

ILLUMINATIONISM or Illuminationist philosophy (Ar. *al-ḥekma/al-falsafa al-ešrāqiya*; Pers. *falsafa-ye ešrāqi*), first introduced in the 12th century as a complete, reconstructed system distinct both from the Peripatetic philosophy (*falsafa-ye maššā'i*) of Avicenna (q.v.; d. 1037) and from theological philosophy (*kalām-e falsafi*). Most medieval historians as well as specialist historians of philosophy concur that Illuminationist philosophy is a “novel” and a most complete system (*al-nezām al-atamm*) constructed by the young Persian philosopher Šehāb-al-Din Yahyā b. Amirak Sohravardi (1155-91).

The basic meaning of *ešrāq* (Illumination) is “rising,” more precisely “rising of the sun” (Lane, *Arabic English Lexicon* I, pp. 1539-41). The term is used extensively in Arabic and Persian philosophical texts, signifying a special intuitive mode of cognition with no temporal extension (i.e., a-temporal), spatially coordinated “in” (*fi*) the knowing, self-conscious subject (Ar. *al-mawzu' al-modrek bi'l-dāt*; Pers. *man-e dānanda/koḍ-āgāh*). In other words, it applies to the relation between the “apprehending subject” (*al-mawzu' al-modrek*) and “apprehensible object” (*al-modrak*). The term *ešrāq* is also widely used in popular discourse. In its general, non-technical usage in ordinary language, it signifies the “mystical” as well as the range of extraordinary types of knowledge, including personal inspiration (*elhām*).

The 12th-century forerunners. Illuminationist philosophy is not the sole creation of Sohravardi. Earlier 12th-century, non-Aristotelian texts started a trend that culminated in Sohravardi's construction of the new system. Firstly, the famous physician and scientist, Abu'l-Barakāt Baḡdādi, composed a novel, philosophical, three-part text titled *Ketāb al-mo'tabar* (The book evidential), which challenges Aristotle (as presented in Islamic Peripatetic texts, mainly in Avicenna's *Šefā'*) in regard to scientific methodology, but especially in physics. He is one of the first 12th-century philosophers to elaborate on an old tradition, whose roots are to be found in Plato's idea of sudden inspiration put forth in light imagery in his *Seventh Letter* (341C, 344B). This was later discussed by Speusippus (see Merlan, p. 64), and was the subject of an entire treatise by St. Augustine (see Allers). The favorite Platonic metaphor of light and vision of the *Republic* V-VIII is repeated in almost all Illuminationist texts. The notion that primary principles of science are obtained by “evident self-reflection” is stated briefly by Baḡdādi in his “Introduction” (*al-Mo'tabar*, p. 3); however, Sohravardi is most likely the first philosopher to utilize the Platonic metaphor in logic and epistemology, as well as cosmology. He states that certain types of knowledge are “evident-in-themselves” and are immediately known by the subject. This is one of Illuminationist philosophy's main non-Aristotelian principles, described by Sohravardi as fundamental to philosophy.

The next 12th-century figure who wrote non-Aristotelian texts was the Persian mathematician and logician, 'Omar b. Sahlān Sāvaji, who, though unknown in Western studies, was a creative logician, and famous for his

ran" and entered museum collections in the 1880s. The dominant colors are cobalt blue, turquoise, and black, which are applied beneath a transparent colorless glaze. Some objects are of high quality, and other evidence indicates investment in technical innovation in which cobalt blue is, for the first time, successfully modified to produce a pale blue underglaze colorant (Plate VIII). The decorative subject matter is wide ranging, but deer, hares, and pheasants are well represented, as in Colored Ground ware, although again there are no legible inscriptions. Similarly, there are no 'Erāq ware tiles, and only two installations where blue inscriptions are applied on a turquoise ground are known. The first is an unprovenanced sequence of frieze tiles with quotations from the *Šāh-nāma* (Melikian-Chirvani, figs. 51-62), and the second is a dated external panel (725/1325) at the base of the minaret of the tomb and *kānaqāh* of Shaikh 'Abd-al-Šamad in Naṭanz.

Turquoise glazed vessels were probably widely produced; but, with the exception of sherds from Taḳt-e Solaymān, information is scant. Monochrome turquoise tiles were made at Taḳt-e Solaymān, and tomb tiles were manufactured elsewhere for both *emānzādas* (q.v.) and private citizens. Iraj Afšār's work on the monuments of Yazd has shown that molded tomb tiles were personalized by the addition of the deceased person's name and that they may well have been made in Yazd. The earliest Yazd tomb tile (1257) is located in the Friday Mosque of Haftādor (Afšār, I, pp. 52, 472). Qom is equally rich in such pieces; the earliest (Moḥarram 667/September-October 1268) is from the tomb of Šāh Ja'far, a grandson of Imam Musā al-Kāẓem (Modarresi Ṭabāṭabā'i, II, pl. 15, p. 38). Monochrome turquoise tomb tiles are found throughout Persia; turquoise glazed meḥrābs are less common.

Luster ware. The output of dated luster tiles declined after the death of Jalāl al-Din K'ārazmšāh in 1227. A meḥrāb in the Āstān-e Qods-e Raẓawī (640/1242) was made by 'Ali b. Moḥammad b. Abi Ṭāher at a time when Khorasan was governed by a Uighur Kōrgūz, a Muslim convert from Buddhism, and it indicates that Kāšān luster potters could, under favorable circumstances, produce tiles for religious institutions. After Hülegü's arrival, luster production increased visibly, and two monumental luster jars (the Hermitage and Hirsch jars) may be dated to the 1260s. The same decade saw the manufacture of large, non-figural star and cross tiles with Koranic inscriptions (October 1261 and January 1263) for the Emānzāda Yaḥyā in Varāmin (London, 1976, no. 379) and figural star and cross tiles with poetic inscriptions for the portal of the Emānzāda Ja'far in Dāmḡān (1267). The imagery and inscriptions of these are repeated on numerous star and cross tiles from Taḳt-e Solaymān made between 1269 and 1274 (Qučāni, 1992b, pp. 37-40). Thereafter, cross tiles are plain or molded turquoise and cobalt blue (but see an undated series in the Reẓā 'Abbāsi Museum, ca. 1340). Although non-figural tiles generally have Koranic inscriptions and figural tiles poetical inscriptions, a set of unprovenanced tiles with identical

birds in flight (Plate VII), which have Koranic inscriptions, are probably from the tomb of a shaikh like those from the Pir-e Bakrān and the tomb of 'Abd-al-Šamad in Naṭanz. Birds, the most common motifs in such contexts, are linked metaphorically to the spiritual quest, as outlined in Farid-al-Din 'Aṭṭār's *Manṭeq al-ṭayr*. Luster tiles with hawks attacking birds may be compared with the hawk and dove simile used in the context of the challenge to Islam posed by Buddhist monks (*baḳṣī*, q.v.) and shamans, rather than viewed as simple hunting scenes (Digby). The animal subject of star tiles from Dāmḡān and Taḳt-e Solaymān may be given a quasi-religious interpretation by reference to Rumi's reinterpretation of animal fables and popular stories. Although dragons and phoenixes are commonly associated with the new iconography, dragons usually do not appear on Persian vessels, with the exception of one tile other than those from Taḳt-e Solaymān.

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works on the foundations of mathematics (see Bayhaqi, *Tattema Şewân al-ḥekma*, p. 137; Hâji Kālifā, I, p. 217; Sāvi, in *EL*). Sāvaji's extant texts are demonstrative of his creativity in restructuring the traditional nine Books of the Arabic *Organon*, by defining a two-part logic: "expository propositions" (Ar. *al-aqwāl al-šāreḥa*, Pers. *goft-e rowšan konanda*); and "proof theory" (*hojaḥ*). His innovations served as the model for Sohrevardi's "Rules of Thought" (*al-Zawābeḥ al-fekr*), which is the Illuminationist restructured logic presented in the text *The Philosophy of Illumination, Part One*: I.1: sec. 1-7. Many Illuminationist technical innovations in formal logic—such as reduction of terms; formal redefinitions of the Second and Third Figures of Syllogism as simple inferences, or reductions, based on the First Figure; critical re-evaluation of negation in simple and compound propositions—may be regarded as extensions of Sāvaji's ideas (see Sāvaji, *Tabşera*, pp. 3-5; and Ziai, 1990b, chap. 1). The fact that Baḡdādi and Sāvaji are among the three Islamic philosophers Sohrevardi does name is indicative that he had studied their work.

Introduction to Sohrevardi's Illuminationism. Sohrevardi, the founder of Illuminationist philosophy, was born in 1155 in northeastern Iran in the hamlet Sohrevard, and was executed by the express command of Saladin the Ayyubid in 1191 in Aleppo, where his tomb still stands. The most widely known Illuminationist text by Sohrevardi is titled *Ḥekmat al-ešrāq* (The Philosophy of Illumination), which is a testimony to Sohrevardi's novel and innovative approach to philosophical discourse distinguished from Peripatetic philosophy. He aims to refine and augment Avicenna's Peripatetic system and is careful that the Philosophy of Illumination does not decline to the position of "handmaiden" of theology, as with the works of many thinkers from the late 12th century and 13th century on who followed Ġazālī's (q.v.) guidelines to limit philosophy by theological presuppositions, notably Aṭīr-al-Din Abhari in his famous and very widely used philosophical primer *Hedāyat al-ḥekma*. Starting in the 13th century historians, notably Šams-al-Din Šahrāzuri, elevate the novel Illuminationist system to the rank of an independent "school" of philosophy, and often praise it as the only creative continuation of philosophical investigation in post-Avicennan periods.

In its technical use within philosophical systems the term illumination (*ešrāq*) is coupled with the term "vision" (*mošāhada*), and together they inform of the unified epistemological theory, Knowledge by Presence (*'elm-e ḥozuri*), first constructed and named in the 12th century by Sohrevardi. This unified epistemological theory is the crowning achievement of the system, Philosophy of Illumination, where the term "illumination" signifies the most general act of knowing and the term "vision" signifies the act of the subject, in terms of generalized knowledge. The epistemological process of vision-illumination leads to knowledge (*dāneš*) in the most general sense, and the action "knowing" is expressed by the term *dānestan* (to know, inclusive of all types), acted by a subject, *dānanda*, related to an object, *dānesta*. The unified epistemology is

extended over the inclusive range of types of knowing. For example, in vision as external sight (Pers. *didan*; Ar. *ebšār*), the subject (Pers. *binanda*; Ar., *mobšer*) and the object of sight (Pers. *dida*; Ar. *mobšar*), when identified by the one-to-one relational correspondence (the Illuminationist relation between any subject and object, *ežāfa-ye ešrāqiya*, replacing predication) that triggers Knowledge by Presence, will indicate the function of sight. Extended beyond external sight, and in its generalized form, the Illuminationist unified epistemological theory posits that, when any knowing subject (*modrek/dānanda*) and any knowable object (*modrak/dānesta*) form "sameness" by an identity preserving relational correspondence in the generalized domain of knowing (*edrāk/dānestan*), then, and only then, knowing is actualized, as stated by Sohrevardi: "knower, known, and knowing are here one" (i.e., the same: *al-modrek wa al-modrak wa al-edrāk hāhonā wāhed*).

Medieval historians, and contemporary scholars, differentiate Peripatetic philosophy and Illuminationist philosophy in terms of ontological, epistemological, and cosmological principles. The philosophical position most widely used to distinguish the two schools, initially by Mollā Šadrā (d. 1640) in his *Ta'liqāt* and later upheld by the contemporary thinker Sayyed Jalāl Āštiāni in his complex text titled *Hastī*, is the Illuminationist ontological principle "primacy of quiddity" (*ašālat al-māhiya*) over that of "primacy of being" (*ašālat al-wojud*)—the latter is commonly thought to be the principle Peripatetic ontological view.

Illuminationist philosophy departs from Peripateticism in relation to: terminology; epistemological priority of the intuitive over the purely syllogistic; and use of constructed ontological-based meta-language of light applied to all entities in the whole continuum of reality, where existent things in each segment of the cosmos (Intellect, Soul, Matter, plus an added fourth realm named *'Ālam al-kayāl*, translated, *mundus imaginis* by Henry Corbin) are said to be lights of various degrees of luminosity and are propagated from the source of being, the Light of Lights. The Light of Lights is one with respect to all possible modes, and all other "lights" are propagated from it according to rapidly increasing sequences such as 2^n . The multiple abstract lights (*anwār-e mojarraḍa*) of the Illuminationist system form the cosmological theory of multiplicity of intellects (*katrat-e 'oqul*), which is another distinguishing feature of the system in relation to the Peripatetic numbered and discrete separate Intellects (*'oqul-e mofāreq*).

Perhaps the most widespread use of Illuminationist Philosophy has been epistemological theory. The impact of Illuminationist Knowledge by Presence (*'elm-e ḥozuri*), which posits a posterior epistemological position to acquired, or representational, knowledge (*'elm-e ḥošuli*), has not been confined to specialist, philosophical circles, as has Illuminationist logic, for example. The epistemological priority status given to intuitive knowledge has dominated "speculative mysticism" (*'erfān-e nazari*) in Iran, and is also widely intimated in Persian poetry.

Sohravardi's new Illuminationist epistemological theory first critically evaluates the logical "law" of identity (sameness, equality) and how it applies to the relation between the subject, or the apprehending subject (*al-mawzū' al-modrek*) and apprehendable object (*al-modrak*). The theory is fully formulated first in the metaphysics of the text *Paths and Havens: Book Three: On the Science of Metaphysics*, which replaces Aristotelian predicative knowledge, thought to be inapplicable to prove validity of the process of obtaining primary principles (Aristotle concurs on this, *Posterior Analytics* 1.2), with the generalized theory of Knowledge by Presence. Said in logical terms this means that: "x is y"; or "x = y" (logical principle, or law of Identity, i.e., X = X); "sameness," "unity," "becoming one," plus all other predicative propositions, are replaced with a generalized law of identity as relational correspondence between each and every one (*koll wāhed wāhed*) of individuals (*āḥād*) of two aggregate wholes (*al-ejtemā'*, a novel Illuminationist term), of both the "realm knowing," and the "realm being," which are realms "in" (*fi*) the continuum whole. This relation between subject (thinking, thought), and object (the thing thought) is named *al-ezāfa al-ešrāqiya* meaning "Illuminationist Relation." It is a novel idea, and the term is first used by Sohravardi in several places of his text *al-Talwiḥāt* (Intimations). This original idea is best described as an identity preserving one-to-one correspondence between each and every member of two realms, being and knowing. The lengthy and elaborate process that terminates with the naming of relational correspondence between thinking and being, subject and object, thinker and the thing thought, is one of Illuminationist philosophy's great achievements. The theory clearly defines the multi-level relation between "thinking subject" (*al-mawzū' al-modrek*, where the verb *d-r-k* replaces 'a-q-l) and object, and is generalized. In this way non-predicative Knowledge by Presence is given priority over predicative knowledge, i.e., finally, "x is y" (and x = y) is replaced by $\{x_i\}R(q)\{y_j\}$, which is named a general law of metaphysics, where R is the Illuminationist Relation between each and every knowing subject and knowable object.

Post-12th-century Illuminationist philosophy. Illuminationist philosophy was very popular in the 13th century, specifically after the Mongol conquest that ushered in with it a new political era. Aš'arite theology was no longer dominant. The lavishly endowed new school at Marāḡa, directed by the Persian scientist-philosopher Našir-al-Din Ṭusi, recruited many scholars from all parts of the vast empire inherited by the Mongol warlords. New activity in all domains of science is attested by the large number of fresh texts, commentaries, and interpretations of earlier sciences. Illuminationist philosophy was eagerly sought primarily due to its political doctrine, because of its potential use in formulating the theory of Mongol rule, lending it scientific and proven authority (Ziai, 1992a).

The main 13th-century Illuminationist scholars are: Šams al-Din Moḥammad Šahrāzuri, Sa'd b. Mašur Ebn

Kammuna (d. 1284), whose commentary on *al-Talwiḥāt* has earned the status of a textbook among Illuminationist philosophers in Iran, and Qoṭb-al-Din Širāzi. Also Ismā'il b. Moḥammad Rizi whose work, titled *Ḥayāt al-Nofus* and dedicated to the prince Yusof Šāh son of Alb Arsalān Arḡun son of Hezār Asp, Atābak of Lorestān during the years 673-87/1274-88 (Rizi, pp. 12 ff.), may be seen as a Persian Illuminationist text. Though the text is mainly a synthesis of Sohravardi's four major Arabic texts, the controversial doctrines are left out. Šahrāzuri's Illuminationist Philosophical texts, such as *al-Šajara al-elāhiya*, the first comprehensive and truly philosophical encyclopedia, and his lengthy Illuminationist commentary, *Šarḥ ḥekmat al-ešrāq* (Commentary on the Philosophy of Illumination) are demonstrative of 13th-century creative philosophical thinking (see Ziai, 1990d; and Šahrāzuri, 1993).

Other commentaries on Sohravardi's texts were composed later, the most important of which are the 16th-century works by Jalāl-al-Din Davāni (q.v.; d. 908/1502), and the extensive 17th-century Persian commentary by Moḥammad Šarif Nežām-al-Din Heravi. Davani is the author of the celebrated work on ethics titled *Aḳlāq-e Jalāli*, and he held the position of vizier under the Āqquyūnlü rulers of northeastern Iran. His commentary on Sohravardi's *Hayākel al-nur*, titled *Šawākel al-ḥur fi šarḥ hayākel al-nur*, is well known. Ġiāṭ-al Din Mašur Daštaki (q.v.; d. 948/1541), too, has written a commentary on Sohravardi's *Hayākel al-nur*, titled *Ešrāq hayākel al-nur le-kašf zolamāt šawākel al-ḡorur*. This is not one of the major Illuminationist theoretical works, but it is indicative of Sohravardi's widespread impact.

Finally there is a possible, though not fully examined, impact of Illuminationist thinking in the West. This is exemplified by the interesting, though seldom mentioned, major paraphrase of important sections of Sohravardi's text *Philosophy of Illumination*, done by the famous Nāšerid vizier Lesān-al-Din Ebn al-Ḳaṭīb in his *Rawḏat al-ta'rif bi'l-ḥobb al-šarif*, composed in Granada, Andalusia.

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