



ĀMOLĪ, SAYYED BAHĀ'-AL-DĪN

ĀMOLĪ, SAYYED BAHĀ'-AL-DĪN ḤAYDAR B. 'ALĪ B. ḤAYDAR AL-'OBAYDĪ AL-ḤOSAYNĪ, early representative of Imamite theosophy (b. 720/1320, or perhaps 719/1319). He studied first in his home town of Āmol, then in Astarābād and Isfahan. Returning to Āmol in his late twenties, he was made a confidant, then a minister, of Faḵr-al-dawla Ḥasan b. Keyḵosrow b. Yazdegerd (734-50/1333-34 to 1349), the last ruler of the Kīnḵvāriya branch of the Bavandid dynasty. The year of Faḵr-al-dawla's assassination coincided with Āmolī's conversion to the Sufi way in the wake of a religious crisis. He abandoned his brilliant career, wore a *kerqa*, and set out on a journey to the Shi'ite shrines, then to Jerusalem, Mecca, and Medina. He was forced to leave Medina due to ill health, and appears to have spent the rest of his life in Iraq. In Baghdad he studied with Naṣīr-al-dīn Kāšānī Ḥellī (d. 755/1354) and with Faḵr-al-moḥaqqaqīn Moḥammad b. Ḥasan b. Moṭahhar Ḥellī (d. 771/1370), son of the famous 'Allāma, from whom he obtained an *ejāza*. He then settled in Najaf, where he lived for over thirty years. The last notice of him dates from 787/1385, when he completed his *Resālat al-'olūm al-'ālīya*.

Āmolī was a prolific writer. Of some forty works whose titles are known (see the Arabic [pp. 19-35] and French [pp. 37-57] introductions by O. Yahya and H. Corbin respectively, in Sayyed Haydar Amoli, *La philosophie shi'ite*, Tehran and Paris, 1969), only seven are at present known to have survived. These are (in chronological order): (1) *Asrār al-šarī'a wa aṭwār al-ṭarīqa wa anwār al-ḥaqīqa* (ed. M. Ḳvājavī, Tehran, 1362 Š./1983). Mentioned twice in *Jāme' al-asrār*, this work discusses each of the five principles of religion (divine unity,



prophecy, eschatology, imamate, and justice) and the five pillars (prayer, fasting, *zakāt*, *hajj*, and *jeḥād*) from the points of view of people of the *šarī'a*, the *ṭarīqa*, and the *ḥaqīqa*. (2) *Jāme' al-asrār wa manba' al-anwār* (ed. O. Yahya and H. Corbin, in *La philosophie shi'ite*, pp. 2-617). This work, completed about 752/1351, is divided into three books (each called *aṣl*), every book consisting of four large chapters (*qā'eda*). It has become the best-known of Āmolī's writings, thanks to studies by Corbin (in *Eranos-Jahrbuch* 30, 1961, pp. 90ff.; 32, 1963, pp. 80ff.; *La philosophie shi'ite*, pp. 58ff., and elsewhere) and P. Antes (*Zur Theologie der Schi'a. Eine Untersuchung des Ğami' al-asrār . . .*, Freiburg, 1971). (3) *al-Masā'el al-āmoliya* (or *al-ḥaydariya*), consisting of questions on theological and juridical matters addressed by Āmolī in 759/1358 to his teacher Fakr-al-moḥaqqeḳīn; an autograph is preserved (Tehran, University Central Library, 1022). (4) *Resālat naqd al-noqūd fī ma'refat al-wojūd* (ed. O. Yahya and H. Corbin, in *La philosophie shi'ite*, pp. 620-710). This work, completed in Najaf in 768/1367, is a summary of Āmolī's *Resālat al-wojūd fī ma'refat al-ma'būd* (written after 760/1359), which is not known to have survived. (5) *al-Moḥiṭ al-a'zam*, a seven-volume Qur'ān commentary, completed in 777/1375-76. (6) *Naṣṣ al-noṣūṣ*, a commentary on Ebn al-'Arabī's *Foṣūṣ al-ḥekam*, completed in Najaf in 782/1380-81. The lengthy introductory sections of this work have been published (Sayyed Ḥaydar Āmolī, *Le Texte des textes (Naṣṣ al-noṣūṣ . . .)*. *Les prolégomènes*, ed. H. Corbin and O. Yahya, Tehran and Paris, 1974). The introductions of this and the previously mentioned work include autobiographical passages which provide much of the available information on Āmolī's life. (7) *Resālat al-'olūm al-'ālīya*, of which an autograph is preserved in Najaf. The attribution to Āmolī of a collection of Imamite traditions entitled *al-Kaškūl fī mā jarā 'alā āl al-rasūl* (Najaf, 1372/1953) has long been in dispute; Corbin has adduced convincing evidence (*La philosophie shi'ite*, p. 46) that it is by a different author.

The significance of Āmol's thought lies in two major areas: First, he was an early proponent of the thesis that Imamite Shi'ism, which combines the *šarī'a*, *ṭarīqa*, and *ḥaqīqa*, is identical with Sufism. Every true Shi'ite (referred to by Āmolī as *mo'men momtaḥan* "a believer put to the test") is also a Sufi, and vice versa. The Imams, who are invested with mystical knowledge, are the guides not only of the Shi'ite community, but also of all those who seek the mystical path. Āmolī is equally critical of Shi'ites who reduce their religion to a legalistic system and of Sufis who deny that their origins and doctrines go back to the Imams.



Second, Āmolī was an early example of a long line of Imamite thinkers (stretching to our own day) who incorporated the thought of Ebn al-‘Arabī and his followers into their writings. In particular, Āmolī adopted and elaborated upon the distinction between pure monotheism (*tawḥīd olūhī*), which is exemplified by the profession of faith (*lā elāha ella’llāh*) and constitutes the outward (*zāher*) aspect of God’s unity, and the inner (*bāṭen*), ontological (*wojūdī* or *ḥaqīqī*) *tawḥīd*, according to which nothing exists except God (*laysa fi’l-wojūd sewa’llāh*). The former was taught by the prophets, and the secrets of the latter by the *awlīā’*. Āmolī illustrates the meaning of *tawḥīd wojūdī* by the example of ink and the letters produced by it: Just as the letters have no independent existence and are merely loci of manifestation (*mazāher*) for the ink, so also the physical world is but a locus of manifestation for the divine names, attributes, and acts (*Jāme’ al-asrār*, pp. 107-08, 312). Āmolī juxtaposes the two forms of *tawḥīd* with two kinds of *šerk* (association, polytheism): one explicit (*ǧalī*), involving the association of others with God, another hidden (*kaftī*, resulting from the failure to perceive that “everything is God, is through Him, from Him, and to Him.” The *tawḥīdwojūdī* will finally be vindicated with the advent of the Mahdī. In accordance with Āmolī’s system, the Mahdī must be a *walī*, not a prophet; indeed, Āmolī follows Sa’d-al-dīn Ḥammūya (d. 650/1252) (in his *al-Maḥbūb*) and ‘Abd-al-Razzāq Kāšānī (d. 730/1330) in maintaining that the seal of the universal (*moṭlaq*) *walāya* is ‘Alī and the seal of the particular (*moqayyad*, Mohammadan *walāya* is the Mahdī (who for Āmolī is identical with the Twelfth Imam). On this issue Āmolī differs from Ebn al-‘Arabī, who identified the *ḵātam al-walāyat al-moṭlaqa* with Jesus and who was himself regarded by some of his disciples as the *ḵātam al-walāyat al-moqayyada* (*Jāme’ al-asrār*, pp. 385, 395-448).

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