

Islamic Philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology in Dialogue

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Islamic Philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology on the Perennial Issue of Microcosm and Macrocosm

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the place of manifestation may remain always hidden. Given what has already been said, it can be easily maintained that the essential hiddenness of the world of matter is not consistent with its being a place of manifestation for the hanged forms, and Suhrawardi's words concerning each of these issues are valid only within their own context.

Mulla Sadra discussed Suhrawardi's words concerning the hiddenness of the world of matter and considered him to be right on one condition. According to Mulla Sadra, if by the essential hiddenness of the body, Suhrawardi meant the hiddenness of primary matter, what he said should inevitably be declared extremely valid. However, if by what he wrote in *Hikmat al-ishraq* he intended the absolute hiddenness of body, this can never be accepted, for a body has a quiddity, which is in its essence neither hidden nor manifest. On the other hand, it is evident that a body, which is in its essence neither hidden nor manifest, can be hidden or become manifest through other than itself. In this way, Mulla Sadra rejected the essential hiddenness of the absolute body, but admitted the essential hiddenness of the primary matter. Concerning the hiddenness of the primary matter he spoke repeatedly. While making use of Suhrawardi's bright thoughts in many cases, in some cases, Mulla Sadra opposed him.

Note

¹ This hadith is quoted in many works of Mulla Sadra.

The Sublime Visions of Philosophy: Fundamental Ontology and the Imaginal World (*'Ālam al-Mithāl*)

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Introduction: On Philosophy Undeterred by Historical Divides

In the "Introduction" to *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, while grappling with the relation between philosophy as science (*Wissenschaft*) and as worldview (*Weltanschauung*), Heidegger discusses Kant's metaphilosophical distinction between the scholastic concept of philosophy (*Schulbegriff*) and the cosmopolitan one (*Weltbegriff* or *Weltbürgerlichbegriff*). The first is not innovative: it does not break new ground; rather it characterizes philosophy as the inquiry into scientific knowledge or "the logical perfection of knowledge".¹ The second, on the other hand, concerns the philosophical inquiry into the essential ends of human beings. In this alternative approach, the philosopher breaks the bounds of tradition, as he "is no longer an artificer in the field of reason, but himself the lawgiver of human reason."² Heidegger complains that Kant "does not see the connection between the two. More precisely he does not see the basis for establishing both concepts of philosophy on a common original ground".³ Not seeing "the common original ground" does not mean that he misses the truth of philosophy as something like the scientific construction of worldviews. In fact Heidegger insists that the common ground is not worldview formation but the science of being or ontology.⁴

In his late work, *Hikmat al-mashriqiyya* (Oriental Philosophy), Avicenna distinguishes his brand of philosophy from Peripateticism.⁵ He claims that Peripatetic philosophy has remained confined within the structure supplied by Aristotle and that his Oriental philosophy goes beyond it by embracing the experience of the divine, the heart of eastern mystical wisdom and the ground of all philosophy.⁶ Only fragments of this work survive, but there are passages in Avicenna's philosophical corpus, as well as three intact allegorical narratives, that help explicate Avicenna's Oriental project.⁷ The Oriental treatises prepare their readers for the experience of the divine which forms the final purpose of Avicenna's later philosophical project.

Shihab al-Din al-Suhrawardi, the twelfth century Persian philosopher and mystic, elaborates on Avicenna's Oriental theme in a text, which he calls the *Philosophy of Illumination (Hikmat al-ishrāq)*. Suhrawardi's title plays off the ambiguity in the common Arabic root (i.e., *sharaqa*) of both "*mashriq*" (orient) and "*ishrāq*" (illumination). Assuming the Avicennan experience of the divine, Suhrawardi articulates a philosophical and literary project articulating the visionary experience.

In this essay, I begin by examining Heidegger's criticism of Kant's reconciliation of the cosmopolitan and scholastic concepts of philosophy. Kant's, according to Heidegger, treats being as *a* being and, as a result, his (Kant's) philosophical method cannot be distinguished from that of the positive sciences. Heidegger, however, undertakes the task of distinguishing philosophy from any positive comportment towards beings. I contend that Heidegger's critique of Kant's position underestimates the latter's insights in the *Critique of Judgment*. In this late work, Kant articulates the bounds of the space of reflective judgment in a way that is remarkably close to Heidegger's own view of a common original ground. Next, I argue that Heidegger's (and Kant's) account of the common original ground is deepened and amplified by the approach inaugurated in Avicenna's Oriental philosophy and completed in Suhrawardi's Illuminationism.

The Scholastic Concept of Philosophy

In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, in a chapter entitled the "Architectonic of Pure Reason," Kant introduces the scholastic concept of philosophy.

Hitherto the concept of philosophy has been a merely scholastic concept - a concept of a system of knowledge which is sought solely in its character as a science, and which has in view only the systematic unity appropriate to science, and consequently no more than the *logical* perfection of knowledge.⁸

By the "systematic unity appropriate to science" Kant has in mind the systematization of knowledge through rational concepts. Knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) is the objectively valid synthesis of concepts. Science (*Wissenschaft*), in the scholastic sense, is the systematic unity of the concepts that enable the objective validity of claims to knowledge. In a similar passage in the *Logic*, Kant maintains that philosophy, in the scholastic sense, is a skill of reason and has two parts: "First, a sufficient store of cognitions of reason; second, systematic coherence of these cognitions, or their conjunctions in a whole".⁹ In other words, philosophy, according to the *conceptus scholasticus*, has the task of uncovering the concepts that underlie cognition, the categories, and determining the systematic unity of these concepts. For Kant, this systematic unity is brought forth by a productive act of the transcendental ego. In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, Heidegger identifies this strain of Kant's philosophy as *metaphysica generalis* or ontology.¹⁰ Heidegger argues that the scholastic concept is ontology because, for Kant, being is the being-known (being-judged) of objects.¹¹

Kant, in the "Preface to the Second Edition" of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, praises his own philosophy for overcoming the problems of his predecessors through a novel approach. He writes,

Hitherto it has been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to the objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them *a priori*, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge.¹²

Kant identifies the failure of prior philosophy in that it has sought the demonstration of the claims to knowledge in their conformity to objects. This ended in failure, because it was unable to demonstrate anything in regard to objects *a priori* by means of concepts. It had to rely on some external gift, rational or empirical Given.¹³ However, Kant, in the manner of Copernicus, stands the tradition on its head and seeks to remedy the failure of prior philosophy through the hypothesis that objects must conform to our knowledge.

Kant's revolutionary hypothesis is grounded in the supposition that the source of knowledge is the subject's productive activity. Kant asserts that "reason has insight only into that which it produces (*hervorbringt*) after a plan of its own".¹⁴ Apparently, for knowledge to be possible, the subject must have already produced the object of knowledge. In the B edition of the "Transcendental Deduction," Kant refers to this agency of the ego as the "original synthetic unity of apperception" and the "I think".¹⁵ This ego, as distinguished from the empirical ego which is given in perception, is not intuited. Heidegger calls it the transcendental ego. This view of knowledge, according to Kant, must take the place of knowledge as conformity to the object since it allows for the demonstration of the claims to knowledge. Claims to knowledge are justified when they conform to the structure of the concepts involved in their production.

For this interpretation of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, the affection of the cognitive faculty by external objects is an important concern. For Kant, the impact of external objects on the senses yields intuitions. In the "Transcendental Aesthetic," Kant states that "the capacity (receptivity) for receiving representations through the mode in which we are affected by objects, is entitled *sensibility*. Objects are *given* to us by means of sensibility, and it alone yields us *intuitions*; they are *thought* through the understanding".¹⁶ Furthermore, Kant maintains that "while the matter of all appearances is given to us *a posteriori* only, its form must lie ready for the sensations *a priori* in the mind, and so must allow of being considered apart from all sensation".¹⁷ With this, however, he moves away from any further discussion of the affection of sensibility to the exposition of the pure forms of intuition, space and time. In the next section of the *Critique*, "Transcendental Logic," he explores and deduces the pure forms of understanding, the categories. A link between the transcendental aesthetic and the transcendental logic lies in the "Schematism of the Pure Concepts of Understanding." The schematism of the transcendental faculty of imagination allows for the subsumption of the intuitions under the pure concepts of understanding, the categories. Kant refers to the schematism of imagination as "an art (*Kunst*) concealed in the depths of human

soul".¹⁸ Through schematism, the transcendental ego completes the production of the object of knowledge according to her own plan.

Kant, in the "Highest Principle of All Synthetic Judgments," further develops his account of the productive act of reason. In this chapter, Kant seems to suggest that the product of the act of transcendental ego is not an *actual experience* but the *possibility of experience*.

The *possibility of experience* is, then, what gives objective reality to all our *a priori* modes of knowledge. Experience, however, rests on the synthetic unity of appearances, that is, on a synthesis according to concepts of an object of appearances in general. Apart from such synthesis it would not be knowledge, but a rhapsody of perceptions that would not fit into any context according to rules of a completely interconnected (possible) consciousness, and so would not conform to the transcendental and necessary unity of apperception.¹⁹

The first sentence of this passage makes clear that the possibility of experience is that in terms of which the *a priori* modes of knowledge "acquire meaning and significance."²⁰ *A priori* modes of knowledge are "absolutely independent of all experience"²¹ and have necessity and universality as their criteria.²² *A posteriori* knowledge, on the other hand, is contingent and possible through experience.²³

According to Kant, knowledge of actual experience rests on the synthetic unity of an appearing object in general for its status as knowledge. In other words, through elucidating the production of an object of possible experience, Kant claims to have supplied what converts the rhapsodic intelligibility of actual experience into knowledge. This accords with Kant's delineation of his Copernican turn: to demonstrate the claims to knowledge not in their conformity to objects but in the conformity of objects to our knowledge. But all that the object of possible experience amounts to is "a completely interconnected (possible) consciousness." Therefore, possible experience relates to empirical knowledge only as a formal criterion which purports to justify the empirical claims to knowledge. Hence, the product of the act of reason is *not* empirical knowledge but a formal criterion of sorts. What exactly is the status of this formal criterion?

Heidegger suggests that the epistemological function of possible experience as the product of transcendental ego is derivative and that it serves, primarily, a metaphysical role. The transcendental ego is the agent that combines the various senses of being, the categories, and the forms of intuition into the unity of the possible experience. This unity is being as such. In the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger insists that "Kant's conviction is that being, actuality, equals perceivedness, being-known."²⁴ Perception is "the empirical use of the understanding or, as Kant also says... the empirical faculty of judgment."²⁵ Perception concerns the epistemological (ontical) interaction of the subject and the object. Moreover, the notion of being is not given in perception. According to Kant, actuality or existence has to do "only with the question whether such a thing be so given us that the perception of it can, if indeed be, precede the concept."²⁶ Hence, existence or actuality of the empirical entities concerns their being-known or their perceivedness. The Kantian categories subsume the various ways of the being-known of objects. Being or actuality as such is the unity of these various ways of being and is set forth by the productive act of the transcendental ego.

The Cosmopolitan Concept of Philosophy

In claiming that "hitherto the concept of philosophy has been a *merely* scholastic concept," Kant suggests that the scholastic concept, by itself, is inadequate and needs a supplement, a concept of philosophy, which he titles the *conceptus cosmicus*. "On this view, philosophy is the science of the relation of all knowledge to the essential ends of human reason (*teleologia rationis humanae*), and the philosopher is not an artificer in the field of reason, but himself the lawgiver of human reason."²⁷ According to the cosmopolitan concept of philosophy, the philosopher provides for the systematic unity of knowledge by aligning it with the essential ends of mankind. This systematic unity subsumes the systematic unity brought forth by the scholastic concept of philosophy and is accomplished by situating the transcendental ego in the cosmopolitan system of ends.

The ends which allow for the further systematization of knowledge are the regulative ideals of reason, maxims²⁸ and are of two sorts, subordinate and ultimate. The subordinate ends are determined by three questions: "1) What can I know? 2) What should I do? 3) What may I hope?"²⁹ These questions are concentrated in the question: What is man? In other words, the subordinate ends are the means for the "whole vocation of man,"³⁰ which is the ideal of the supreme good.³¹ By subordinating the question of the being-known of objects to anthropology, Kant suggests the identity of the transcendental ego and the human being as such. In the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger maintains that Kant defines the *essence* of the human being in terms of existing "as its own end,"³² in the sense of a product—a thing, and claims that with this definition Kant remains within the horizon of Cartesian philosophy.³³

In subsection 'c' of the "Thesis of Modern Ontology" of the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger maintains that for Suarez and Descartes "God is the true substance. The *res cogitans* and *res extensa* are finite substances (*substantiae finitae*). Kant presupposes these basic ontological theses of Descartes without further ado. According to Kant non-divine beings—things, corporeal things and mental things, persons, intelligences—are finite beings... (Kant) does not get beyond the ontology of the extant."³⁴ The ontology of the extant is another way of referring to Suarez's *metaphysical specialis*. "The totality of beings is divided into God, Nature and Humankind, and to each of these spheres respectively is then allied Theology, Cosmology and Psychology. They constitute the discipline of *Metaphysica Specialis*."³⁵ Furthermore, Heidegger maintains that *metaphysica specialis* is directed to the final end which is the supreme idea of the good, the divine being. This accords with Kant's account of the *conceptus cosmicus* and the highest end for the vocation of man. However, Heidegger criticizes *metaphysica specialis* and the Kantian cosmopolitanism for treating human beings as ends in themselves.

In the *Foundations for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant states emphatically that every human being "should treat himself and all others never merely as means but in every case also as an end in himself."³⁶ "An end in itself" is the defining characteristic of all substances in the tradition. Each substance as produced by

God is actual. Actuality is having its end in itself. For instance, when one produces a chair, the end of her activity, the chair, is contained in the product. Although the products contain their ends within themselves, they are nevertheless for the sake of something else. The chair has its end in itself, but it is for the sake of someone sitting on it. Hence, the chair finds its perfection and completion in the actuality of higher substances.

Having inherited Suarez's *metaphysica specialis*, Descartes endorsed the idea that reality is a chain of substances held together and ruled by the highest substance, God.³⁷ Leibniz inherited Descartes's scheme. In Leibniz's metaphysics, sensible substances, in so far as they are substances, are the same as intelligible substances. Their difference is grounded upon their degree of perfection and, as a result, upon their position in the hierarchy of substances. God, the highest substance, not only thinks and therefore sustains all other substances as possibilities,³⁸ but He also chooses to actualize one set of compossible substances among the infinitely many other sets. God's choice is informed by the principle of perfection which delineates a world of highest variety and order. The human substance, less perfect than the divine, is, nevertheless, superior to other sensible substances.

Kant, in this story, comes upon the hierarchy of *metaphysica specialis* through the Leibnizians, especially Wolff and Baumgarten. He criticizes only the general ontology (*metaphysica generalis*) in Leibniz's philosophy. Leibniz's general ontology allows for the interconnection between the various beings only in the light of God's favor, i.e., creating the best possible world. Kant, on the other hand, situates the locus of the unity of the various senses of being in the human reason's productivity. Despite this modification, Kant seems to endorse the *metaphysica specialis* as developed by Leibniz who, in turn, inherited it from Descartes and Suarez.

The most evident endorsement of the traditional *metaphysica specialis* is in Kant's moral writings. It was shown already that Kant envisaged human beings as ends in themselves. In section IX of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, entitled "Of the Wise Adaptation of Man's Cognitive Faculties to His Practical Vocation," Kant writes, "If human nature is called upon to strive for the highest good, the measure of its cognitive faculties and especially their relation to one another must be assumed to be suitable to this end.... This great goal... (speculative reason) can never of itself reach even with the aid of the greatest knowledge of nature. Thus nature here seems to have provided us only in a stepmotherly fashion with a faculty needed for our end".³⁹ The knowledge of nature provides the human beings with knowledge of substances that are subservient. Therefore, human beings can use nature for their own ends. However, they must treat each other as ends in themselves for they are on the same level on the scale of perfection. Furthermore, all their actions and interactions must be subservient to the highest good, the divine substance. The subservience is facilitated by the respect for the moral law.

Heidegger criticizes Kant for not seeing the fundamental distinction between philosophy and the positive sciences. This criticism is grounded in his observation that, for Kant, the ground of the unity of being, the human being, is itself a being, a product, in relation to the divine substance. As a result, in either case,

philosophical inquiry into the common original ground of the different concepts of philosophy is conceived as anthropology, a positive inquiry into a preconstituted human thing, a being. Heidegger's reading, however, overlooks Kant's efforts in the *Critique of Judgment* to revolutionize the tradition by grounding the various concepts of philosophy in the faculty of judgment. But before exploring that late work, I want to explain Heidegger's own account of the common original ground.

Heidegger on the Common Original Ground of the Two Concepts of Philosophy

By identifying the inquiry into the common ground of the two concepts of philosophy (Kant's *conceptus cosmicus* and *conceptus scholasticus*) as fundamental ontology, Heidegger suggests that he plans a radical reformulation of philosophy so that it can overcome the traditional ontology's problem: the confusion concerning the distinction between being and beings. Heidegger's ontology begins with a phenomenological analysis of the being of man, *Dasein*, as the being who understands being.⁴⁰ He identifies the unity of the various ontological structures (the various ways of the being) of *Dasein* as being-in-the-world in the structure of Care.⁴¹ Care as being-ahead-of-itself and as always not-yet is comprehended in its totality in the phenomenon of temporality.⁴² Temporality as completing Care "has the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been".⁴³ Temporality, according to Heidegger, is the completion of the being of *Dasein* and the condition for the possibility of the understanding of being.

Heidegger's fundamental ontology is completed by an examination of *Dasein's* self-understanding, projecting in terms of a for-the-sake-of-which. This examination is an inquiry into *Dasein's* projection of a self in terms of its various possibilities. A possibility, however, is not an end in the sense of a product, a being, but an end as the for-the-sake-of-which of *Dasein's* self-projection. As already in the world, *Dasein* is in truth, it knows how to be itself; yet this primordial access is obfuscated by *Dasein's* falling away from its primordial for-the-sake-of-which. However, *Dasein*, as always already thrown and fallen away, must reclaim its primordial purpose.⁴⁴ Therefore, *Dasein* is either authentic, understanding himself in terms of his primordial for-the-sake-of-which, or inauthentic. An authentic *Dasein* is an individual who casts his being in terms of his own self as the "for-the-sake-of-which." *Dasein's* 'uncritical' projection of its being in terms of an unowned "for-the-sake-of-which" accounts for *Dasein* in the inauthentic mode. Heidegger writes: "Proximally and for the most part the self is lost in the 'they.' It understands itself in terms of those possibilities of existence which 'circulate' in the 'average' public way of interpreting *Dasein* today".⁴⁵ Authenticity, as the process of taking over (owning) one's roles critically, implies that one is not in the grip of this or that "public" ideal. Rather the authentic individual adjusts himself to the demands of the particular situation: he acts appropriately (does the right thing).⁴⁶ As a result, the authenticity of *Dasein* makes possible a genuine encounter with things themselves, not as they fit into the mold of public ideals imposed

on an inauthentic *Dasein*; in other words, authenticity makes the ideal of phenomenology possible.⁴⁷ In *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes: "To have a science 'of' phenomena means to grasp its objects in such a way that everything about them which is up for discussion must be treated by exhibiting it directly and demonstrating it directly".⁴⁸ In a phenomenological encounter that reaches to things themselves, things appear in their relevant contexts, and the inquirer is free of interpretive constraints that abduct them from those contexts. These interpretive constraints are caused by *Dasein's* inauthenticity, its appropriation of phenomena for the sake of irrelevant and external possibilities. Authenticity frees *Dasein* from such interpretative constraints.

Kant on the Judgment of Taste

In the Introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant is unambiguous about this work's role in mediating the connection of practical and theoretical philosophy.⁴⁹ Judgment mediates understanding and reason; in its theoretical mode, it constitutes the attitude towards the content supplied by the understanding, and ultimately concerns the unity of our empirical cognitions according to the transcendental concept of a purposiveness of nature.⁵⁰ The latter concept is not a law of nature but a law for reflection on nature. In its practical mode, the power of judgment determines and assesses our actions based on the concept of freedom.⁵¹ Reflection on the faculty of judgment then opens up a space wherein things appear and can be subjected to determinations according to various purposes (i.e., theoretical and practical). It is the common original ground of the various concepts of philosophy (i.e., the scholastic and the cosmopolitan) and remains conspicuously free of the metaphysical assumption (the tradition's *metaphysica specialis*) which Heidegger's reading foists upon it.

The significance of the reflection on the power of judgment as the disclosure of the common original ground comes through in Kant's examination of the judgment of taste and its object, the beautiful. The judgment of taste is a reflective judgment that is aesthetic, i.e., it involves the receptivity of the subject to itself and yields the feeling of pleasure or displeasure.⁵² This judgment does not determine the appearance given in experience according to any purpose or interest: "Taste is the ability to judge an object, or a way of presenting it, by means of a liking or disliking devoid of all interest".⁵³ The ability to resist interest in the object is an acquired capacity and Kant does not give a fair treatment of this issue. Had he done so, his claim that the judgment of taste involves a subjective universality would have become more accessible.⁵⁴ Subjective universality prescribes the norm observed by all subjects who have acquired the ability to approach an object not as a means but as an end in itself. Therefore, if the presentation of the object, for the cultivated subject, involves the harmony of the imagination and understanding – the ability that presents us with an object and that of making it a cognition (without actually making it a cognition) – then we feel pleasure and judge the object

beautiful. In this state, the subject is free of all interests including the interest to know or the interest to assess the object morally.

The judgment of taste is the judgment of reflection that lays open the space of things themselves (in its phenomenological sense). It is the Kantian equivalent of Heidegger's hermeneutic unveiling of the phenomena. Heidegger's account, however, has the added advantage of accentuating the practice of freeing the person from the interference of interests. Surprisingly, Heidegger himself is aware of the phenomenological significance of Kant's account of disinterested pleasure in the beautiful. In a rare reference to Kant's aesthetics, he writes: "Precisely by means of the 'devoid of interest' the essential relation to the object itself comes into play ... now for the first time the object comes to the fore as pure object and that such coming forward into appearance is the beautiful. The word 'beautiful' means appearing to the radiance of such coming to the fore".⁵⁵ In this light, authenticity is the cultivation of taste, i.e., the ability to suspend one's interests before the phenomenon in order to experience it as it presents itself.

Islamic Philosophers on the Common Original Ground

I read Avicenna's Orientalism and Suhrawardi's Illuminationism as extending the approach that receives articulation by Heidegger (and the later Kant). Their allegorical narratives (*qisas* or *risālāt*) are designed to lead the reader away from his confused understanding of being to the unveiling of that which makes phenomena intelligible. The unveiling comes about when the philosopher attains practical and theoretical excellence (*arete*, *fadl*, virtue, authenticity), and the excellence of the philosopher culminates in the autonomy of the individual, his liberation from ossified theoretical and practical constraints. This the Muslims share with the Heideggerian approach, but, as I have suggested, Avicenna and Suhrawardi go beyond Heidegger (and Kant) by expanding the common original ground to include visions of the divine and prophetic insight. Allegorical narratives are a means to access the visionary phenomena.

Perhaps no other Islamic predecessor of Avicenna captures the spirit of Heidegger's account of the common original ground of the various concepts of philosophy better than Alfarabi. In *The Attainment of Happiness*, he distinguishes between true philosophy and the counterfeit:

As for mutilated philosophy: the counterfeit philosopher, the vain philosopher, or the false philosopher is the one who sets out to study the theoretical sciences without being prepared for them. For he who sets out to inquire ought to be innately equipped for the theoretical sciences – that is, fulfill the conditions prescribed by Plato in the *Republic*: he should excel in comprehending and conceiving that which is essential... He should by natural disposition disdain the appetites, the dinar, and like. He should be high-minded and avoid what is disgraceful in people. He should be pious, yield easily to goodness and justice, and be stubborn in yielding to evil and injustice. And he should be strongly determined in favor of the right thing.⁵⁶

The ethical cultivation and improvement of the self constitutes the centerpiece of Alfarabi's notion of true philosophy. The acquisition of virtue allows the individual to resist extraneous ends and attend to the relevant features of the context for action or thought. A virtuous person, in the words of Alfarabi, excels "in comprehending and conceiving that which is essential."

For Heidegger, engaging in fundamental ontology and the interpretation of the human condition is what allows for the acquisition of authenticity (i.e., virtue). For Alfarabi, on the other hand, virtue is attained through a relationship with a wise man, the ideal embodiment of the virtues. In this, he is responding to his Hellenic predecessors. According to Aristotle, for instance, ethical standards are not abstract moral principles (as prevalent in modern moral philosophy); rather they are given by a moral exemplar, the *spoudaios* or *phronimos*, i.e., the practically wise person.⁵⁷ Plato's account of the wise person in the *Republic* is perhaps more relevant to the above passage from Alfarabi. Plato's Socrates portrays the ideal person, the practically wise person, as the philosopher-king: one whose cultivated practical and theoretical sensibilities enable him to be the preferred lawgiver.

Alfarabi reconciles the Greek with the Islamic tradition by attaching and developing the quality of prophecy to the Greek ideal of the human individual. The ideal person, for Alfarabi, is not just a philosopher and legislator (king), he is also a prophet, and Alfarabi defines prophecy as a perfected imagination impregnated by divine intellect.⁵⁸ The addition of the quality of prophecy to the ideals of philosophy and kingship was designed, in part, to bring the Greek ideal to correspond more closely to the Islamic ideal, embodied in the figure of Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet, according to Islamic sources, has three basic attributes: he is a *walī* (intimate of God), a *nabī* (a prophet), and a *rasūl* (the conveyer of divine law). For Alfarabi (and the subsequent Islamic Peripatetics), the analogue to *wilāyah* was philosophy, since a philosopher's practical and theoretical excellence brought him near the divine intellect so that he could be enlightened.

In regard to the characterization of the ideal person as a prophet, it would be useful to briefly examine the relation between the divine intellect and the human mind. In *al-Siyasat al-madaniyeh*, Alfarabi identifies the creative or active intellect (*aql-e fa'al*) with Islam's angel of revelation.⁵⁹ Richard Walzer, in his commentary on *al-Madinat al-fadilla* (*On the Perfect State*), writes: "To know the true meaning of the Active Intellect is... essential, according to al-Farabi, to an adequate understanding of one of the most fundamental Muslim articles of faith, the transmission of eternal truth to mankind through a man of overwhelming mental power – a philosopher-prophet-lawgiver."⁶⁰ The philosopher is one who has subjected himself to a rigorous examination aided by the light of the active intellect. He is near in status to the active intellect, the angel of revelation. If this nearness is accompanied by a perfected imagination, then the philosopher is also a prophet, a person whose perfected imagination is active and receives forms from the active intellect as well as the senses. The modification of the imagination by the revelations of active intellect allows for "prophecy of present and future events and... prophecy of things divine."⁶¹

In his prophetology, Avicenna follows Alfarabi very closely, but he modifies some of the details of Alfarabi's account. For Avicenna, the intellect of the

philosopher is distinct from that of the prophet. For the philosopher, the acquisition of a just and balanced soul,⁶² the critical examination of his thoughts, and the discovery of empirical truths⁶³ must precede his conjunction with and enlightenment by the active intellect. The benefits of this conjunction include the acquisition of first principles as well as visions brought about in the perfected imagination. Prophets, God's chosen messengers, do not require the mediation of practical and theoretical perfection (as necessary in the case of the philosopher); the prophet receives immediately from the active intellect: "That which becomes completely actual does so without mediation or through mediation, and the first is better. This is the one called prophet and in him degrees of excellence in the realm of material forms culminate."⁶⁴ The prophet is the genuinely blessed human being and benefits from unmediated perfection and illumination.

Avicenna and Alfarabi assign to philosophy the task of facilitating the person's attainment of practical and theoretical excellence, through a discipleship of the ideal person. They share this with their Greek predecessors; but, as I have argued, they claim to go beyond their Hellenic and Hellenizing predecessors by insisting that human excellence also terminates in the experience of the divine and prophetic insight. As we have seen, Alfarabi defines prophecy as a function of the perfection of the power of imagination. To put it more exactly, Alfarabi's ethical ideal not only possesses a perfected imagination, but by virtue of its significance as a feature of the standard for ethical conduct, this ideal also cultivates the imagination (for the sake of virtue). As to the cultivation of the imagination for divine experience, Alfarabi's works and Avicenna's theoretical prophetology contain very few indications. However, Avicenna's poetics and Oriental allegories and the work of his successor, Suhrawardi, provide us with ample material. But before turning to a discussion of the Islamic philosophical allegory, let us see whether the writings of Kant and Heidegger contain any trace of the above notion of prophetic insight.

The Sublime in Kant and Heidegger

In the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant distinguishes the reflective judgment of taste from that of the sublime. He writes: "In presenting the sublime in nature the mind feels agitated, while in an aesthetic judgment about the beautiful in nature it is in restful contemplation. This agitation (above all at its conception) can be compared with a vibration, i.e., with a rapid alternation of repulsion from, and attraction to, one and the same object."⁶⁵ The imagination presents an object, which it cannot contain as a totality according to the conceptual repertoire of understanding; this results in a feeling of repulsion, but then reason and its idea of the supersensible engage the presentation of the imagination and a harmony is struck; a feeling of pleasure ensues. The vibration or the oscillation between repulsion and attraction determines the presented object as sublime. What is expressed in this experience is the un-presentable, the power of "pure and independent reason."⁶⁶ In other words, what is presented is that which makes possible the presentation of the ordinary

phenomena. Reason's purposiveness (without purpose) unveils the phenomena in the judgments of taste and in the sublime it is itself presented indirectly.⁶⁷

The judgment of the sublime, like that of taste, is an acquired talent. It presupposes not only the cultivation of taste, but also moral sensibility.⁶⁸ The person must have cultivated his practical faculty and recognize the weight of the moral law in his actions. Only then can reason interfere in imagination's desperation and provide solace and harmony to the anguished soul.⁶⁹ Like the prophetic insight of Muslim philosophers, the *worthy* soul is able to turn away from the material world and receive the illumination of divine reason.

Philippe Lacoue-Labarthes, in an essay titled "Sublime Truth," identifies the Heideggerian version of the judgment of the sublime in his account of the origin of the work of art. A great work of art, according to Heidegger, unveils the unveiling of beings; it accomplishes this by defamiliarizing, alienating, deranging, shocking, transporting, and retreating.⁷⁰ And for Lacoue-Labarthes, these terms bear striking resemblance to the vocabulary of the sublime. But the similarity is more than nominal:

But it is obviously not merely a matter of vocabulary, just as one cannot say that Heidegger is innocent in matters of traditional vocabulary. What this text ("The Origin of the Work of Art") describes, in its own way and at a depth doubtless unknown before it, is the experience of the sublime itself. That is, it describes precisely what Heidegger elsewhere – notably concerning anxiety or being-unto-death – ascribes to the *ek-static* comportment of *Dasein* and *ek-sistence*. The shock produced by the work, the estrangement of the being, is such an ecstasy or rapture. It is the precipitation beyond oneself," as Burke says, which, from Longinus to Boileau and from Fenelon to Kant, has been described as the properly sublime emotion or affect.⁷¹

The experience of the sublime is ecstatic, it transports us beyond the ordinary, the familiar, and presents us with that which is beyond the realm of beings. It presents the un-presentable, the transcendence that makes possible the very presentations themselves.⁷² In this, the sublime experience is what the Islamic philosophers discussed under the topic of prophecy, as prophecy is illumination by that which makes things intelligible, the giver of forms (*wahib al-suwar, dator formarum*). However, the Islamic philosophical allegory goes beyond the various theoretical discourses on the sublime and prophecy; it expands philosophical discourse by cultivating the imagination for the direct expression of the divine experience.

The Cultivation of Imagination and the Imaginal World

"Allegory" means, literally, the inversion of public, open, declarative speech. In the simplest terms, an allegory says one thing and means another. Avicennan *qisas* and Suhrawardian *risālāt* share this sense of "allegory", as the two philosophers follow the general trend in Islamic hermeneutics (*ta'wil*) of distinguishing between the apparent (*zāhir*) and the hidden (*bātin*) meanings of sacred texts. They take the hidden meaning to be available to those who have made progress in

the path of perfection. Despite this, some scholars of Islamic thought dispute the understanding of the *risāla* or the *qisa* as allegory. Henry Corbin, for instance, argues that these works are symbols. He writes, "[T]he symbol is not an artificially constructed sign; it flowers in the soul spontaneously to announce something that cannot be expressed otherwise; it is the unique expression of the thing symbolized as of a reality that thus becomes transparent to the soul, but which in itself transcends all expression. Allegory is a more or less artificial figuration of generalities or abstractions that are perfectly cognizable or expressible in other ways".⁷³ I want to maintain, *pace* Corbin, that the Avicennan and the Suhrawardian narratives are allegories *and* symbols. This move requires that we understand "allegory" not as an "artificial figuration of generalities or abstractions," but as a figuration that points beyond itself and undermines the philosophical generalities or abstractions that it evokes. The latter dimension of an allegory is educational; it helps cultivate the person who engages it by delivering him from the grip of intellectual illusions. The imagination of such a disenchanted person is then ready to experience the sublime and express the divine. To sum up, Avicenna and Suhrawardi consider their narrative treatises as products of imagination that simultaneously cultivate and express the cultivation of the soul, especially the power of imagination.

For Avicenna, the cultivation of the soul by means of the allegorical dimension of the narrative, frees the interpreter from an imagination in the grip of the mundane.⁷⁴ This liberation culminates in the experience of the divine mind, and the symbolic dimension of the narrative is precisely the expression of this sublime experience, which may become available to those who cultivate their minds hermeneutically (i.e., by interpreting the narrative).

In order to better understand the education provided by and the insight expressed in the allegorical narratives, let us examine Avicenna's poetics. In his commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*, Avicenna refers to the difference between philosophy and poetry in this way:

One of these [philosophy] tells us of what was and can be, the other [poetry] speaks of that which exists only in words. Poetry, therefore, has come to be more akin to philosophy than the other kind of speech, because it has a greater grasp of the existent and a more precise execution of universal judgment.⁷⁵

The Avicennan philosopher cultivates the soul by knowing the existent world. The poet, however, educates the soul by attending to the existents "in words." Both the poet and the philosopher, however, understand the limits of existents and have a grasp of the universals, the forms that endow intelligibility on existents, be they real or verbal.

Avicenna also calls the verbal existents the objects of imaginary representations (*mukhayyil*). Avicenna observes:

The imaginative-creative representations and the true-to-life presentation are both a kind of acceptance, except that the imaginative representation is an acceptance of the astonishment (*ta'jib*) and delight (*ladhha*) in the discourse itself, while the objective presentation is an acceptance of the object as it is said to be. Thus, the imaginative representation is

created by the locution itself, while the objective presentation is created by the objectivity of the locution's content. That is to say that in it one considers the real nature of the locution's content.⁷⁶

The philosopher pursues the discipline of looking outward to become aware of objective truths. The poet, on the other hand, turns his attention inward and disciplines his imaginative thoughts by discovering the criteria for their correctness in the feelings of astonishment and delight. These feelings are not idiosyncratic.⁷⁷ An imaginative representation of an object may produce pleasure by fitting within the network of our particular projects and interests. The Avicennan poet is not interested in these feelings of pleasure because they point beyond the imaginary space to the outside world. The authentic pleasure of the poet is in intrinsic interestingness of the image, not by reference to something beyond it. So the poet's pleasure, to use Kantian terminology, results from interestedness in a disinterested manner. Astonishment, on the other hand, is often understood as the Aristotelian "wonder," as a prelude to philosophical inquiry.⁷⁸ But, in this reading, an image generates astonishment in relation to an interest that points beyond it (to a philosophical inquiry that results in cognition). I, however, argue that astonishment should also be understood in a Kantian manner. Astonishment is felt when an image overwhelms our ability to have an interest – either by its large magnitude or great power. The pain of the disruption of our interestedness is then supplemented by the pleasure of appreciating the image as a manifestation of the divine power (the active intellect) that conditions the very possibility of having images.

To sum up, both the philosopher and the poet aim to conjoin with the active intellect. The philosopher does so by systematically correcting misunderstandings arising from outwardly directed study, while the poet corrects the study conducted by gazing inward. Poetic study is essentially hermeneutic: The poetic text invites the reader to interpret and thereby expose the untutored condition of her imagination. As the text of poetry is itself expressive of the poet's refined imagination, the interpretation falls short of the ideal posed by the original text. This is because the reader-in-training aims to appreciate the poetic images in relation to her specific sensual, practical, or even theoretical interests. The pleasure occasioned by this understanding is not genuine. The reader is then invited to interpret again and overcome the pressure of interests that guide her misreading. As a result, she transforms herself and moves closer to the ideal presented by the original. The Avicennan poet, in cultivating the imagination, frees that faculty from its servitude. The liberated imaginative representations acquire an objectivity determined by the intrinsic interestingness of the image manifested by genuine feelings of pleasure and astonishment.

Avicenna's account of poetry should not be construed too narrowly so as to exclude his allegorical narratives. The Allegorical narratives are also poetic in the sense stated above. I agree with Sarah Stroumsa⁷⁹ that we must distinguish these stories from fables, which, for Avicenna, communicate results of experience and are not poetic as they do not deal primarily with the imaginative process (*takhyil*). The allegories affect the soul both in their production and through their exegesis,

refining imaginative thought through the criteria supplied by the feelings of astonishment and pleasure and promoting the union with the divine intellect.

Suhrawardi, however, goes beyond Avicenna's account of the poetic imagination and argues for the independent existence of the images of the perfected imagination and considers the perfected imagination as a cognitive faculty that perceives the objects of a realm (*'alam al-mithal*) between the spiritual and the physical.⁸⁰ He affects this transition by maintaining that the perfection of the imagination is also the goal of the philosopher. In the introduction to his "A Tale of Occidental Exile," Suhrawardi writes:

When I saw [Avicenna's] tale of Hayy ibn Yaqzan, I was struck by the fact that, although it contained marvels of spiritual words and profound allusions, it was devoid of intimations to indicate the greatest stage, which is the 'great calamity' that is stored away in divine books, deposited in the philosopher's symbols and hidden in the tale Salaman and Absal put together by the author of Hayy ibn Yaqzan, that is, the mystery upon which the stages of the adherents of Sufism and the apocalypics are based. It was alluded to in Hayy ibn Yaqzan only at the end of the book, where it is said: 'Sometimes certain solitaries among men emigrated toward Him', etc.⁸¹

Here, Suhrawardi invokes the conclusion of Avicenna's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, where the narrative persona is silenced in astonishment before the invitation to conjoin with the transcendent divine.⁸² But Suhrawardi maintains that the perfected imagination, upon the termination of its training, perceives a domain of objects that require articulation and exploration. This point is echoed in the introduction to the *Philosophy of Illumination*, where Suhrawardi distinguishes two types of wisdom in illuminative philosophy: intuitive (*fi al-ta'ala*) and discursive (*fi al-bahth*). He argues that the ideal philosopher is the master of both: "Should it happen that in some period there be a philosopher proficient in both intuitive and discursive philosophy, he will be ruler by right and the vicegerent God".⁸³ Intuitive philosophy involves the cultivation of accurate imaginative representations culminating in the imagination's symbolic visions, which loom as ineffable at the conclusion of Avicenna's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*. Suhrawardi, however, claims that Avicenna's account of spiritual progress ends prematurely. In fact, a whole philosophical domain opens up and demands investigation.

Suhrawardi calls the neglected domain the imaginal world, *'alam al-mithal*.⁸⁴ Perfected imagination, like a mirror, reflects the divine illumination and makes concrete what otherwise transcends the domain of the worldly phenomena. He writes:

The truth is that the forms in mirrors and the imaginative forms are not imprinted. Instead, they are suspended fortresses – fortresses not in a locus at all. Though they may have loci in which they are made evident, they are not in them. The mirror is the locus in which the form in the mirror is made evident.... The imaginative faculty is the locus in which the forms of the imagination are made evident and suspended".⁸⁵

The realm of the imaginal, in contrast to the practical and the theoretical domains, introduces us to a new dimension of the common philosophical ground. And the explora-

tion and description of the imaginal realm is the task of the master of both intuitive philosophy and discursive philosophy. So the reworking of the common original ground of philosophy to include a consideration of the imagination brings to view a new area of philosophical inquiry. It is to this realm that the attention of later Islamic philosophers is directed and in the working out of this domain they make original contributions to the philosophical tradition.

I should point out that the discovery and the exploration of the imaginal realm is not without its dividends for other areas of philosophical phenomenology. The imagination, when perfected through interpretation, encounters the imaginal, but the ideal philosopher does not simply get engrossed in this visionary domain. His imaginal sojourns also allow him to engage creatively in theoretical and practical phenomenology. This creativity benefits from a cultivated imagination that enables the thinker to concretize abstract issues and problems and fathom their manifold particular aspects. And it goes without saying that this ideal philosopher's understanding of practical and theoretical matters is enriched by divine inspiration.

Conclusion

It is the symbolic dimension of the perfected imagination that is absent in the works of Heidegger and Kant. By focusing on the symbolic, Islamic philosophy expands the common original ground, the domain of phenomenological inquiry, and takes account of imaginal entities which include direct representations of that which makes phenomena intelligible. At this point, it may seem that the Islamic philosopher's concern with the experience of the divine, from a Heideggerian perspective, is hopelessly in the grip of the confusion between being and beings because of its commerce with positive presentations of the supersensible. It suffices to say that this criticism is not up to snuff as the confusion diagnosed by Heidegger concerns the concretizations of being by the average, everyday imagination, not by one cultivated by the rigorous hermeneutics of allegorical texts.

Notes

¹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (tr) N K Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965) A838=B866.

² *Ibid*, A839=B868.

³ Martin Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (tr) A Hofstadter (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), p 9.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp 11-12.

⁵ According to R Macuch "Greek and Oriental Sources of Avicenna's and Suhrawardi's Theosophies," *Graeco-Arabia* 2:9-22 (1983) and S Pines "La Philosophie 'orientale' d'Avicenne et sa Polémique contre les Bagdadiens," *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littérature du Moyen Age* 27:5-37 (1952), the Peripateticism in dispute is that of the school of Baghdad. Pines even identifies the *maghribiyyin* (occidentals) as Abu'l-Faraj and 'Abd-

lah ibn al-Tayyib. Their works have not survived, but Mukhtan ibn al-Hassan, known as Ibn Butlan, a student of al-Tayyib, in his work, *al-Maqalat al-Missriyyah*, presents the *maghribi* point of view.

⁶ Avicenna, "Mantiq al-Mashraqiyyin" (tr) S H Nasr, in *An Anthology of Philosophy in Persia* vol 1, Seyyed Hossein Nasr with Mehdi Aminrazavi (eds) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp 268-70.

⁷ Henry Corbin, *Avicenna & the Visionary Recital* (tr) W R Trask (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960), p 41; see also pp 44-45. The typically oriental philosophical texts are the "Introduction" and the "Metaphysics" of the *Shifa*, a text titled "On the Proof of Prophecies" (*Fi ithbat al-nubuwwat*), a commentary on Prophet Muhammad's mystical journey - *Mi'raj-nama*, the fourth part of Avicenna's *Isharat wa al-tanbihat* [*Ibn Sina and Mysticism* (tr) Shams Inati (London, Kegan Paul, 1996)] and *Risalah fi'l-'ishq* "Treatise on Love," (tr) E Fackenheim, *Mediaeval Studies* 7:208-228 (1945).

⁸ *Op cit*, Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A838=B866.

⁹ *Op cit*, Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p 28.

¹⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (tr) R Taft (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), p 11.

¹¹ *Op cit*, Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p 128.

¹² *Op cit*, Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Bxvi.

¹³ In contemporary analytical philosophy, Wilfrid Sellars, in *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, and John McDowell, in *Mind and World*, have done much to call attention to Kant's critique of the Myth of the Given.

¹⁴ *Op cit*, Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Bxiii.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, B157.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, A19=B33.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, A20=B34.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, A141=B180.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, A156=B195.

²⁰ *Ibid*, A155=B194.

²¹ *Ibid*, B3.

²² *Ibid*, B4.

²³ *Ibid*, B3.

²⁴ *Op cit*, Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p 128.

²⁵ *Ibid*.

²⁶ *Op cit*, Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A225=B272.

²⁷ *Ibid*, A839=B867.

²⁸ *Ibid*, A666=B694.

²⁹ *Ibid*, A805=B833.

³⁰ *Ibid*, A840=B868.

³¹ *Ibid*, A810=B839.

³² *Op cit*, Heidegger, *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, p 9.

³³ *Ibid*, p 148.

³⁴ *Ibid*.

³⁵ *Op cit*, Heidegger, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, pp 5-6.

³⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Foundations for the Metaphysics of Morals* (tr) H J Patton (New York: Harper & Row, 1964), p 101.

³⁷ Rene Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy: Third Meditation," *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol 1 (trs) J Cottingham, R Stoothoff, and D Murdoch (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

- ³⁸ Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, "Monadology," *Philosophical Papers and Letters*, Leroy E Loemker (ed) (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1989), §§53-55.
- ³⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* (tr) Lewis White Beck (New York: Macmillan, 1985), pp 151-52.
- ⁴⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (trs) J Macquarrie and E Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 32/H11-12.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid*, 237-38/H193.
- ⁴² *Ibid*, 277/H234.
- ⁴³ *Ibid*, 374/H326.
- ⁴⁴ In *Being and Time*, Heidegger maintains that "inauthenticity is based on the possibility of authenticity" (303/H259).
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 435/H383.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 355/H307-08. Perhaps here is a good place to mention that Heidegger's personal life was at odds with ideals of virtuous conduct mentioned here. On Heidegger's involvement with the Nazis and his atrocious behavior towards his colleagues and others, refer to Victor Farias's *Heidegger and Nazism*. This work helps us understand what we often take for granted: the ability to articulate the ideals of virtue is not indicative of the possession of those ideals. In Heidegger, it poses the further problem that on his own assumptions we cannot consider him a philosopher, as he failed the test of authenticity, the necessary element of the ground of the various concepts of philosophy.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 50/H28, 58/H34.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 59/H35.
- ⁴⁹ Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment* (tr) W S Pluhar (Indianapolis IN: Hackett, 1987), 176/15.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 183-4/23.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid*, 176/15.
- ⁵² *Ibid*, 203-4/44.
- ⁵³ *Ibid*, 211/53.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 214-216/57-60.
- ⁵⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche: The Will to Power as Art* (tr) David Farrel Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), p 110.
- ⁵⁶ Abu Nasr al-Farabi, "The Attainment of Happiness," in *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (eds) (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1961), p 80.
- ⁵⁷ Aristotle, "Nicomachean Ethics," in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, Richard McKeon (ed) (New York: Random House, 1941), 1140a25-28, 1143b21-25.
- ⁵⁸ Abu Nasr al-Farabi, *On the Perfect State* (tr) Richard Walzer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p 245.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p 406.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid*.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid*, p 225. We should not overlook Alfarabi's insistence that the philosopher-prophet is also a lawgiver, a skillful orator and knows how to guide people towards achievement of happiness. *Ibid*, p 247.
- ⁶² Avicenna, "Healing: Metaphysics X," in *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (eds) (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1961), p 110.
- ⁶³ Avicenna, "On the Proof of Prophecies and the Interpretation of the Prophets' Symbols and Metaphors," in *Medieval Political Philosophy: A Sourcebook*, Ralph Lerner and Muhsin Mahdi (eds) (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1961), p 114.
- ⁶⁴ *Op cit*, Avicenna, "On the Proof of Prophecies," p 115.

⁶⁵ *Op cit*, Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, 258/115.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 258/116.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 246/100.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 292/158. Also see Jean-Francois Lyotard, *Lessons on the Analytic of the Sublime* (tr) Elizabeth Rottenberg (Palo Alto CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), p 228.

⁶⁹ *Ibid*, pp 236-38.

⁷⁰ Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, "Sublime Truth," in *Sublime: Presence in Question* (tr) Jeffrey S Librett (Albany NY: SUNY Press, 1993), p 94.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, p 95.

⁷² See the section titled "Truth and Art," in Heidegger's "On the Origin of the Work of Art," in *Poetry, Language and Thought* (tr) Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), pp 57-78.

⁷³ *Op cit*, Corbin, *Avicenna and the Visionary Recital*, p 30.

⁷⁴ This view perhaps owes something to Diotima's ladder in Plato's *Symposium*, where we are given an account of the ascent of the soul through reflection on beauty.

⁷⁵ Ismail M Dahiyat, *Avicenna's Commentary on the Poetics of Aristotle* (Leiden: E J Brill, 1974), p 100.

⁷⁶ V Cantarino, *Arabic Poetics in the Golden Age* (Leiden: E J Brill, 1975), p 133.

⁷⁷ It is in developing an account of the objectivity of imaginative representations based on criteria having to do with feelings of pleasure and astonishment that Avicenna's position differs from that of his predecessor Alfarabi and breaks new ground. Refer to Salim Kemal, *The Poetics of Alfarabi and Avicenna* (Leiden: E J Brill, 1991), pp 135-38.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p 161.

⁷⁹ Sarah Stroumsa, "Avicenna's Philosophical Stories: Aristotle's Poetics Reinterpreted," *Arabica* 39: 200-04 (1992).

⁸⁰ Fazlur Rahman, "Dreams, Imagination, and 'Ālam al -Mithāl'," in *Islamic Studies* 3:169 (1964).

⁸¹ Shihabuddin Yahya Suhrawardi, *The Mystical and Visionary Treatises* (tr) W M Thackston Jr (London: The Octagon Press, 1982), p 100.

⁸² At the end of *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, however, the divine sage addresses the novice thus: "Were it not that in conversing with thee I approach the King by the very fact that I incite thy awakening, I should have to perform duties toward Him that take me from thee. Now, if thou wilt, follow me, come with me toward Him", *op cit*, Corbin, *Avicenna & the Visionary Recital*, p 150.

⁸³ Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, *The Philosophy of Illumination* (trs) John Walbridge and Hossein Ziai (Provo UT: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), p 3.

⁸⁴ Corbin chooses the word *imaginal* in contrast to the *imaginary*. He writes, "[D]espite all our efforts, we cannot prevent that, in current and non-premeditated usage, the term *imaginary* is equated with the *unreal*, with something that is outside the framework of being and existing, in brief, with something utopian... this is undoubtedly symptomatic of something that contrasts with an order of reality, which I call *mundus imaginalis*, and which the theosophers of Islam designate as the 'eighth clime'" [*Mundus Imaginalis or the Imaginary and the Imaginal* (Ipswich UK: Golgonooza Press, 1976), pp 3-4].

⁸⁵ *Op cit*, Shihab al-Din Suhrawardi, *The Philosophy of Illumination*, p 138.