the ritual stoning of Satan and of the animal sacrifice (cf. Dawn-Breakers, 132-3).
- (8) Kh-J VIII: 12 The Bedouin theft of a saddlebag containing the Bāb’s writings in the sacred Mecca-Medina region on 11th Ṣafar 1261 AH or February 19th 1845.
- (9) Kh-J VII:12-13 After twelve days travelling bypassing Mecca and the Zamzam, the “Fount of Salsabīl” (‘ayn al-salsabīl),² from 4th-16th Ṣafar 1261 AH or 12th - 24th February 1845.
- (10) Kh-J VII: 14 Arrived in Jeddah and stayed for three days from 16th-19th Safar = 24th- 27th February 1845 : Jeddah is referred to as the “land of Eve” (arḍ al-ḥawā’) (see below). ¹

(‘Sacred Visitation’ or ‘Lesser Pilgrimage’) can be read in the various Shīṭī law books and other articles (see EI² `Umra). Balyuzi notes that the 10th Dhu’l-Hijjah 1260, the time of the feast of `Īd al-Aḍḥā, fell on Friday December 20th, but that year it seems to have been on Saturday Dec. 21st. (the Bab, 70).

¹ According to Zarandī [Shoghi Effendi], the Bāb “proceeded to Medina” on the 1st Muḥarram, 1261 A.H = Friday January 10th 1845 CE (Dawn-Breakers, 139-140). This dating is about a week too early.

² In Islamic texts the ancient sacred well of Zamzam (“Abundant Water”) which lies to the SE of the Meccan Ka`ba is associated with the story of Hagar and Ishmael among the family of Abraham. The Bāb appears to refer to it with the qur’anic term Salsabīl (“Easy to Swallow”) (Q. 76:18) which indicates a fountain or river in Paradise. Pilgrims could drink from the Zamzam well from within its ornate enclosure. For some details on Zamzam see art. In SEI and Farāḥāni, A Shiite Pilgrimage, 217-8 +fns.

- Kh-J VII: 15. Departure by boat for the more than two month journey from Jeddah to Bushire-Shiraz on 24th Safar 1261 or March 4th 1845 : Shiraz is now the “sacred House of God” (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām).

The detailed and very specific dates given by the Bāb in his Khuṭba al-Jidda have remained little known.² Consequently, many volumes of Bahā'ī historical literature dealing with the Bāb and early Bābī history need some rewriting, correction or updating.³ Only a few notes on these matters can be included here.

The Tomb of Eve in Jeddah, the “land of Eve”.



¹ On Islamic sources such as Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā' literatures mentioning Jeddah and first woman Hawā or Eve the wife of Adam see below. Note also that Medina is 419 km from Jeddah and 72 from Mecca.

² MacEoin had access to one or two mss. of the Kh-J (INBA 5006C and 3036C) and drew upon Ishraq Khavari's use of the Kh-J in his Early Shaykhi Reactions (p. 23 and fn. 90) and Sources (p.52ff).

³ Neither Muhammad Nabī Zarandī (d. 1892 CE) who authored a Persian Bābī-Bahā'ī hagiopographical history, a recension of which came to be reworked and translated by Shoghi Effendi as the Dawn-Breakers...(1st ed. 1932), nor Shoghi Effendi himself seem to have used or been aware of the Kh-J datings. The latter certainly did not mention it in his 'List of the Bab's best-known works' and as far as I am aware never cited it (Dawn-Breakers, 669).

Within numerous Islamic sources such as Tafsīr (Qur'ān Commentary) and Qiṣaṣ al-anbiya' (Stories of the Prophets) literatures, qur'anic verses are interpreted and traditions (ḥadīth) are cited indicating the post-fall status, condition and worldly history of the first couple Adam and Eve. Adam is reckoned to have fallen from Paradise to India or Ceylon (Derendip) while his wife Eve (ḥawā) ended up in Jeddah where her (now demolished) tomb is located. The exposition of key verses about the first couple within the qur'anic Sūrat al-Baqara (2: 36, 38) and elsewhere (e.g. Q. 7:24) became one of the bases for registering traditions about the fall, death and burial of Adam and Eve.¹ Only a few details from early sources can be cited here:

[Abū Ishāq] Ka`b [al-Aḥbar] (d. c. 32/652) said: `Adam came down to India, on top of a mountain called Serendip [= Ceylon], which surrounds India. Eve came down to Jidda, Iblis to the land of Maysan [between Baṣra and Wasit], the peacock to Egypt, and the serpent to Isfahan (in Persia)" (cited al-Kisāī, Qisas, trans. 1978, 55).

Ibn `Abbās [related] Adam was cast down in India, and Eve in Juddah [today Jidda or Jeddah] ... Adam was cast down in a mountain in India called Nūdh [cf. Genesis 4:16]" (al-Tabarī, Tarikh, 1:120, trans. Rosenthal, History vol. 1,p. 291).

¹ "When their lots had been meted out, they [Adam and Eve] were commanded to descend to the earth, as He hath said: Get ye down, the one of you an enemy unto the other; and there shall be a dwelling place for you on earth, and a provision for a season (Q. 2.36, 38)" In the Qiṣaṣ al-anbiyā' of al-Kisāī the "dwelling place" was interpreted as the grave and the "season" the Day of Resurrection (see Thackston Jr. 1978 p. 54-55, 343-4 fn. 40).

“The people of the Torah said, Adam fell down in India on a mountain called Wāsim in a valley called Bahil between ad-Dahnaj and al-Mandal, two areas in the land on India. Eve fell to Jiddah in the land of Mecca” (Ibn Ishāq, Kitāb al-Mubtadā’, trans. Newby, 1989, 38).

Adam alighted in Sarandīb (Ceylon now Sri Lanka) in the land of India -- some say on a mountain in the land of India which is called Nūd, some sat Wāsim. Eve (alighted) in Jiddah in town in the land of the Hejaz. Iblis (alighted) in al-Ubullah in the land of Iraq, which is near Basra -- some say Mashān. The serpent alighted in Isfahan (here Iṣbahān) and the peacock in the land of Bābil (Babylon)” (al-Thalabī, Qisas al-anbiya’ trans. Brinner, 53).

While there exist quite a number of pre-1926 CE photographs of the legendary grave or tomb of Eve at Jeddah, certain Wahhābī Muslims (of Saudi Arabia), following strict policies probably inspired by perspectives of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), demolished it around this time. It was feared that Muslims in the vicinity of Jeddah and elsewhere might pay undue attention to an ancient shrine allegedly enclosing the remains of the first woman.¹ Note also that the name جدة Jidda or Jeddah has a popular etymology associating it with Eve, the *jadda*² or “grandmother” of all humanity. It is interesting that the Bāb refers to Jeddah as

¹ For some details and practises at the tomb of Eve see Burton, 1856, esp. Ch. XXXIII (‘To Jeddah’); Farahānī, Shi`ite Pilgrimage, 200-201.

² On the meaning of جدة *judda* /Jidda/ Jeddah see Lane, Lexicon I:386 giving ‘paths’ ‘tracks’, or ‘pathway’, ‘lane’, ‘road’. Grandmother جدة, *jadda* in Arabic is spelled exactly as the placename Judda/Jidda (Jeddah) though the vowel pointing is different. Cf. Arabic *jadd* = “grandfather, ancestor, forefather”.

the “land of Eve” (arḍ al-ḥawā’) though it is not known whether or not he actually visited the legendary and ‘unofficial’ sacred place of her tomb.

While at Kh-J VII: 4-5 reference is made to the date of the commencement of the pilgrimage journey of the Bāb from Shiraz and Bushire with allusion to the Isrā (‘Night Journey’) and/ or Mi`rāj (‘Night Ascent’, see Q. 17:1f) of the Prophet Muhammad and to the qur’ānic laylat al-qadr (“Night of Destiny”, traditionally 27th Ramadan, see Q. 97:1ff). Its commencement was redolent of deeply significant events of the utmost significance in Islamic history. The Kitāb al-Irshād of Shaykh al-Mufīd records the following tradition:

The Commander of the faithful [Imam `Alī], peace be on him, told Ibn `Abbās,... "The Night of Decision [Laylat al-Qadr] is (concerned) with every religious practice (sunna). On that night, the command for the religious practice (sunna) was revealed and because of that order there are friends of God (wulāt) after the Apostle of God, may God bless him and his family" (trans Howard, 527).

At Kh-J VII:15 the exact date of the departure of the Bāb by boat from Jeddah for Bushire and Shiraz (via Muscat and elsewhere)¹ is registered as the 24th of Safar/ March 4th 1845 and again associated with important events. At that time the Bāb set sail (once again) on the “ship of oppression” (al-fulk al-musakhir) (see Kh-J VII: 5 and VIII:15) which is also referred to as an “ark”

¹ In Persian Bayan IV:16 it is recorded that the journey to Muscat took twelve days. The arrival there would thus have been around March 16th 1845. .

(safīnat) of the kind sailed in by Noah (at the time of the universal flood) for the salvation of humanity (Kh-J VIII: 15b).¹ The Bāb twice refers to the boat from Bushire to Jeddah (and back) as an “oppressive ship” ([al-]fulk al-musakhir), most likely on account of the roughness and privations of the sea journey and the unbecoming conduct of many of his fellow pilgrims.² Yet, for the Bāb it remained something of an “ark” of salvation as the vehicle transporting himself as the mouthpiece of God on the journey back to the new “sacred house of God” (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) in Shiraz.³ The first journey from Bushire to Jeddah lasted over two months (60-65 days) and the return journey back to Bushire a similar period of time with periodic stopping points in, for example, Musqat (12 days from Jeddah). The exact chronology of the return journey is not spelled out in the Kh-

¹ In the Kitāb al-Ghayba of al-Nu`mānī the following tradition is cited “The likeness of the people of my house amongst you is as the likeness of the ṣafīnat (Ark) of Noah. Whoso travels upon it will be saved and whoso lags behind will drown” (ed. 2003:46).

² Not all of the Bāb’s fellow pilgrims were rowdy or unspiritual. The mystically inclined Āqā Sayyid Ja`far ibn Abī Ishāq Darābī (d. 1267/1850-51) known as Kashfī (“Unveiler”) was present on the boat. He was highly respected by the Bāb who went so far as to acknowledge his mystical insight and address him as the “Greatest Ja`far” (ja`far al-akbar) in his Khuṭba `ilm al-ḥurūf (‘Sermon on the science of Letters’) (see INBMC 91:30-36 + bib. below). Ḥājī Abu'l-Ḥasan Shirazī was also traveling in the same boat (Dawnbreakers, 230). Ḥājī Sayyid Jawād Karbalāī travelled on (part of) the return journey from Musqat (cf. Kitāb al-`ulamā' in INBMC 91:93)..

³ The boat was crowded, the two over two month sea journeys were tumultuous, the provisions inadequate and many of the fellow pilgrims and travelers rowdy. The Bāb traveled with his Ethiopian servant and close Bābī associate Mirza Muhammad `Alī whom he entitled Quddūs (“the Holy One”). He mentions these circumstances himself in several of his writings including some early khuṭbas (see INBMC 91: 93 etc) and the later Persian Bayan (IV:16ff. Cf. also Dawnbreakers and footnotes)

J obviously because this Khuṭba was completed around this time or on the way to Muscat. ¹

Kh- VIII Divine Foreordainment and the Episode of the Theft

The first paragraph of Kh-J VIII consists of a lofty celebration of the divine grace and bounty. In the second paragraph the personified Dhikr (Remembrance) is said to be crying out on the day of the Bāb's embarkation at Jeddah, with a laudation of the divine intermediary, "His Logos-Self" (nafs) and a remembrance of his ziyārat (visitation) to Medina (earlier named Yathrib). Medina lies 338 kilometres north of Mecca and is the location of the tomb and mosque of the Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE), the al-Masjid al-Nabawī, as well as the tomb of his daughter Fāṭimah (d. 632 CE) and of four of the (twelver) Imams (the 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th Imams) located in the Jannat al-Baqī (جنة البقيع) cemetery where Shaykh Aḥmad al-Aḥsā'ī is also buried. For the Bāb these Islamic worthies are "manifestations of His Power" (maẓāhir qudratihi) and the "Treasury of the Divine Grandeur" (ma`dan al-`aẓīmat), as well as the very acme or quintessence of His Cause (muntahā amrihi) (Kh-J VIII:2f). As among the Shaykhis, the Bāb's devotion for Muhammad and the Imams was extremely

¹ MacEoin stands almost alone as one who has made useful observations based on various Kh-J manuscripts (see his Sources, index).

elevated. His messianic claims in no way lessened his devotion to these deceased yet ever living sources of inspiration.

Kh-J VIII:4-6 indicates that the Bāb had acted and wrote in the Khuṭba al-Jidda so as to proffer to all an “instruction” about “the days of his journey” which was clearly in line with “the decree of foreordained Destiny (ḥukm al-qadr) and its mystery”. Indeed, the Bāb believed his journey to be fully consonant with the dictates of those spheres (aflāk) which regulate time, space and destiny, including the divine “Throne” (‘arsh) and cosmic “Chair” (kursī), as well as the related cosmogonic divine Names and Attributes (asmā’ wa’l-ṣifāt).

Kh-J VIII:6-7 would seem to imply that all who journey on pilgrimage to the now the Shiraz located “sacred House of God” (bayt Allāh al-ḥarām) (see Kh-J VII:15) should do so in line with the Bāb’s revelation of “mighty verses revealed within these Snow-white scriptural Tablets” (al-alwāḥ al-bayḍā’). In so doing such persons “fall prostrate” in the al-masjid (“mosque”) of the House of the Bāb and (symbolically) precipitate “an utter destruction” (li-yutabbirū) upon all that is upstanding” (mā `alaw tatbīr^{an}) (see Qur’ān 17:7b). The practises of the new age involve revolutionary change, a turning of things upside down. In these verses of the Kh-J the Bāb cites and slightly rewrites a qur’ānic verse dealing with the past catastrophic destructions of the Jerusalem Temple (al-masjid) in 586 BCE (by Nebuchadnezzar) and 70 CE (by Titus):

“Then, when the promise of the second [destruction] of the Temple in 70 CE] came to pass, they will defeat you, and enter the Temple [lit. Mosque] (al-masjid), as they entered it the first time, and thereby wreak an utter destruction” (Q. 17:7).

Here one is reminded not only of the Roman destruction of the Jerusalem Temple (al-masjid) in 70 CE and its earlier destruction by the Babylonians, but of the destructions of all the idols in the Ka`bah when the Prophet Muhammad initiated his religious reforms with the conquest of Mecca in c. 630 CE/8AH. Pagan Mecca was transformed when 360 idols within the Ka`ba area were destroyed. This when the Arabian Prophet and his son-in-law `Alī are said to have recited Qur’an 17:81 when cleansing the Ka`ba. ¹ Also worth noting in this connection is the hadīth relayed from Imam Abū `Abd-Allāh Ja`far al-Şādiq in the Kitāb al-Irshād of Shaykh al-Mufīd to the effect that the Qā`im will reduce the Ka`ba to its foundations: "When the Qā`im, peace be on him, rises, he will destroy the Sacred Mosque so that it is reduced to its foundations" (trans. Howard, 552; cf. also the long ḥadīth of al-Mufaḍḍal cited in the Bihar).

¹ In Kh-J VIII:7b Q. 17:7b is slightly rewritten (= “that they might assuredly fall prostrate in the mosque *just as they did aforesaid* and thereby wreak an utter destruction (li-yutabbirū) upon that which is upstanding” (mā `alaw tatbīr an). The words “just as they did aforesaid” replace the دَخَلُوهُ (“they entered it). The Bāb thereby seems to transform pre-Islamic (and/or Islamic) catastrophe into impending post Islamic regeneration.

The implication of Kh-J VIII:6-7 seems to be that the new path instituted by the Bāb on behalf of God and the hidden Imam are revolutionary. For the Bab the slightly rewritten qur'anic verse seems to indicate the eventual triumph of devotion to his new Shiraz-centered, post-Islamic religion characterized by new divine revelations. In embarking from Jeddah for Shiraz the Bāb was evidently excited about reaching his birthplace which would ultimately become the new Mecca and locus of an emergent Bābī community.

The Episode of the Bedouin theft within the Mecca-Medina region (ḥaramayn).

During the mid. 19th century period of the Ottoman rule of Jeddah and the Mecca-Medina region, theft from pilgrims and other travellers in Arabia appears to have been commonplace. The Persian diplomat and author Mīrzā Muhammad-Ḥusayn Farāhānī (1847-1913) observed during the course of his own 1302/1885 pilgrimage that outside the city of Jeddah things were “extremely chaotic”, adding that,

“The Bedouin of the desert are lying in wait for a chance to steal [something]. Three or four people, even ten or twelve, are not bold enough to go from Jeddah to Mecca. [The Bedouin] are constantly robbing people.” (p. 200).

The exact date of the Bedouin theft of a saddlebag containing writings of the Bāb within the sacred Mecca-Medina region (ḥaramayn) is given in Kh-J VIII:11 as the 11th Ṣafar 1261 AH or February 19th 1845. This occurred at the

“third halting place” (fī manzal al-thalith) about a week after the Bāb had left Medina in the course of his (twelve day) journey back to Jeddah via Mecca. According to Kh-J VIII:14 the thief stealing within the Ḥaramayn was completely ignorant of the divine plan, something which, for the Bāb, he could not possibly interfere with (Kh-J IX, etc).

Muhammad Nabīl Zarandī gives a different context for the bedoiun theft, placing it on the initial journey from Jeddah to Mecca, prior to the commencement of the Ḥajj. He writes,

“One day, when the Bab had dismounted close to a well in order to offer His morning prayer, a roving Bedouin suddenly appeared on the horizon, drew near to Him, and, snatching the saddlebag that had been lying on the ground beside Him, and which contained His writings and papers, vanished into the unknown desert. His Ethiopian servant set out to pursue him, but was prevented by his Master, who, as He was praying, motioned to him with His hand to give up his pursuit. "Had I allowed you," the Bab later on affectionately assured him, "you would surely have overtaken and punished him. But this was not to be. The papers and writings which that bag contained are destined to reach, through the instrumentality of this Arab, such places as we could never have succeeded in attaining. Grieve not, therefore, at his action, for this was decreed by God, the Ordainer, the Almighty." Many a time afterwards did the Bab on similar occasions seek to comfort His friends by such reflections. By words such as these He turned the bitterness of regret and of resentment into radiant acquiescence in the Divine purpose and into joyous submission to God's will” (Dawn-Breakers, 132).

Zarandī's narrative of the Bedouin theft goes beyond what is stated by the Bāb himself in the Kh-J. It provides a fascinating, probably orally transmitted and creative account of the Bedouin theft and of the Bāb's response thereto. Zarandī correctly had it that the Bāb saw the theft as part of the divine plan but adds that he anticipated that his "papers and writings" might as a result reach persons who would ordinarily have proved unable to obtain them. This, furthermore, could be related to Kh-J X: 4 where the Bāb seems to leave room, in accordance with the divine will, for the possible rediscovery of his lost writings (Kh-J X:4).

Kh-J VIII: 5f categorically states that the extended pilgrimage journey of the Bāb was fully in synchrony with both the fate dictating heavenly bodies and with the divine plan. As the Bedouin theft would appear to contradict this, the Bāb in various ways frequently reiterated the Qur'ānic dictum that the ways of God or the divine plan are not subject to change or alteration (see Q. 48:23 etc, Kh-J VIII:10,11, 12b,13 IX:2).

The lost writings of the Bāb

The considerable body of lost writings dating from the time of the extended pilgrimage of the Bāb and prior to February 19th 1845 (Kh-J VIII:12) are described both generally and in considerable detail in Kh-J VIII:15f and IX: 2ff. These stolen writings were evidently very precious to the Bāb who

described them as elevated divine revelations written up with great skill and sometimes in crimson-red or golden inks.

The Bāb's revelation of verses continued through the pilgrimage months whether he was at sea or on land. Ḥājī Abu'l-Ḥasan Shirazi, a fellow traveler between Bushire and Jeddah in 1844, frequently observed the Bāb and Quddus "absorbed in their work" of dictating and recording verses for,

"Neither the violence of the elements nor the tumult of the people around them could either ruffle the serenity of their countenance or turn them from their purpose" (Dawnbreakers, 130).

In the first section of his *Ṣaḥīfa-yi `adliyya* which was probably written in Shiraz in 1846 during a period of partial disimmulation a few months after his pilgrimage, the Bāb refers to his Ḥajj (pilgrimage) as "the completion of the Proof (itmām-i ḥujjat) especially accomplished through his "manifestation of knowledge unto every world". This messianic proof involved the production of "incontrovertable books" (kutub-i muḥkama) and "well-assured treatises" (ṣaḥā'if-i muttaqina), of "numerous books of diverse kinds for the people of knowledge and exposition"; many peerless, revealed texts being produced during the sea voyage, if this be the sense of "in the midmost-heart of the ocean of weeping" (buḥbūḥat-i baḥr-i ḥuzn). (S-`Adliyya I/2, p.3).

Khuṭba al-Jidda IX : the stolen writings of the Bāb.

Details regarding the nature of important stolen writings of this Ḥajj period, several of which are specifically said to have been “scribed by the Hand of the [messianic] Remembrance” and expressive of something of the *bāṭin* (deep inner dimension) of the Qur’ān, are supplied in elevated language in Kh-J IX. These writings are characterized by the Bāb as “Supreme Treasuries” (*khazā’in al-kubrā*) (Kh-J VIII:15f) which were revealed after the manner of the inspired disclosures of the occulted twelver Imams who seem to be referred to as “men of the Bayān” (*rijāl al-bayān*). They are also “revelations (*tanzīl*) from a manifest Imam” (the Hidden Imam!) (kh-J IX: 21).

In summary, with occasional clarifications, the nine listings of around thirty-one stolen writings are indicated in the Kh-J as follows : ¹

- (1) IX:3 : A Kitāb (Book) expressing aspects or inner dimensions (*bāṭin*) of the Tablet (*lawḥ*), perhaps anew form of the “Tablet of Destiny” (*lawḥ maḥfūz*) (see Q. 89: 11).
- (2) IX: 4-5: A Kitāb (Book) of 200 sūrahs each with twelve “deep inner” (*bāṭin*) verses, reflecting or interpreting the “Throne Verse” (Q. 2:255).
- (3) IX: 6-7: A Kitāb (Book) of 40 sūrahs of 400 verses commenting on what was sent down upon the heart of Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī (d. c. 173/789) in the “primordial script”, presumably Arabic (see further below Fihrist No.3).
- (4) IX: 8-13 A Kitāb (Book) reflecting or interpreting in deep inward (*bāṭin*) fashion the implications of the qur’ānic “Light Verse” (Q. 24:35).

¹ In his Sources pp. 52-3 MacEoin lists and usefully comments upon the lost writings (listed in the Kh-J IX) according to INBA ms. 5006C (pp.359-363).

- (5) IX: 14: A Kitāb (Book) [Tafsīr] interpreting the second division (juz' al-thānī) of the qur'ānic Sūrat al-Baqara (Sūrah of the Cow), presumably completing his earlier Tafsīr Sūrat al-Baqara (on Q. 2:1-133[141], written late 1843, early 1844), by commenting on Q. 2: 134[143]ff in ways that included "inner dimensions of the deeper sense (bāṭin al-ta`wīl) of the qur'ānic verses.¹
- (6) IX: 15: Ṣaḥīfa fī'l-Du`ā' ("A Treatise on Supplication") in 15 sections (abwāb) and in seven dialects (lisān).
- (7) IX: 16-17: Ṣaḥīfa fī'l-sabīl al-Ḥajj ("A Treatise on the Pathway of the Ḥajj [Pilgrimage]") in 14 sections (abwāb).²
- (8) IX: 18-19: Seventeen khuṭbas (sermons) of unsurpassed eloquence.
- (9) IX: 20. Twelve incontrovertable letters (kitāb muḥkamat) with Qur'ān type verses sent unto Persian and `Arab ulamā'.

The Stolen writings in the Kitāb al-fihrist (Book of the Index)

Apart from referring to Ḥajj period writings in his Ṣaḥīfa-yi `Adliyya (see above) the stolen writings are also listed by the Bāb himself in a specific listing at the end of his Kitāb al-fihrist (Book of the Index), an important book written after the Ḥajj in Bushire on 15th Jumadī II 1261 / 21st June 1845, about two weeks prior to his arriving back in Shiraz on completion of the extended pilgrimage

¹ The Bāb began the first part of his Tafsīr Sūrat al-Baqara in Dhu'l-Ḥijja, 1259/ Nov-Dec.1843 and completed it before he declared his prophetic mission to Mullā Ḥusayn on May 22nd 1844 (refer Lawson, 1986, 1988; MacEoin, Sources, 46-47, 52).

² This lost writing of the Bāb may well have included the kind of chronological data which the Bāb includes in the Khuṭba al-Jidda.

journey. Nine stolen writings are again listed in the K-Fihrist though they do not always correspond exactly with the list in Kh-J IX (summed up above):

- (1) A *Ṣaḥīfa* of fifteen supplications This most likely corresponds to No. 6 above, the *Ṣaḥīfa fī'l-Du`ā'* (see Kh-J IX: 15)
- (2) A Commentary (*Sharḥ*) on the *Miṣbāḥ [al-sharī'a]* ("The Lamp of the Religious Law"?) in 100 sections called "illuminations" (*ishrāqs*).¹
- (3) The *Sharḥ Qaṣīda al-Ḥimyarī* (the "South Arabian") or the 'Commentary upon the *Qaṣīda* of (presumably) Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī (d. c. 173/789) in 40 *sūrahs* each with 40 verses.² See No. 3 above, Kh-J IX:4-5.
- (4) A *Tafsir (Sharḥ) Sūrat al-Baqara* (Commentary on the Surah of the Cow). This may well be part one of this work but it is not mentioned in the Kh-J listing.³

¹ This text here could well be the *Miṣbāḥ al-sharī'a*, which cites (or is attributed to) the sixth Imam Ja`far al-Ṣādiq. (MacEoin, *Sources*, 52 fn. 36 on the basis of reference to this work in the Bāb's *Ṣaḥīfa-yi `Adliyya*,.10) There are also other key texts with the abbreviated title *Miṣbāḥ*, most notably the massive devotional compilations of Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn Ḥasan al Tūsī (d.460/1067) and of Shaykh Taqī al-Dīn al-Kaf`amī [*al-`Āmilī*] (d. 900/1494-5).

² MacEoin In his *Sources* (p. 52) incorrectly refers to a "*Qaṣīda Humayra [sic.]*" (no 5) in the *Kitāb al-Fihrist*. Nicholas also misreads *Ḥimyarī* as "Omeīrī", with an initial letter *ع* not *ح* (see Nicholas, 1905 p.45 and *Fihrist* mss. 6006C p.347 which could be misread in this way). This is an error or misreading of *Ḥimyarī* ("South Arabian") since it is a *Qaṣīda(s)* of most likely Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī upon which the Bāb commented (see below on this line and Kh-J IX:6-7).

³ On the basis of two mss. (INBA 6003C: 285-293 and INBA 4011C: 62-69) MacEoin adds that this *Baqara* commentary is "in the manner of the commentary on the [*Tafsīr*] *Sūrat Yūsuf* (= *Qayyūm al-asmā'*) though this is not stated in the mss. I have seen (see bib). Several mss. of the K-Fihrist add, after reference to the *Sūrat al-Baqara*, the Arabic plural *al-Aḥzāb* meaning (if the text is not corrupt) "Groups", "Factions", "Confederates", which is the title of Surah 33 of the *Qur`ān*. Nicholas deduces that the Bāb also refers to a lost Commentary on this *Sūrah* though there is no confirmatory evidence of this and the *Fihrist* texts I have seen are textually confused at this point. This seems unlikely.

- (5) A Tafsir Sūrat al-Baqara (Commentary on the Surah of the Cow) part two, from the second division (juz' al-thānī) unto the end. See KhJ IX: 14.
- (6) Twelve khuṭbas ¹ Cf. Kh-J IX: 18-19 which mentions seventeen.
- (7) Ṣaḥīfat al-Ḥajj (Trestise on the Pilgrimage) in 14 sections (abwāb). This is No. (7) above, see Kh-J IX: 16-17.
- (8) Tafsīr (Sharḥ) āyāt al-kursī (Commentary on the “Throne Verse” (Q. 2:255) in 200 sūrahs each with twelve verses. This is No. (2) above, see Kh-J IX: 4-5.
- (9) Six letters (kutub).

Several of the stolen items listed above in the K-Fihrist correspond with those listed in the Kh-J. The column detailing the stolen writings in the former work is headed, “Column [lisitng] what was stolen by the thief (al-sāriq) – may the curse of God be upon him – on the pathway to Mecca (sabīl fī makka)” which must indicate the pathway of the return journey between Medina and Mecca. The listing in the Kitāb al-Fihrist extends and clarifies the number of works stolen; adding for example, the commentary on the Miṣbāḥ [al-sharī'a] (“The Lamp [of the Religious Law” ?]) (Fihrist, No.2), part one of the Tafsīr Sūrat al-Baqara (Fihrist No. 4) and six letters of the Bāb (Fihrist No.9).

Stolen item No. 3 of the Fihrist, the Sharḥ Qaṣīda al-Himyarī (the “South Arabian”) is most probably a `Commentary by the Bāb upon a specific Qaṣīda (Ode) of Sayyid al-Himyarī (d. c. 173/789) once extant in 40 sūrahs each with 40 verses. This Qaṣīda(s) on which the Bāb wrote his commentary most likely

¹ For some details see the listing above on p. 7. fn. 2 and bib. under Bab, khuṭbas.

derives from the 2nd/8th cent. (Sunnī, Ibādī) born, then Kaysanī Shī'ī poet who is said in Shi'ī sources to have been converted to imāmī Shiism by Ja`far al-Şādiq (d. c. 148/765) (Ibn Babuwayh, Kamal al-Dīn, 32-4).

Sayyid al-Himyarī's full name was Abū Hāshim Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad ibn Yazīd ibn Rabī'a ibn Mufarrigh. Perhaps 231 (out of a massive 2, 300) of his poetical compositions are extant, having been transmitted, among others, by his four daughters. Some of these poems touch upon Shī'ī messianism, including the characteristics, identity and ghaybat (Occultation) of the messianic Qā'im/ Maḥḍī or Hidden Imam. It is very likely upon one such suggestive messianic ode the like of which can be found, for example, in the Kamāl al-dīn wa-tamam al-ni'ma of Ibn Babuwayh al-Qummī (d. 381/991), al-Şadūq that the Bāb was moved to comment during his pilgrimage journey. Such is indicated in somewhat abstruse language in Kh-J IX: 6-7.¹

In the Kh-J the Bāb's stolen Sharḥ Qaṣīda al-Ḥimyarī is said to exist in 400 verses in forty "well-established Surahs" (surat muḥkamat), which would be forty sūrahs of ten verses each. This only loosely corresponds with the 40 Sūrahs with 40 verses each (= 40x40 = 1,600 verses) of the Kitāb al-Fihrist (although multiples of 40 are again involved). In the Kh-J this work is specifically said to

¹ There are several other important Ḥimyarī poets, including Nashwān ibn Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī (d. 495/1178 CE) though almost certainly did not write poetical qaṣīdas suggestive of Shī'ī messianism of the kind that might have invited commentary by the Bāb.

have been revealed unto “the heart of [Sayyid] al-Ḥimyarī [the South Arabian] (qalb al-ḥimyarī) which, in the light of the Kitāb al-Fihrist, is most probably the aforementioned individual whose poetical works are, furthermore, specifically cited in such Shīʿī literatures as the Biḥār al-anwār of Muhammad Baqir Majlisi (e.g. 2nd ed. Vol. 53 pp. 131-2).¹ That the lost Sharḥ Qaṣīda al-Ḥimyarī is described in the Kitāb al-Fihrist as a qaṣīda or poetical ode again strongly points to its being a composition of Sayyid Ibn Muhammad al-Himyarī who is famous for composing qaṣīdas about the ghayba and the Qāʾim or Imam Mahdī.²

The lost Sharḥ Qaṣīda al-Himyarī, furthermore, is said in Kh-J IX: 7 to have been written “in the primordial script (biʿl-saṭr al-awwāl), by which Arabic is most likely intended. It is also said to have been in “the threefold [ʿAlid] condition (biʿl-ḥall al-thālith)” possibly alluding to ʿAlī, the first three-letter name of the Bāb, yet “regulated through the fourfold talisman” (ṭilasim al-rābiʿ) which may indicate his four-letter second name Muhammad (thus ʿAlī Muhammad = the Bāb). Note in this connection that in the Khuṭba al-ṭutunjiyya it is the Prophet Muhammad who

¹ Useful some details about ʿSayyid al-Ḥimyarī are found in the entry so named in EI² by Wadad Kadi. The Qaṣīdas/ Dīwān of Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī have several times been printed (see bib. and Iṣfahānī, al-Aghānī, ed. Beirut, vii, 224-68).

² See esp. the messianic qaṣīdas printed in Ibn Babuwayh, Kamāl al-Dīn, 32-35 beginning “the Imams from Quraysh” and the poems of Sayyid al-Ḥimyarī cited on subsequent pages and on p. 552ff. In certain texts al-Ḥimyarī refers, like the Bāb and following a ḥadīth of Imam Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, refers to the expected Imam as the Baqīyyat-Allāh, the “Remanant of God” (e.g. Kamāl al-Dīn, p.33, 342).

is referred to as one most agreeable, of “talismanic disposition” (tilasimī^{an})” (cited Bursī, Anwār al-yaqīn, 169).

The Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya (“The Sermon of the Remembrance”).¹

There exists another brief Arabic Khuṭba of the Bāb, the Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya (“The Sermon of the Remembrance”), which forms one of the fourteen khuṭbas constituting the Ṣaḥīfat al-Riḍawiyya in which the Bāb lists his early writings composed between 1st Muḥarram 1260/22nd January 1844 and 15th Muḥarram 1262/14 January 1846 identifying them after the various names or titles of the prophet Muhammad, his daughter Fāṭimah and the twelve Imams (the fourteen ‘immaculate ones’). Fourteen titles, four called books (Kitāb) and ten (with the pre-genitive) Saḥīfa (loosely “Treatise”) are successively and to some degree chronologically listed. Towards the end of the Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya the Bāb makes the following reference to his stolen writings,

Now with respect to what went out from my possession or was stolen on the pathway of the Ḥajj (Pilgrimage). Detailed mention thereof hath been made in the Ṣaḥīfat al-Riḍawiyya (“The Treatise after Imam `Alī al-Riḍā”). Whomsoever discoveres any portion thereof, its preservation (ḥifz^{an}) is incumbent upon him. Blessed be such as do preserve all that hath been

¹ Details regarding this work cannot be gone into here. It must suffice to note that it forms a part of or Khuṭba within the larger Ṣaḥīfat al-Riḍawiyya which has been variously titled and identified (see MacEoin, Sources, 50, 53-4, 207, Appendix IV). While MacEoin refers to this text as Risāla-yi Dhahabiyya, Afnan gives it the more accurate designation Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya (Ahd, 2000: 473). A translation of the Khuṭba Dhikriyya has been prepared by Vahid Brown within his 2005 article (see bibliography).

sent down on My part in delightful scriptural Tablets (bi'l-*alwāḥ ṭayyiba*), in the most beautiful of scripts (*aḥsan al-khatt*). So by He Who hath ennobled Me with [the receipt of] His verses! but a single letter thereof is more elevated in my estimation than the dominion of both this world and that of the hereafter (Kh-Dhikriyya, in `Ahd, 473).

As in the Kh-J the Bāb here anticipates the possible recovery of his stolen writings and gives some advice about their preservation and befitting duplication or copying out. He refers back to a *Ṣaḥīfat al-Riḍawīyya* (“The Trestise after Imam `Alī al-Riḍā”) for details of these writings. This work is the tenth item listed in the *Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya*. It is described by the Bāb in the following way:

“Tenth is the *Ṣaḥīfat al-Riḍawīyya* (“The Trestise after Imam `Alī al-Riḍā”) consisting of fourteen chapters (*bāb*^{an}) setting forth fourteen magnificent (*gharrā'*^{an}) *khuṭbas* (“sermons”), crying out through the [Sinaitic] Tree of Laudation (*shajarat al-ṭhanā'*), `There is no God except Him, the Mighty, the Munificent' (Kh-Dhikriyya, mss. 5; Afnan, 2000: 274).

This description of a work listing the stolen writings of the Bāb does not easily correspond to any currently known text though it may well, in somewhat cryptic fashion, point to the *Khuṭba al-Jidda* or (less probably) to the *Kitāb al-Fihrist*.

Kh-J X The Final Address and Benediction.

The final paragraph of the Kh-J is addressed to a totality of hearers, the “concourse” (*malā'*) of souls. It reiterates the fact that the theft of the sacred

writings of the Bāb took place within the sanctified zone between Mecca and Medina. It was an unjust act involving the “treasures of the inhabitants of the heavens and of the earth” (X: 2). It is not outside God’s power to enable these lost writings to be found. As has already been remarked, such sentiments are expressed in the history of Nabīl Zarandī and the Khuṭba al-Dhikriyya (see above).¹

Though, in conclusion, the Bāb expressed a judgemental opinion of the Bedouin who stole his writings, uttering a curse upon him in his Kitāb al-Fihrist, he did utter something of a benediction upon the people of Jeddah when he wrote in the Kh-J VII:12 “may be blessings of God be upon its indescribable and innumerable inhabitants”. The people of Jeddah perhaps numbered 25-30,000 in 1844-5 with numerous other pilgrims from diverse lands and ethnic groups greatly swelling the population.² That the Bāb felt moved to make positive mention of the peoples of Jeddah perhaps played a part in his naming his seminal Khuṭba al-Jidda after this ancient yet remarkable city that for a short time housed a Sayyid who claimed to reveal texts inspired of God through the hidden Imam who, after a few years, he explicitly claimed to be.

¹ It may be noted here that In 2001 the Baha’i writer Bahiyyih Nakhjavani published a prize winning fictional tale of the Bedouin theft entitled Saddlebag (see bib.) though without any knowledge of the Kh-J.

² The population statistics for Jeddah are not too reliable though it was something like 5,000 at the time of Nasir al-Khusraw (died 1072 CE) and around 25-30,000 in 1847.

To write lyrically at the very end of these extended notes, one might say that the legendary, ancient Eve allegedly lying nigh Jeddah caught a glimpse of the new eschatological “Eve” in the person of the Bāb. For Bahā’īs the Bāb (= Eve) and Bahā’u’llāh (= Adam) represent new eschatological manifestations of the first couple on the “Day of God” (yawm al-qiyāma) which they are thought to have jointly and succesively brought to a realization.

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- <http://www.hurqalya.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/03THE%20BAB/KHUTBAS%20BAB/Khutba%20%60ilm%20al-huruf.htm>
- Kh.J = Khuṭba fi'l-Jidda. INBMC 91: 61-73 and uncatalogued mss. original

¹ Here the abbreviation INBA above indicates Iran National Bahā’ī archives mss. and INBMC ‘Iran National Bahā’ī Achives Manuscript Collection’ 100 volumes of which were selectively privately published in photocopied form in the mid. 1970s. Around 35 of these volumes are manuscript collections or individual writings of the Bāb.

- Kh-Jidda = Khuṭba al-Jidda (Jeddah). Mss. = (1) Tehran, INBA 5006C, 330-35 (2) Tehran, INBA 3036C, 404ff (3) INBMC 91: 60-74.
- See also text and trans. Kh-J on Lambden Website:
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- Kh-Medina = `Khuṭba one stage from Medina', INBMC 91: 42-47. .
- Two khuṭbas revealed near the staging-post of al-Safrā' , INBMC 91: 42-7.

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- 'A khuṭba [written] one stage from Medina' 1. Tehran, INBA 5006C, pp. 322-24
- (xi) Two khuṭbas [written] near the staging-post of al-Safra' 1. Tehran, INBA 5006C, pp. 320-22 and 324-26
- (xii) A khuṭba written as a preface to the Tafsīr Sūrat al-kawthar (see under that title)
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