



‘AQL

‘AQL, “intellect, intelligence, reason.”

i. *General.*

ii. *In Persian Literature.*

i. General

The term ‘*aql* is said by Arab philologists to mean originally “to restrain” or “to tie.” It then comes to mean “reason” because it “restrains man from precipitous conduct” (see standard Arabic dictionaries). Its use in Islamic philosophy, theology, Sufism and literature is very wide-spread but has different nuances in each. Particularly in philosophy and theology (*kalām*) its use is technical and has developed under the impact of Greek philosophical ideas. In this technical literature it translates the Greek terms *noûs* and *diánoia*. The philosopher al-Farābī, at the beginning of his *Resāla fi’l-‘aql* (ed. M. Bouyges, Beirut, 1938) distinguishes several meanings of ‘*aql*, on the basis of Aristotle, including one he attributes to *kalām*-theologians.

In its philosophical usage ‘*aql* perceives universals as opposed to sense-perception which perceives particulars only. The operation of the intellect is described as abstracting the object of perception from matter and material relationships and making a concept out of it that is applicable to all the members of a species. The manner in which this is done is that the mind composes and contrasts the images of perceptibles stored up in memory and



this activity enables it to receive the universal intelligible from the Active Intelligence (*'aql fa'āl*), a cosmic intelligence (see below) that acts upon the potential human intellect and renders it actual. The universal intelligible, thus, does not “come out of” the images in the mind but is an influx “from the outside.” Ebn Sīnā developed the theory of the intellect most elaborately among the Muslim philosophers. According to him, by exercising intellection, man develops a capacity within himself for creative knowledge. This capacity or power which he calls “simple intellect” (*al-'aql al-basīṭ* = *scientia simplex* of medieval Latin philosophy) enables man to create knowledge *ab initio* which had never been acquired before. This newly created knowledge he terms “discursive knowledge” (see his *De Anima*, Arabic text, ed. F. Rahman, Oxford, 1959, pp. 241f.).

At the highest point of its development, where the human intellect becomes like the Active Intelligence, the Prophetic Intellect comes into being where all truth is deposited in a coupe and from where intellectual Revelation arises in the form of revealed messages in the Prophet’s mind (see F. Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam*, Chicago, 1979, pp. 30-36).

Under the impact of the neo-Platonic theory of emanation, Muslim philosophers developed the theory of ten metaphysical Intelligences. The First Intelligence arises directly from God. From this Intelligence arises the Second Intelligence, on the one hand and the highest Sphere on the other. This process, where each Intelligence moves its corresponding heavenly sphere goes on until the 10th Intelligence which has weakened so much that it can not give rise to another Intelligence; instead it produces the sub-lunar world of matter. It is this intelligence, called the Active Intelligence, which gives forms to the spatio-temporal world’s hierarchy of beings, culminating in the Prophetic Intellect where this world rejoins the Active Intellect. What seems to have made this theory irresistibly powerful over the minds of medieval philosophers—Muslims, and, following them, the Latin thinkers like St. Thomas Aquinas—is that it satisfied both scientific and religious demands at the same time. Scientifically, there were eight planets and one High Sphere (containing all “stationary” stars), and, religiously, the number of Arch-Angels was believed to correspond to the number of spheres (see E. Gilson, *Les sources gréco-arabes de l’augustinisme avicennisant*, in *Archives d’Histoire Doctrinale et Littérature du Moyen Âge*, 1938).

As for *kalām*, it did not develop any elaborate theory of the intellect or reason, but, as al-Farābī points out in the reference given above, theologians often



speak of a “natural reason” or a “sound reason” (*‘aql be’l-feṭra*; *‘aql salīm*). This appears to have its source in the Stoic concept of a natural reason which they also call *lumen naturale* (natural light). While for the Mu‘tazilites, this natural reason is autonomous in giving man guidance independent of Revelation, the orthodox theologians consider its operations to be decisively subordinate to Revelation: Particularly in the sphere of law, orthodox theologians reject the autonomy of reason.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See also *EI*² III, p. 943.

Particularly for later developments see Ebn Sīnā, *Ketāb al-eṣāra wa’l-tanbīhāt*, with commentaries of Faḵr-al-dīn Rāzī (on the margin) and Naṣīr-al-dīn Ṭūsī, Istanbul, 1290/1873, pp. 281-333.

F. Rahman, *The Philosophy of Mullā Ṣadrā*, Albany, N.Y., 1975, pp. 146-66, 232-46.

(F. Rahman)

ii. In Persian Literature

The term *‘aql* (which will be translated as intellect throughout) is widely discussed in Islamic texts, a fact that is hardly surprising since knowledge (*‘ilm*), which is the content of intellect if not in some way identical with it, is central to Islamic civilization and dominates “over all aspects of Muslim intellectual, spiritual and social life” (F. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant: The Concept of Knowledge in Medieval Islam*, Leiden, 1970, p. 334).

Definitions of intellect and disputes over what exactly is denoted by the word are common in the works of various authorities in the different sciences. It is often divided into several kinds. For the philosophical discussion, see above (see also S. M. Afnan, *A Philosophical Lexicon in Persian and Arabic*, Beirut,



1969, pp. 178-85). The famous theologian Abū Ḥāmed Ḡazzālī (d. 505/1111) suggests that one of the reasons for difference of opinion over the nature of the intellect is that the word 'aql denotes four different realities (*Eḥyā' 'olūm al-dīn*, Cairo, 1327/1909, I, p. 64): 1. The attribute which distinguishes human beings from animals and makes them capable of learning arts and sciences; as such, intellect is an innate capacity (*ḡarīza*) that is related to knowledge as the eye is related to vision. 2. Knowledge that is possessed innately by children once they have gained a certain power of discernment, e.g., that two of a thing are more than one. 3. Knowledge that gained through experience. 4. The understanding by man's innate capacity for knowledge that all affairs have certain consequences and that passion and self-interest must be restrained. The first of these kinds of intellect, says Ḡazzālī, is the foundation and source, the second the initial consequence of the first, the third the consequence of the first and second combined, and the fourth the ultimate fruit and final goal. The first two are innate, while the third and fourth are acquired (Ḡazzālī then quotes three verses from 'Alī b. Abī Ṭāleb that provide a traditional basis for this classification; Abū Ṭāleb Makkī [*Qūt al-qolūb*, Cairo, 1961, I, p. 324] quotes the same verses with the word 'elm in place of 'aql; see the translation by Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, p. 184).

In the early Islamic texts and in discussions by authorities such as Ḡazzālī, intellect is accorded a highly positive role. Nevertheless, in Persian literature and in Sufism in general, intellect is often criticized for its shortcomings, especially in the face of love (*'eṣq, maḥabba*); the remainder of the present entry will deal mainly with the theme of the contrast between intellect and love.

Although the word 'aql as such is not found in the Koran, various verbal forms (e.g., *ya'qelūn*) occur forty-nine times, always in a positive sense. Through intellect mankind understands the signs (*āyāt*) of God, whether in the phenomena of nature (Koran 2:164, 13:4, 16:12, 23:80, etc.), or in the Koran and other scriptures (2:44, 3:65, 3:118, 10:16, 11:51, etc.). Intellect prevents man from falling into hell (67:10) and allows him to understand that the next world is better than this (6:32, 7:161, 12:109, 28:60). The vilest of creatures in God's sight are those who have no intellect (8:22). Intellect's importance is enhanced by the fact that commentators identify the *lobb* possessed by the *ūlu'l-albāb*, mentioned in sixteen verses, with intellect; a typical verse reads, "Are they equal—those who know and those who know not? Only the *ūlu'l-albāb* (the possessors of intellects) remember" (39:9).

The very few Hadiths in the primary Sunni collections referring to intellect



always mention it in the same positive sense that is seen in the Koran. Later works add numerous examples of Hadith in praise of *'aql* (e.g., Ġazzālī, *Ehyā'* I, pp. 63-64). The Shi'ite Hadith collections are particularly rich in traditions praising intellect (see Maġlesī, *Beḥār al-anwār*, repr. Beirut, 1983, I, *Ketāb al-'aql wa'l-ġahl*, pp. 81-162). In both Shi'ite and Sunni Hadiths, the connection between intellect and sound religious faith and practice is stressed. Thus Ġazzālī (loc. cit.) quotes the Prophet as saying that the pillar of the believer is his intellect, which determines the measure of his worship (*'ebāda*). Similarly Imam Ja'far al-Šādeq defines intellect as "That through which the All-Merciful is worshipped and Paradise is attained" (Maġlesī, *Beḥār* I, p. 116). The Shi'ite sources emphasize the idea that all positive moral qualities depend upon intellect; the lists of these qualities seem to be prototypes for the later discussions of the *maqāmāt* or "stations" of spiritual perfection in Sufism (cf. the one hundred branches of intellect according to the Prophet, *ibid.*, pp. 117-19, or the seventy-five soldiers of intellect—as opposed to the seventy-five soldiers of *ġahl* "ignorance"—according to Imam Ja'far, *ibid.*, pp. 109-11).

Though intellect is highly praised in the early sources, it is always recognized as a creature of God, who has no equals. Hence intellect must have certain limitations; among these are the fact that God Himself can only be known to the intellect to the extent that He chooses to reveal Himself to it, either through scripture or through the created world. But man as a possessor of intellect will never be able to comprehend God as He is in Himself; the verse "They measure not God with His true measure" (Koran 22:74) is often cited to prove this point. Similarly, a prophetic Hadith that is sometimes quoted in this context states, "Meditate (*tafakkor*) upon God's creation (or: God's bounties), but not upon God (or: upon God's Essence)" (Ġazzālī, *Kīmīā-ye sa'ādat*, ed. A. Ārām, Tehran, 1319 Š./1940, p. 779). 'Alī's *Nahī al-balāġa* contains several passages alluding to the intellect's inability to grasp true knowledge of God (ed. Š. Šāleḡ, Beirut, 1387/1967, pp. 217, 225, 238; cf. W. Chittick, *A Shi'ite Anthology*, Albany, 1981, pp. 28, 32; on the whole question of man's ability to know God in the Islamic context, see Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, pp. 129-42). In general, the great emphasis placed by *kalām* upon the concept of *tanzīh*, or "incomparability," the idea that God is dissimilar to created things and transcends our understanding, is closely connected to the inability of the intellect to reach a true comprehension of God's inmost nature (*konh*), however necessary intellect may be in order for the individual to establish sound religious faith and practice. Many early Sufis also allude to the limitations of intellect. Thus Abu'l-Ḥasan Nūrī (d. 295/908) said that the



intellect is “impotent (*‘ājez*), and this impotent can only point to that which, like itself, is impotent” (*Ḳolāṣa-ye šarḥ-e ta‘arrof*, ed. A. ‘A. Rajā’ī, Tehran, 1349 Š./1970, p. 155; cf. J. Nurbakhsh, *Sufism: Meaning, Knowledge, and Unity*, New York, 1981, pp. 46-47; Kalābādī, *The Doctrine of the Sufis*, tr. A. J. Arberry, Lahore, 1966, pp. 51-55).

Intellect was also suspect because the philosophers and many of the theologians claimed to base their doctrines upon its findings, while the majority of the community felt that these thinkers had strayed far from the letter and spirit of Islam; “man of intellect” (*‘āqel*) is often a derogatory term alluding to a rationalistic thinker or philosopher, someone who is perceived as placing intellect even above revelation. Thus we find Sanā’ī (d. 525/1130-31) writing that intellect is blind in religious love: “Exercising intellect (*‘āqelī*) is the work of Ebn Sīnā (Avicenna)” (*Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqa*, ed. M. T. Modarres Rażawī, Tehran, 1329 Š./1950, pp. 300-01). In his *Dīvān*, Sanā’ī stresses the superiority of the *šarī‘a* over intellect and remarks that Avicenna will not be able to provide you with *šefā’* and *naĵāt* (“healing” and “salvation,” the titles of two of Avicenna’s works; *Dīvān*, ed. idem, Tehran, 1341 Š./1962, p. 43; cf. pp. 57, 127). In a similar way he points out that intellect is useless without revelation and that the “partial intellect (*‘aql-e ĵozvī*) cannot encompass the Koran: How can a spider snare a phoenix?” (p. 191). Criticisms of Avicenna as the archetypal *‘āqel* are made by Ḳāqānī (*Toḥfat al-‘Erāqayn*, ed. Y. Qarīb, Tehran, 1333 Š./1954, pp. 65-66) and Rūmī (*Maṭnawī*, ed. R. A. Nicholson, London, 1925-40, IV, v. 506; cf. ‘Aṭṭār’s arguments that the philosopher’s intellect takes him outside of Moḥammad’s religion; *Asrār-nāma*, ed. Ş. Gowharīn, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959, pp. 49-51, especially v. 801). In a famous verse (*Maṭnawī* V, v. 4144) Rūmī places Faḵr-al-dīn Rāzī, the great theologian, in the same category; he seems to be repeating the sentiment of his celebrated compatriot Šams Tabrīzī, who remarks, “If these meanings (*ma‘ānī*) could be perceived through study and discussion, then Bāyazīd and Jonayd should heap all the dirt in the world on their own heads in regret for [not having attained the rank of] Faḵr Rāzī” (*Maqālāt*, ed. M. ‘A. Mowaḥḥed, Tehran, 2536 = 1356 Š./1977, p. 135; on the complicated problem of whether or not the Sufis’ criticism of intellect was justified, see S. H. Nasr, “The Relation between Sufism and Persian Culture,” *Hamdard Islamicus* 6/4, 1983, pp. 33-47).

When Persian poets look at the positive side of intellect and praise its role in supporting religious faith and practice, they are often being influenced not only by the picture of the intellect drawn in the Koran and the early religious



literature, but also by the praise that was lavished upon it in Iranian sources (where *kerad* [Pahl. *xrad*, q.v.] is used interchangeably with '*aql*'; see *Adab*; *Andarz*) and in Greek wisdom literature. Whatever the extent of this sort of influence, it served to accentuate the positive role given to intellect in Islam. A glance at Wolff's concordance of the *Šāh-nāma* shows almost 1,000 instances of the use of *kerad* and various derivatives, such as *keradmand* (= '*āqel*'), invariably in a positive sense (F. Wolff, *Glossar zu Ferdosis Schahname*, Hildesheim, 1965; cf. M. Dabīrsīāqī, *Kašf al-abyāt-e Šāh-nāma-ye Ferdowsī*, Tehran, 1348-50 Š./1969-71, II, pp. 461-63, for the first meṣrā's of about one hundred lines beginning with *kerad*). Nāṣer Kōsrow (d. 481/1088-89), who was well versed in Peripatetic philosophy, praises intellect in numerous verses as man's indispensable companion in religion (e.g., *Dīvān*, ed. M. Mīnovī and M. Moḥaqqueq, Tehran, 1353 Š./1974, pp. 44, 84, 270, 273, 313, 452, 453).

But the Persian poets could not ignore intellect's weakness and incapacity in the face of God Himself; this negative side of '*aql*' came to be expressed most vocally in discussions of love (see 'Ešq), which was considered to be opposed to the intellect from early times. The connection between love and madness (*jonūn*), and the fact that the latter is the opposite of rationality ('*aql*', '*āqelī*'), was clear to everyone; the story of Laylā and Maǰnūn serves as the mythical expression of this understanding. Already Ferdowsī refers to the coming of love as coinciding with the departure of intellect (*Šāh-nāma*, ed. Borūḳīm, I, p. 152, v. 441). Similar verses can be found in Faḳr-al-dīn As'ad Gorgānī's *Vīs (Ways) o Rāmīn* (ed. M. M. Todua and A. A. Gwakharia, Tehran, 1349 Š./1970, pp. 94, 117-18), written in about 446/1054. Thus, "Intellect discerns good from bad, but when love comes, no intellect remains in the heart" (p. 117; most authorities locate intellect in the heart, not the mind; thus also Koran 22:46). Eventually the contrast between love and the intellect becomes a standard motif in the Persian *gāzal*.

Given Islam's tremendous emphasis upon the positive role of intellect, it might be expected that the "Islamic" view would be to denigrate love whenever it acts in opposition to intellect, and this is indeed the tenor of such works as Ebn al-Jawzī's *Damm al-hawā* (see J. N. Belt, *Love Theory in Later Hanbalite Islam*, Albany, 1979, p. 37). But Sufism had long emphasized the importance of love for God over all other human attributes. A respected master of *kalām* like Abū Ḥāmed Ġazzālī could write, "Love for God is the ultimate goal of the spiritual stations (*maqāmāt*). . . . Every station beyond it is one of its fruits, and every station before it leads up to it" (*Eḥyā* IV, p. 209).



As the Sufis increasingly wrote about the central importance of love in religion, they adopted the imagery and themes employed in poetry and prose to describe a man's love for a woman. Of seminal importance here for the development of Persian literature is the *Sawāneh*, a masterpiece of prose by Abū Ḥāmed's younger brother Aḥmad Ġazzālī (d. 520/1126). His succinct observation on intellect in this work sets the tone for all subsequent treatments of mystical love: Alluding to the Koranic verse, "They will ask you about the spirit, say: "The spirit is from the command of my Lord, and of knowledge you have been given but a little" (17:85), he writes that intellect's eyes are shut toward the perception of the spirit (*jān, rūḥ*), which is the shell surrounding love. "Since knowledge has no access to the shell, how should it find its way to the pearl hidden within?" (*Sawāneh*, ed. N. Pūrjavādī, Tehran, 1359 Š./1980, p. 55; cf. pp. 42-43; cf. also his *Baḥr al-ḥaqīqa*, ed. idem, Tehran, 1977, pp. 2, 6). The theory of intellect's relation to love was greatly elaborated by Aḥmad Ġazzālī's disciple, 'Ayn-al-qozāt Hamadānī (d. 525/1131), especially in his Arabic *Zobdat al-ḥaqā'eq* (ed. 'A. 'Osayrān, Tehran, 1341 Š./1962, pp. 25-36), where he explains that love belongs to a stage of human perfection "beyond the stage of the intellect" (*warā' ṭawr al-'aql*). Hamadānī's much longer Persian work, *Tamhīdāt*, is devoted largely to explaining the nature of love and the imagery that is used to express it; the limitations of intellect are implicit throughout the discussion, but mentioned explicitly only in a few lines of poetry (*Tamhīdāt*, published with *Zobdat al-ḥaqā'eq*, pp. 116, 151).

Among poets, 'Ayn-al-qozāt's contemporary Sanā'ī continues the tradition of praising intellect as man's great aid in religion (see *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqa*, chap. 4, pp. 295-314). But he pointedly distinguishes between the intellect that takes man to God and the counterfeit intellect that is possessed by the devil (p. 303). He describes the spiritual ascent of the man who seeks refuge in intellect, "becomes a sun through intellect's shadow," then gains the robe of fervent desire (*šawq*) for God and passes beyond even the Universal Intellect, God's first creation (p. 308). At the beginning of the *Ḥadīqa*, Sanā'ī had alluded to the inability of intellect to grasp the true nature of God (p. 16; this admission of intellect's impotence becomes a standard feature of the sections on *tawḥīd* that begin so many *matnawīs*, cf. e.g., J. A. Boyle, tr., *The Ilāhī-nāma or Book of God of Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār*, Manchester, 1976, pp. 1-2; G. M. Wickens, tr., *Morals Pointed and Tales Adorned: The Būstān of Sa'dī*, Toronto, 1974, pp. 5-6). In chapter five of the *Ḥadīqa*, Sanā'ī tells us that love is beyond intellect and spirit and that it transcends the dualities that the intellect discerns, such as faith and infidelity (p. 328). Sanā'ī's *Dīvān* devotes a far larger proportion of its verses to



love than does the *Ḥadīqa*, so in general it is more critical of intellect. Love deals with a domain beyond intellect; the latter asks about the licit and the illicit, while the former is only interested in “non-existence” (p. 337). In other words, the lover of God must smash the snare of everything other than his Beloved (including his own self): “Call everything other than love “heartache’ (*ḡamm*)” (p. 499).

Sanā’ī’s verses set the pattern for the contrast between intellect and love in Persian poetry. However, he also emphasizes the cosmological role of intellect, and this in turn becomes a common feature of Persian verse, especially among Sufis. The Hadith stating that God’s first creation was intellect is found in both Sunni and Shi’ite sources, though its authenticity was questioned by some of the ‘*olamā*’. It was often quoted by the philosophers, who found in it a confirmation of neo-Platonic teachings, and Sanā’ī was well versed in the philosophical tradition (J. T. P. de Bruijn, *Of Piety and Poetry: The Interaction of Religion and Literature in the Life and Works of Ḥakīm Sanā’ī of Ghazna*, Leiden, 1983, pp. 208f.). Like later Sufis, Sanā’ī was happy to make use of philosophical views to explain Islam’s vision of man’s origin and destiny. Thus he speaks of the Intellect as the cause of all existent things (*Ḥadīqa*, p. 295) and alludes to the Universal Intellect as the closest thing to God (p. 298). In his *Sayr al-‘ebād ela ’l-ma‘ād* (ed. Modarres Rażawī in *Maṭnawīhā-ye Ḥakīm Sanā’ī*, Tehran, 1348 Š./1969, pp. 212-14), he describes the cosmological role of the ‘*aql-e koll* (or *kollī*) in some detail.

‘Aṭṭār (d. 618/1220) devotes his *Dīvān* and *maṭnawīs* mainly to love and its concomitants, so he seldom speaks of the positive side of intellect, emphasizing instead its incapacity in the face of love, the intoxication produced by love’s wine, and the madness and bewilderment (*ḥayrat*) that overcome the lover at the vision of his Beloved’s face (e.g., *Manteq al-ṭayr*, ed. Ş. Gowharīn, Tehran, 1342 Š./1963, pp. 186-87; *Asrār-nāma*, ed. idem, Tehran, 1338 Š./1959, p. 35; *Dīvān*, ed. T. Tafazzolī, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966, pp. 6, 12, 31, 32, 38, 53, 56, 57, 61, 72, 77, 78, 82, 108, 110, 135, 136, 150, 156, 169, 176, 192, 200, 209, 216, 235, 241, 243, 271, 283, 296, 299, etc.). In contrast to Sanā’ī, ‘Aṭṭār rarely refers to intellect’s role in the cosmos.

Among ‘Aṭṭār’s contemporaries, a number of important prose writers contributed to the discussion of intellect’s relation to love. Though the master prose stylist Šehāb-al-dīn Sohravardī (d. 587/1191) writes constantly of intellect in his mystical recitals (*Majmū‘a-ye āṭār-e fārsī*, ed. S. H. Nasr, 2nd, ed., Tehran, 1977, index; cf. W. M. Thackston, Jr., tr., *The Mystical and Visionary Treatises of*



Suhrawardī, London, 1982, passim), his emphasis is upon the positive role of intellect as the source of the knowledge that brings about spiritual transformation, and here he is influenced not only by Sufi ideas of spiritual realization but also by Avicenna's cosmology and psychology; in *Sohravardī*'s view, the Active Intellect, identified as Gabriel in the angelic hierarchy, is man's inward guide to felicity (see 'Aql-e Sork). Rūzbehān Baqlī (d. 606/1209), a great theoretician of love, has little to say in criticism of intellect other than to acknowledge that it is a stranger (*bīgāna*) to God (*Ġalaṭāt al-sālekīn*, ed. J. Nūrbakš, with *Resālat al-qods*, Tehran, 1351 Š./1972, p. 83); however, he praises intellect as the instrument of man's servanthood and classifies it into four different kinds, showing that the highest kind belongs to the prophets and saints (*Resālat al-qods*, pp. 71-74). The Sufi Naǧm-al-dīn Rāzī (d. 654/1256) provides a detailed and systematic discussion of the relationship between love and intellect in his *ʿEšq o ʿaql* (ed. T. Tafazzolī, Tehran, 1345 Š./1966), explaining the cosmological basis for love's superiority. He concludes that intellect concerns itself with discernment and separation among things and thus with plurality and the establishment of this world, but love bridges gaps and annihilates multiplicity. The opposition (*zeddīyāt*) between intellect and love is based upon the fact that "Intellect is the great champion (*qahramān*) of constructing the two worlds, corporeal and spiritual, while love is a fire that consumes the haystack and overthrows the existence of both these worlds" (p. 63). Hence love carries the lover to the Beloved on the feet of effacement of the self (*nīstī*), but intellect cannot take its possessor farther than its own object; "And all men of knowledge and wisdom agree that God cannot be the object of anyone's intellect" (ibid.; cf. Rāzī's explanation of the conflict between love and intellect in *The Path of God's Bondsmen*, tr. H. Algar, Delmar, N.Y., 1982, pp. 87-90).

One of the subtlest and most detailed discussions of the relationship between intellect and love is found scattered throughout the works of Jalāl-al-dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273). The ideas he expresses and the poetical imagery that he employs mark the highpoint of this tradition; for the most part the poets who come after him contribute to discussions of intellect not by offering new concepts or imagery but by refining the literary technique. It is also true that Sufi writing after Rūmī undergoes profound changes because of the influx into Persian of Ebn al-ʿArabī's ideas and terminology, but this has little if any effect on the tradition of contrasting love and intellect (e.g., a poet like Maǧrebī [d. 809/1406-07] is totally dominated by Ebn al-ʿArabī's teachings, but in the few instances where he alludes to the opposition between love and intellect, his



concepts and images are no different from those of earlier poets (*Dīvān-e kāmāl-e Šams-e Mağrebī*, ed. A. Mīr ‘Ābedīnī, Tehran, 1358 Š./1979, *gāzals*, vv. 43, 478, 744, 789, 1111, 1330, 1336; *tarjīāt*, vv. 52, 160-85). Ebn al-‘Arabī and his followers place far less emphasis upon love than do Sufi poets such as Sanā‘ī, ‘Aṭṭār, and Rūmī; they were far more concerned with the construction of an elaborate theory of the nature of existence, and here intellect plays a major role, at least cosmologically. But intellect, and the knowledge it is able to acquire, are always subordinated to knowledge received directly from God, most often referred to as *kašf* “unveiling” (see, e.g., Ebn al-‘Arabī, *al-Fotūḥāt al-makkīya*, Beirut, n.d., I, pp. 91-92; tr. Rosenthal, *Knowledge Triumphant*, pp. 188-92. For a Persian example of this school’s writings, see Šadr-al-dīn Qūnawī, *Maṭāle‘-e īmān*, ed. W. Chittick, *Sophia Perennis* 4/1, 1978, pp. 71-72; cf. Chittick, “Mysticism vs Philosophy in Earlier Islamic History,” *Religious Studies* 17, 1981, esp. pp. 89-95).

Rūmī acknowledges that in the end love is superior to intellect, but he never ignores intellect’s positive dimension. Even more than Sanā‘ī or Najm-al-dīn Rāzī he gives intellect a clear role to play in the cosmos and in the stages of spiritual growth undergone by the traveler (*sālek*). He teaches that intellect is one in substance with the angels and is constantly engaged in seeking God; he contrasts it with the ego (*nafs*), which was originally one substance with Satan. Most men are veiled from the light of intellect by their egos; hence their intellects are in fact partial, while only the prophets and saints have reestablished contact with the Universal Intellect, through which all things were created. If intellect has a negative side, it is because “the partial intellect has disgraced the Intellect” (*Maṭnawī* V, v. 463). But in spite of the intellect’s fundamentally positive role, it must eventually be left behind in the quest for God. Just as Gabriel could only go so far in guiding the Prophet on his celestial ascent (*me‘rāj*), so the intellect must be finally naughted, since it pertains to creation and therefore duality. The intellect takes the saints to the Lote Tree of the Far Boundary (*ibid.*, VI, v. 4139; cf. Koran 53:14), but “Intellect is a shadow, God the Sun: How can the shadow stand up to the sun?” (*ibid.*, IV, v. 2111). Hence Rūmī devotes many lines, especially in his *Dīvān*, to criticizing intellect from the point of view of love, which burns away all multiplicity and leaves only the One God. Rūmī also makes clear the close connection between sobriety and intellect on the one hand and intoxication and love on the other: “The form of intellect is all stricture of heart, but the form of love is nothing but drunkenness” (*Dīvān*, v. 33781).



See also A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimension of Islam*, Chapel Hill, 1975, pp. 18-20 and passim.

Idem, *The Triumphal Sun: A Study of the Works of Jalāloddin Rūmī*, London, 1976, pp. 336-38 and index, s.v. intellect.

Idem, *As Through a Veil*, New York, 1982, pp. 66-67, 78, 126-29.

On intellect in Rūmī see Chittick, *The Sufi Path of Love*, Albany, 1983, pp. 33-37, 65-68, 88-92, 220-31, 318-23, and index.

(W. C. Chittick)