



HORUFISM

HORUFISM, a body of antinomian and incarnationist doctrines evolved by Fażl-Allāh Astarābādi (d. 796/1394; q.v.), known to his followers also as Fażl-e Yazdān (“the generosity of God”). Its principal features were elaborate numerological interpretations of the letters of the Perso-Arabic alphabet and an attempt to correlate them with the human form. The movement that espoused these teachings was relatively short-lived in Persia, but it had a significant prolongation in Anatolia and the Balkans, primarily under the auspices of the Bektāši order.

The foundational text of Horufism, Fażl-Allāh’s *Jāvdān-nāma*, has not yet been published, either in its fuller version, written in the dialect of Astarābād, or in its synopsis in standard Persian, nor has it been studied in any detail. The rest of the voluminous literature of Horufism, in Persian and Turkish, also remains largely in manuscript (for a comprehensive listing of titles in Turkish libraries, see Gölpınarlı, 1973, pp. 45-147), the only exceptions being the poems of Fażl-Allāh written with the pen name Na‘imi (in Āžand, pp. 127-45); various texts published by Clément Huart (1909) and Şādeq Kiā (1951, pp. 210-46); the works of Nesimī (Nasimi, 1973); Turkish poems by Refī‘i (Rafi‘i) and Penāhī (Panāhi; see Ertaylan, 1946); and Firişteoğlu’s *Işknâme-i Ilâhî* (1881), a Turkish précis of the Persian *Jāvdān-nāma*. Horufism is, therefore, imperfectly known to scholarship, and speculation about its ultimate origins seems hazardous. Since the Qur’ān is a revealed book in form as well as content, it is natural that the letters of which it is formed should have been viewed, from the earliest times, as more than phonetic markers. Not every consideration of the numerological



and symbolic significance of the letters can, therefore, be regarded as a precursor or source of Horufism. At least two elements of Horufism are, however, highly reminiscent of Isma‘ilism, although no direct line of filiation can be traced: a cyclical view of time, and an esoteric mode of interpretation (*ta‘wil-e bāṭeni*), both of the Qur‘ān and of religious duties, whereby the alleged inner meaning serves not to complement the outer meaning, but to displace it. Ismā‘il Hakkı Burūsevî (d. 1137/1725), a well-known Turkish Sufi and exegete, thus remarked of the Horufis that “they are blameworthy because they have laid hold of the indication (*al-ešāra*) while rejecting the obvious meaning (*al-‘ebāra*)” (in *Ruḥ al-bayān* IV, p. 4). The cycle of sainthood (*welāyat*) propounded by Horufism, however, does not include the imams peculiar to Ismā‘ili tradition, consisting instead of the first eleven imams of Twelver Shi‘ism. At the same time, Horufism cannot be classified as a variety of *gōlāt* Shi‘ism, for it shows no particular interest in elevating the rank of Imam ‘Ali b. Abi Ṭāleb above the ordinary. Ebn ‘Arabi has been mentioned as a possible Sufi forebear of Horufism (Mélikoff, 1998, p. 118), but Fażl-Allāh’s doctrines bear little resemblance to Ebn ‘Arabi’s understanding of the “science of letters” (*‘elm al-ḥoruf*) as expounded in his *Fotuḥāt al-makkiya* (I, pp. 56-74). They are, however, strikingly reminiscent of Sa‘d-al-Din Ḥa-muya’s abstruse speculations on the same subject in his *al-Meşbāḥ fi’l-taşawwof*, written some time in the early 7th/13th century.

Fażl-Allāh’s own insights were vouchsafed to him in a revelatory experience he called *zohur-e kebriā* “the manifestation of glory,” that took place in Tabriz in Ramażān 775/February-March 1374. Among the matters disclosed to him was the meaning of the much-discussed *ḥoruf-e moqatta‘a*, the separate letters that, without forming words, introduce twenty-nine chapters of the Qur‘ān; previously classed among the metaphorical or symbolical parts of the Qur‘ān (*motašābehāt*), they were now assigned to the verses having clear and unambiguous meaning (*moḥkamāt*; *Jāvdān-nāma-ye kabir*, Cambridge ms., foll. 30a-65b). These fourteen separate letters that, in varying combinations, occur at the beginning of the twenty-nine chapters, correspond to fourteen follicular features visible in the face of the human male. Seven of these—four sets of eyelashes, two eyebrows, and the hair on the head—are present already in childhood, and are designated as the “maternal lines” (*koṭuṭ-e ommiya*) in that they derive from Eve; the other seven—hair growing on each side of the face, the two sides of the moustache, hair growing out of each nostril, and the hair between the lower lip and the chin—appear with the onset of puberty and are known as the “paternal lines” (*koṭuṭ-e abiya*) in that they derive from Adam.



There is a further correspondence between these fourteen “lines” and the opening chapter of the Qur’ān, *Ṣurat al-fāteḥa*, for not only does it contain seven verses but it is also described in Qur’ān 15:87 as “*sab’an min al-matāni*” (“seven verses revealed twice,” once in Mecca and once in Medina; Firişteoğlu, pp. 35-36, 54).

Central to the Horufi scheme is, however, $2 \times 14 + 4$, thirty-two being the total number of letters in the Perso-Arabic alphabet; it is often represented in Horufi texts with the symbol. This total is not, however, the result of a simple historical contingency, the need to improvise letters for the four consonantal sounds found in Persian but not in Arabic (*p*, *č*, *ž*, and *g*); rather it is held to be the numerical analogue of “the thirty-two perfect, pre-eternal and post-eternal words” (*kelimât-i tâmme-i ezeliyye-i ebediye*; Firişteoğlu, p. 7). The “names” taught to Adam in pre-eternity (Qur’ān 2:31) were none other than these thirty-two letters and the sounds they represent; the letters thus serve as both a compendium of the cosmos and a means for its knowledge. A physiological confirmation of this truth is that the human mouth, the locus of articulation, normally contains precisely thirty-two teeth. The total of thirty-two is additionally foreshadowed, before the emergence of the Perso-Arabic script, by the occasional reckoning of the *lām-alef* combination in Arabic as a letter in its own right, for if the names of these two letters are written out in full, they are seen to be four in number. Hence the mystery of the separate letters introducing twenty-nine chapters, not twenty-eight, for once *lām-alef* is understood to be a letter in its own right and dissolved into its four constituent letters, the actual total is seen to be thirty-two. Many similar processes of computation yield the same result. If, for example, the names of the five letters constituting the name “Allāh” in Arabic script are written out in full, the total is fourteen, as is the case with the five letters that make up the name “Moḥammad;” the two names together thus have a numerical value of twenty-eight. Since these two names are pivotal to the creed (*šahāda*), it will be appropriate to add to them the four letters constituting *ašhadu* (“I bear witness”), leading to a grand total of thirty-two (Aksu, p. 409).

The exaltation of this blessed numeral is tied intimately to Fażl-Allāh’s concept of his own person and status. Given that the thirty-two letters were taught to Adam, knowledge of them was potential in the human form from the very beginning of creation; this form had in any event been imprinted with the divine image, according to Fażl-Allāh’s understanding of “He reposed on the throne” (*estawā ‘ala’l-‘arš*; Qur’ān 7:54 and other verses). Actualization of the



knowledge given to Adam was, however, gradual. First came the cycle of prophethood (*nobowwat*), extending from Adam to Moḥammad, each prophet having a fuller degree of knowledge than his predecessor. Then came that of sainthood (*welāyat*), a rank higher than that of prophethood in that those possessing it progressively disclosed the inner meanings of prophetic revelation. This cycle opened with ‘Ali, first of the Imams according to Twelver Shi‘i belief, and closed with Ḥasan al-‘Askari, the eleventh. The culminating cycle is that of divinity (*oluhiyat*), essentially coterminous with the person and teachings of Fażl-Allāh. The divine image primordially imprinted on the human form now becomes fully manifest in a person having complete mastery of the thirty-two letters. This enables him to penetrate the inner meanings of all things, above all those of the Koranic revelation, which he expounds in the *Jāvdān-nāma*, a book employing all thirty-two letters of the Perso-Arabic script. Authored by one considered the supreme exponent of esoteric interpretation (*ṣāḥeb-e ta’wil*), the *Jāvdān-nāma* not only revealed definitively the full meaning of the Qur’ān; it also superseded it, much as the Qur’ān itself had superseded earlier revelations.

Drawing on a full range of messianic expectations, Horufi teaching also awarded Fażl-Allāh several other titles of high dignity. He was, for example, both Jesus returned to the manifest plane and the promised Mahdi from the lineage of the Prophet. It was indeed this duality of Fażl-Allāh’s messianic identity that made possible the reconciliation of two apparently contradictory Hadith: “There is no Mahdi save Jesus son of Mary,” and “The Mahdi will be from my lineage, from the children of Fāṭema.” Since Jesus is, by the testimony of Qur’ān 3:39 and 3:45, “a word (*kalema*) from God,” it follows that Fażl-Allāh, as both a master and a manifestation of the thirty-two letters, should count as the final and comprehensive word of God (*kalām Allāh*) and hence as Jesus returned. As for the predicted descent of Jesus from the heavens while still thirty-three years of age, its true meaning is the discovery of the science of esoteric interpretation by Fażl-Allāh at that age; if one, the numeral of unity, is subtracted, the actual age in both cases is seen to be thirty-two. Like other aspirants at the time to messianic status, Fażl-Allāh claimed descent from Imam Musā al-Kāẓem, and hence qualified as a candidate for Mahdihood. Furthermore, his birthplace, Astarābād, counted as part of Khorasan, so there was no need to interpret esoterically the traditions that predict the appearance of the Mahdi in that region. The black banners the Mahdi will display according to those same predictions should, however, be understood as, again, the science of esoteric interpretation (Firişteoğlu, pp. 13-17).



The cycle of divinity was cut short with the beheading of Fażl-Allāh Astarābādi by Mirānšāh, the son of Timur and governor of Azarbaijan, at Alanjaq in Šervān in 796/1394. The site of his execution and burial (*maqtagāh*) became a shrine for his followers and remained such until at least 822/1419, the year in which ‘Ali al-Aḷā (q.v), his principal successor, was buried there. No ordinary place of pilgrimage, the *maqtagāh* was explicitly intended to replace the Ka’ba, and the rites performed there both mimicked and replaced the *ḥajj*. This transference of ultimate sanctity from Mecca to Alanjaq was facilitated by the detailed esoteric interpretation to which Fażl-Allāh had already subjected the *ḥajj*. The Ka’ba, as “the ancient house” (*al-bayt al-‘atiq*; Qur’ān 22:29 and 22:33), represents the face and the head of Adam, the form bearing the primordial divine imprint; the first set of sevenfold circumambulations corresponds to the seven “maternal lines,” and the second, to the “paternal lines,” not to mention the seven facial cavities (the eye sockets, the nostrils, the earholes, and the mouth); the swift walking between Şafā and Marva indicates hastening toward the mystery of *estewā*, the divine “settling” on the throne of Adamic form; and so forth (*Firişteoğlu*, pp. 106-12). The ultimate truth concerning the Ka’ba was, however, that it was a mere outward representation of the “true Ka’ba” (*Ka’ba-ye ḥaqiqi*) at Alanjaq, the final abode of the person in whom the fullness of the divine mystery had at last been displayed. *Eḥrām* (the consecrating dress of the pilgrim) was donned when arriving in its vicinity; circumambulations were performed about the shrine in multiples of seven, especially twenty-eight, this representing seven multiplied by four, the number both of the elements and the walls of the *maqtagāh*; and the castle of Sanjariya, the abode of Mirānšāh, who was regarded as the Dajjāl (Antichrist) by the Horufis, was ritually stoned in place of the pillars at Menā. These ceremonies took place during Du’l-qa’da, the month in which Fażl-Allāh had been put to death, reaching their climax on the fifteenth (Bashir, 2000, pp. 293-95). This pseudo-*ḥajj* seems to have been the only distinctive form of devotion practised by the Horufis. How long the *maqtagāh* was visited or its structure survived is unknown.

Fażl-Allāh is said to have foreseen his execution in one of the many dreams that marked his career, ten years before its occurrence, so that his followers cannot have been fully unprepared for this setback. Nonetheless, there was difference of opinion as to its meaning. Some believed that seeing Fażl-Allāh was equivalent to the vision of God in the hereafter, and that they were therefore already in Paradise. This being the case, all devotional duties fell away: “Paradise consists of knowledge, and Hellfire of ignorance. Since we are



aware of the thirty-two letters of our own being and of all things, all things are Paradise for us. There is no prayer; there is no fasting; there is no ritual purity. There is nothing that is illicit; everything is licit. All the aforementioned constitute duties, and there are no duties in Paradise. What is meant by Paradise is life in this world in a state of knowledge of the science of the letters and the exposition (*bayān*) made by the Master of Exposition (*ṣāḥeb-e bayān*)” (*Estevā-nāma* of Ġiāt-al-Din, in Browne, 1898, pp. 72-73). This antinomianism is said to have prevailed among the Horufis of Baghdad, Šervān, Gilān, Khorasan, and Lorestān, as well as some of those of Tabriz. Certain among them went so far, indeed, as to assert that “it is the right of the knowledgeable man (*ensān-e āref*; i.e., the enlightened Horufi) to take possession of whatever from the contents of the cosmos (*kā’enāt*) comes within his reach; as for what is not in his reach, he should regard it as his right and exert himself to wrest it from the grasp of others and take possession of it” (*Estevā-nāma* in Browne, 1898, p. 75). Other Horufis, following the pattern of other failed or frustrated messianists, believed that Fażl-Allāh would return to ensure the triumph of their cause—this, despite the fact that he had already been recognized as Jesus returned to the terrestrial plane (Bashir, 2002, p. 181).

In any event, vigorous, sometimes insurrectionary, propagation of the Horufi cause continued. Activity in Khorasan was overseen by a son-in-law of Fażl-Allāh known as the “*moršed* of Khorasan,” Sayyed Amir Eshāq, author of the *Maḥram-nāma*. The Horufis were particularly numerous in Herat, where they managed to infiltrate the army of the Timurid ruler Šāhroḡ. Mindful of their desire to avenge themselves on his dynasty for the execution of Fażl-Allāh, Šāhroḡ attempted to purge his soldiery by expelling a number of Horufis from the city. Not long after, on Jomādā II 23, 830/April 21, 1427, Aḥmad-e Lor, a Horufi who had come to Herat from Šervān, stabbed Šāhroḡ as he emerged from Friday prayers. The wound was not fatal, and the would-be assassin was put to death on the spot. A wave of arrests, executions, and banishings ensued. One of Fażl-Allāh’s grandsons, ‘Azod-al-Din, was put to death, and another, Amir Nur-Allāh, was imprisoned, together with Amir Ġiāt-al-Din, author of the *Estevā-nāma*. The poet Qāsem-al-Anwār (d. 837/1433), accused of Horufism because of a passing acquaintance with Aḥmad-e Lor, was banished to Samarqand. It is likely, however, that Qāsem-al-Anwār came under suspicion primarily because of the numerous disciples he had at the court of Šāhroḡ; his poetry contains relatively few Horufi themes (one being the divine “settling” [*estevā*] on an infinite number of thrones; see *Kolliyāt*, p. 29), and the most significant of his multiple associations was with Shaikh Šadr-al-Din Ardabili.



Also caught up in the panic-stricken aftermath of the attempt on Šāhroḡ's life were Ma'ruf Baḡdādi, a calligrapher who had failed to execute a copy of Neẓāmi's *Ḳamsa* for Bāysonḡor, and Šā'en-al-Din 'Ali Torḡa Eṣfahāni (d. 836/1432), probably not a Horufi but a Sufi with Shi'ite leanings (see, however, Corbin, *En Islam Iranien* III, p. 234); they were both imprisoned. Other, anonymous persons were put to death *en masse* (Kiā, 1954, pp. 43-49).

Isfahan had been the center of the earliest Horufi community, and it continued after the death of Faẓl-Allāh to harbor devotees of the sect he had founded. It was, however, an outsider, Ḥāji Sorḡ, who, newly arrived in the city, led the Horufi rebellion of 835/1431 in which two sons of the Timurid governor, Amir 'Abd-al-Šamad, were killed. The uprising was suppressed, Ḥāji Sorḡ was captured and skinned alive, and his following dispersed (Āẓand, pp. 87-88).

Horufi relations with the Qarāqoyunlu rulers of Tabriz, themselves adversaries of the Timurids, were initially amicable. Qarā Yusof (d. 823/1420) had after all defeated Mirānšāh, the Horufi Dajjāl, in 810/1407, an event celebrated by 'Ali al-A'lā' in his *Korsi-nāma* to mean that God had "settled" on the "throne" of Qarā Yusof, or alternatively that Faẓl-Allāh himself had returned to rule over the world in his person (Ritter, p. 31). Qarā Yusof does not appear to have embraced this esoteric interpretation of his victory, but Horufi prospects in Tabriz remained bright into the reign of Jahānšāh (841-872/1438-67). Reputed to be indifferent to religious matters, he was prepared to give a hearing to the claims of the Horufis: "They conversed occasionally with the aforesaid monarch, and their words were not without their effect" (Ebn al-Karbalā'i I, p. 479). That "effect" is apparent in some of the Turkish verse that Jahānšāh wrote under the sobriquet of Ḥaḡiqi; he praises Faẓl-Allāh and proclaims the seven verses of *Šurat al-fāteḡa* to be reflected in the face of the beloved (Ḥaḡiqi, pp. 41, 59). The Horufi community of Tabriz was led by a certain Mawlānā Yusof and, perhaps more importantly, by Kalemāt-Allāh al-'Olyā, a daughter of Faẓl-Allāh, once married to Pir-e Torābi, a butcher in the Naubar district of the city who had died in a fit of mystic ecstasy. The combined danger of Jahān-šāh's apparent recruitment by the Horufis and their wider appeal among the populace caused the 'olamā' of Tabriz to issue *fatwās* calling on the ruler to extirpate the Horufis, failing which he would be subject to dethronement. He temporized, however, as did the only scholar to whom he was close, Mawlānā Najm-al-Din Osku'i, until in 845/1441, a dervish came to Osku'i with the story that the Prophet had ordered



him in a dream to make sure the Horufis were annihilated. Thereupon Osku'i issued the requisite *fatwā*, Jahānšāh did not stand in his way, and some five hundred Horufis, including Kalemāt-Allāh al-'Olyā, were immolated (Maškur, pp. 140-42)

These events in Tabriz seem to mark the end of the Horufi community in Persia, at least in an organized form, although the emergence in Safavid times of the Noḡṭawi movement, an offshoot of Horufism dismissed as heretical by its mainstream adherents, may suggest some degree of subterranean survival. Horufism had thus survived in Persia for a mere fifty years after the death of Fażl-Allāh, a relatively brief period that hardly permits the assumption, commonly made, that the sect helped significantly to prepare the way for the Safavid dispensation. Efforts to spread Horufism in Syria and Iraq, primarily Baghdad, do not seem to have borne much fruit. Al-Ašraf Qānṣuḡ al-Ġawri (d. 922/1516), the last Mamluk ruler of Egypt before the Ottoman conquest, appears from his poetry to have favored the doctrine, but this was a personal choice, without visible effect on his realm. It was to be in Anatolia and the Balkans that Horufism found a receptive constituency.

Missionary efforts in Anatolia began very early, perhaps even during the lifetime of Fażl-Allāh, once he realized that his doctrines were unlikely to gain wide acceptance in Persia (Ritter, p. 25). The earliest identifiable agent of the Horufi cause in Anatolia was the poet Nesimī. Born in either Baghdad, Šemāki, or a variety of other possible locations, Sayyed 'Emād-al-Din Nesimī was directly acquainted with Fażl-Allāh, who referred to him in the *Jāvdān-nāma-ye kabir* as "Sayyed 'Emād" (Cambridge ms., fol. 410a); the two men met only once, shortly before Fażl-Allāh's death (Kulizade, p. 154). He traveled extensively in Anatolia, visiting Bursa, Larende, Maraş, and Ankara, and perhaps other cities as well. His poetry, written mostly in Turkish, is replete with hyperbolic praise of Fażl-Allāh, as in this quatrain: "Our hearts fell for the *fā'* and the *zād* and the *lām*" (the letters constituting the name Fażl); our hearts fell for the Ka'ba and the *eḥrām* (probably an allusion to a visit paid to Fażl-Allāh); our hearts fell for love without end; our hearts fell for the eternal name (*cāvidān nāma*, an obvious reference to the *Jāvdān-nāma*)" (Burrill, p. 146). Other Horufi themes occurring in his verse are the primacy of the divine word as the basis of creation; its substantial manifestation in the human form and the resultant deification of man; and the coming realization of Paradise on earth. Nesimī resorted, however, to other topoi as well, especially the notorious theopathic utterance of Ḥallāj, *ana'l-Ḥaqq*, which he clearly



understood in an incarnationist sense, and it may have been this rather than his Horufi loyalties that resulted in his being flayed alive at Aleppo in 807/1404-05. He left behind at least one disciple, Refîî, author of the *Beşâretnâme* and *Gencnâme*, the earliest works systematically expounding Horufism in Turkish, but Nesimî's own poetry was a more effective means for the propagation of Horufi ideas. Indeed, so wide was its appeal that attempts were made to obfuscate its manifest Horufi content and claim it for mainstream Sufi tradition, as by 'Alîşir Nevâ'î (p. 437).

Another early propagator of Horufism in Anatolia was Abdülmecid Firişteoğlu (d. 864/1459-60). Born in Tire near Izmir, he enjoyed the protection of his brother, a scholar favored by the local ruler, Aydınoğlu Mehmet Bey, who nonetheless disapproved of his heretical views. Although Firişteoğlu has been described as "one of the companions of Fażl-Allāh" (Taşköprüzade, p. 45), chronological reasons make it far more likely that he was initiated into Horufi doctrine by a certain Şams-al-Din, a *kalifa* of Fażl-Allāh, or by one of Şams-al-Din's successors, Bāyazid. It is unclear whether Firişteoğlu himself trained any successors, and his role as a propagator consisted chiefly of translating three of Fażl-Allāh's works into Turkish. The most significant of these was the *Işknâme-i İlâhî*, presented by him as the translation of the *Jāvdān-nāma*. In view of its brevity (164 pages in the Istanbul edition of 1288/1871), this work cannot be a full rendering of the Persian précis, which covers some 250 folios in the Ali Emiri farsça, 1,000 manuscript, let alone the voluminous text written in Astārābādi dialect, which in any event would presumably have been incomprehensible to Firişteoğlu. The *Işknâme* was evidently intended for clandestine circulation, for the translator invokes God's curses on whoever discloses it to the uninitiated (*nāmahrem*; p. 5). He additionally translated Fażl-Allāh's *Kvāb-nāma* and *Hedāyat-nāma* (both to be found in Istanbul University Library, ms. TY 9685, foll. 2a-73a). The attribution to Firişteoğlu of an Arabic-Turkish glossary of all the words occurring in the Qur'ān, organized in twenty-eight chapters, is disputed (Aksu, pp. 134-35).

At about the same time that Firişteoğlu was laboring on his translations, a Horufi missionary had penetrated the court at Edirne of the Ottoman heir apparent, the future conqueror of Istanbul, Mehmed II. This proselytizing effort was of a piece with earlier attempts to win rulers to the cause; they included Fażl-Allāh's overtures to Timur, his activities at the Jalāyerid court, and his politically inspired desire to marry the daughter of Toqtameş Khan, ruler of the Golden Horde, as well as the "conversations" with Jahānšāh



Qarāqoyonlu. Fearful that Mehmed might be won to the Horufi cause, the vizier Mahmud Paşa arranged for Mollâ Fahrettin Acemi (Mollâ Faqr-al-Din ‘Ajami), *şeyhülislam* of the day and an immigrant from Persia, as his name suggests, to overhear the Horufi propagandist outlining his views. Unable to contain his rage, Mollâ Fahrettin burst forth from his place of concealment, and promptly had the Horufis arrested and burnt alive, together with their books, in the courtyard of the Üçşerefeli mosque. Such was the zeal he brought to the task that his beard was singed by the fire. This event took place most probably in 848/1444, although other dates have also been suggested (Babinger, 1978, p. 35). The name of the immolated propagandist is not mentioned in any of the sources, but it seems safe to connect his activity with that of ‘Ali al-A‘lā (q.v.), the most important successor to Fażl-Allāh in that Horufi tradition describes him as *kalifat Allāh* (“the vicegerent of God,” i.e., Fażl-Allāh) and “the unveiler of the secrets of the *Jāvdān-nāma*” (Ritter, p. 35).

After the execution of his master, ‘Ali al-A‘lā traveled first to Syria and Jerusalem before proceeding to Anatolia, a land he regarded as propitious because of the interpretation he gave to *Şurat al-Rum*, the thirtieth chapter of the Qur’ān. Certain of his brethren had preceded him there, he said, but he was the first to carry with him copies of the Horufi scriptures (*kalām-e ḥaqq*) and to send the books “across the water, beyond Istanbul,” i.e., across the Sea of Marmara to Rumelia and, presumably, Edirne. The only other geographical detail he provides of his sojourn in Anatolia is that he travelled along the Laz-inhabited coast of the Black Sea (*il-e Lāz*). It is, however, to ‘Ali al-A‘lā that is attributed the propagation of Horufism among the Bektāšis, whose order became the principal vehicle for its survival and transmission in both Anatolia and Rumelia. According to three nineteenth-century sources, all hostile to both Bektaşism and Horufism, Ali al-A‘lā went to the central hospice of the Bektāšis at Hacıbektaşköyü and presented the *Jāvdān-nāma* to its credulous residents as a hitherto unknown work by Hāji Bektāš Vali himself. The details of this account may be fanciful, but Bektāši oral tradition does preserve the name of ‘Ali al-A‘lā as the first instructor of the order in Horufism (Algar, pp. 45-46, 48).

The doctrines of Fażl-Allāh became a fixed component of the teachings of the Bektāšiya, a supremely syncretic order, his incarnationism and *ta’wil*-based antinomianism being found particularly attractive. As Shi’is of a certain type, the Bektāšis already had a devotion to the cult of the Čahārdah Ma’šum (the Fourteen Immaculate Ones), but under the influence of Horufism they



doubled the category to produce the significant total of twenty-eight, and correlated each member of the two series of Fourteen Immaculate Ones both with a letter of the Arabic alphabet and with some aspect of the human face (Algar, p. 50). These physiognomic correspondences gave rise to a distinctive Bektāši iconography intended to aid in detecting significant combinations of letters such as *fā'*, *zād*, and *lām* (= Faẓl) in the bearded and mustachioed face of an adult male (see

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