Türk Dili

TÜRK DİL KURUMU DERGİSİ

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Sn. İskender PALA

İCADİYE MAH. MARUF SOK. 44-5
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On Çoofism.

Gentlman!..

I am invited, by my dear friend Mr Lampard to entertain you this evening on an important subject which is worthy of your attention, and deserves to be keenly studied by all earnest man. that is (Çoufism) or (oriental mysticism), as many european scholars use to call it.

It is rather an embarassing task to treat such a subject within the short time given to me; so it will be better - I am sure - to set forth the fundamental tenets of the Çoufism, leaving aside the particularities which can be easily drawn out from those essential principles of creed, when they are firmly grasped and fairly understood. then I will try to do my best to be clear and concise; meanwhile, I shall, very carefully explain to you, the technical terms used in my speech in order to avoid misunderstanding or confusion.

the orientalists have been engaged in a long

discussion concerning the true meaning and the etymological origin of the word çoufi. they suppo-sed perhaps that such an inquiery would throw a beam of light over this subject as to lead them to the discovery of the historical origin of mysticism. Some of them supposed that the word çoufi is the corrupted arabic form of (sophos) or (sophia) which mean (wise) and (wisdom) in greek. Others relying upon some oriental writers, reported that it is derived from (safa) which means (purity) in arabic etc.. the truth is perhaps simpler than all these conjectures and suppositions. Soofi comes very probably from (soof) which means (wool) in arabic, as you know. there is no doubt anyhow, that the pioneers of Çoufism were very pious poor derwishes (just like the friars of Europe). They used to wear some coarse woden raiment (some-thing like the Aba of the bedouins!) not only as a symbol of their disregard of ostentation, luxury or earthly plea-sures, but because they were very poor also. Anyhow this question has not a great importance in my consi-

deration, because it can not throw any light on the origin of çoufism. I dare say even that it is a very childish behaviour to seek for one single origin for such an inextricable mass of lofty ideas harmoniously organized as to form a general system of religious philosophy. In reality the very origin of çoufism is the human mind activated by some deep rooted emotional and moral factors, and meditating under peculiar circumstances.

Çoufism existed long before christianity and has appropriated, during its historical evolution, some fundamental principles from buddhism, Brahmanism, Jewish Cabalism, Mohammedanism, and such doctrines as epiphany (which is the manifestation of the Holy Spirit of God in man), Messianism and redemption. these, considered as christian doctrines are also some of the essential doctrines of Oriental mystics. the mystic Sheïkhs and poets of the Near East, have in the course of time), appropriated all these elements of thought and creed, and built with them a mozaïc picture. It has a peculiar poetical charm,

and, of course, it is sympathetic with every form of creed simply because it contains them all in substance, harmoniously represented. that is why it is liberal and tolerates every creed.

As to the historical evidence, we know certainly that the first çoofis were very pious and poor people indeed, but living saintly, having renounced to every earthly desires. they had even renounced their own selves, for the sake of Divine love devoting their lives to meditation, and hoping to catch a glimpse of the radiant, but unknowable and unsolvable evident mystery which is at the bottom of everything. their irresistible, overwhelming, and intense desire was only to get an undubitable knowledge about the Sublime, unfathomable Divine mystery we name God. these singleminded and devoted men were not scholars, or scientists, or philosophers. they were rapt by emotion and drowned in a deep meditation. they have never written any book, never formed schools for teaching methodically philosophy or theology. they have never made a propaganda. they used only to

express their deepest thoughts in some moments of ecstasy, in concise and brillant sentences, which throw - as the sudden flash of lightning — full light on their very intimate creed. Such sentences full of meaning are called (gnomes) in philosophical terminology. this first period is called accordingly the (gnomic period) of mysticism. there is a very interesting book written by (Koshayri) who has recorded the the principal gnomes and the lives of the first çoofis like (معروف کرخی) and (Bayezîd i Bestâmî بایزید بسطامی) who exclaimed in a supreme moment of rapture (سبحانی ما اعظم شانی) and: (لیس فی جبتی سوی الله) etc. It seems that these pious men prefered to teach others by example, and their behaviour was considered as the best example of Holiness. this peculiar state of mind, and this disposition to renonciation, illustrates the emotional aspect of Coufism.

You know gentlmen that the problem of Religion has ever been a subject of the fiercest controversy between the most prominent and most devoted spiritual leaders of cultured societies. this antagonism, very unfortunately, divided the humanity unto many factions and

mated with the most destructive fanaticism.

Religion is the highest universal institution we know. its sacred mission is to establish peace and brotherhood amongst mankind through sympathy and love, so as to make a savage horde of men a civilized society. that is the greatest religious miracle. then it becomes evident that the incurable narrow-mindedness, the horrible fanaticism, and sectarianism are altogether a profanation in absolute contradiction with the Holy Spirit and the moral teachings of a true Religion. I am happy to acknowledge that your generation has a much better disposition of mind to consider the real meaning of Religion and the real value of science.

It has been the highest privilege of man alone to be able ~~to be able~~ to meditate about such problems as the (Supreme truth حق تعالى), the origin and the end of things, the causes of the Creation, the mystery of life and death, the destinies of man and the Universe. Such meditation has given birth to philosophy, when confined strictly, within the limits of purely intellectual speculation. But man

is not only an intellectual being. Our emotional Nature is certainly the most essential and important ~~part and important~~ part of our real personality. It has been and it is still the inexhaustible source of Religion, poetry, fine arts and all our social and moral virtues which are the main factors of civilization and culture. So religious sentiment is very deeply rooted at the bottom of our emotional Self. All the religious creeds formulated in words ~~in words~~ are but the outward forms, the clothing by which man wanted to embody this imperious sentiment of his; he wanted to express it in some way, although intensly deep emotion can not be expressed totally and truly by any ~~means~~ possible means. that is why our conception of Religion, or formulae of creed, have ever been changing with the progress of our understanding; while our natural emotional life remains the most characteristically representative of our real personality. that is the divine spark which shines and lives within us: ~~Religion~~ In matters of Religion, our starting point and our leading light is this emotion which is the source of every creative inspiration.

this is exactly the starting point of every kind of mysticism and of the oriental mysticism also. there lies the essential difference of view and method between mysticism properly so cal-

led and the purely intellectual and conventional philosophy which we are teaching in our Universities; but the essential problems which constitute the subject-matter of both, are precisely the same unsolvable riddles relating to the fundamental questions of the appearences and the Reality of things.

« The problems of speculative philosophy – says a contemporary American philosopher, the late Borden Bowen, – may be summed up in two questions: How is Knowledge possible?. and what is Reality?. the former question, belongs to epistemology, the later belongs to metaphysics or ontology. »

this is very clear, but I must only explain to you in a a few words the meaning of the two technical terms which are never used in our common speech. Epistemology which means in greek, discussion about knowledge, is the first important part of general philosophy, which opens a serious discussion to know what are the means of our knowledge and how we can ascertain the validity and the truthfulness of our knowledge. How we can be absolutely sure and quite convinced of the fact that when we know something we ~~we~~ know it as it ought to be in Reality.

the importance of these questions is quite evident, for if we could not be convinced about the truthfulness of our

senses and intelligence we could not be sure at all that we know the reality of things. We are obliged then to inquire about the ~~limits~~ means of our knowledge and their capacity and limits. Epistemology discusses indeeds all thes questions, and draws out of such a controversial discussion some hypothetical conclusions which are called (theories of knowledge.

~~Ontology is the second part of the general philosophy which deals properly with the question of absolute Being. (Ontos) in greek means Being. the question to know the absolute Being as it is.. (in knowledge about the material world.~~

You know quite well that our senses are the proper means with which we get some knowledge ~~by the self activity of our intelligence~~ about the Phenomena of the outer world, this are sensations. We can get also some important truths by the mere self activity of our intelligence. those are the rational truths.

صحیح بکله

پدرینک بویوک پدرلری ابراهیم اوقف افندی سوده مخلصی (حلمی) ایدی. (۹٤) ده وفات ایتمشدر

شاعرانه بر غزل یازمشدر.

بیوا اولدمسه نولور حلمی یه کیم اهل سخنه
آنی آخلم سخنده سرنشاه بیلیر

حلمی احمد افندی
ادیب یازدی
دوکاشاعر نوری
پاشا مرحومدر دیکی
بر قوله صول
صول تی بوکا بنزه طوغر دکلر.

یا قدر حالا تدبیر دوشمیتی حلمی یوکسز سمنده بنم
دیسه بنم دردیمی بر کیمسه بیلمز. الله بیلیر.

Gentlemen:-

I accepted most willingly your invitation, and I shall be very glad indeed, if the subject-matter of my lecture will more or less interest you.

I thought, it would be better to give you a short account of the Oriental mysticism, which underlies a theosophical doctrine; a living creed, a spirit animating still today a good many heterodox sects, born in the Islamic world, sects claiming a kinship with Mohammedan religion, though more or less incompatible with the fundamental principles of Islam.

As it is quite impossible to bring within the compass of a lecture a lot of arguments tending to prove my assertions concerning this peculiar philosophy, I shall only point out its most characteristic principles; then you will forgive, I hope, the categorical tone of my statements.

Mysticism, in its general acception, is a peculiar state of mind, a tendency which is manifested under some psychological and social conditions. The history of civilisation shows clearly that great calamities, unstability of politico-social institutions, chronic anarchy create such a disposition in the collective conscience and proves the vanity of everything. On the other hand when classic philosophy can no more give a rational explanation for the riddles of existence, then everything around us becomes a mystery. The human mind after having exhausted nearly all her forces without getting any satisfaction, gives up altogether the so-called science and philosophy as useless and even deceptive systems built up on words and false opinions only. The mind then does not trust any more neither the discursive knowledge nor experience, but hopes or wishes to discover directly the Supreme Truth by a possible communion with him.

This remarkable attitude of mind paralyses also the will, and the

the mystic falls in this fatalistic inaction, and disinterestedness or indifference, which we call quietisme. The former Greeks, without being mystics at all were seeking the highest blessedness in ataraxia and adiaphoria.

So the mystic tendency of the mind is - in my opinion - the symptom of its decrepitude, or it comes surely from the decadency of dogmatic philosophy.

You know all, that our means of knowledge are unfortunately very limited. If we can't trust any more the witnessing of our senses, and discover at the same time that our intellect also is limited with antinomies which means essential, and incompatible logical contradictions, there remains only one way to get out from nihilism, which is far more fearful, and disappointing than atheism That way is revelation, which means the sudden discovery of truth by our inner sense illuminated with inspiration.

This is indeed the simplest and the most general form of mysticism. But in matters of belief form is the most valuable and important thing. I daresay: the essential thing! For instance, we all believe in the existence of a supreme power, which is beyond the reach of our perceptive and conceptive faculties. Call him what you like, but be sure that we are obliged to believe in such a Reality, if we do not suspect or deny the existence of our own self. Yet this belief does not characterise any religious creed exclusively, though it constitutes the first principle and the essential condition in the teachings of every religion.

I wish to say, that religion is not only a creed, but a formal creed.

My opinion is the same about çoufism; it is not a simple and general mysticism, but quite a special form of it. A very elaborate

system

system indeed, built up on a philosophical ground. It seemsto be a religious philosophy; but it is not a religion; though it has given birth to so many sects, which during many centuries troubled the Islamic world by successive politico-religious revolutions. We have no doubt today that these revolutions weakened and even ruined the theocratic unity of Islam, dissolving beforehand the fundamental Mohammedan creed which was essentially a Semitic conception of God and His kingdom.

So if we study the çoufism under the light of a historical spirit we may find, I am sure, the keynote of interpretation for all these revolutions which have cut off the Islamic power into thousand pieces and stopped at once its conquests.

In the beginnings çoufism was certainly misunderstood, and considered as the highest expression of the original Mohammedan philosophy. Its most remarkable representatives were at the beginnin some pious and ascetic Persians, born and brought up in the Islamic faith. They were gnomic thinkers, they never wrote any book. These holy men, used to express their opinions or feelings in a moment of ecstasy by short sentences, aphorisms, or gnomes as we call them.

Later on when Mohammedan doctors have organised and established on a firm ground the dogmatic theology, çoufism was rejected by them as the most pernicious and dissolving heresy, the mystics were also persecuted.

But since the 18th century a good many European scholars - some of the most genuine and eminent orientalists above all - devoted themselves to the study of the Oriental mystic literature with such a keen interest that they succeeded in discovering the real

sources of çoufism. There is no mystery about it.

There is no doubt today. The socalled Oriental mysticism is neither original nor Mohammedan, but thoroughly Greek. It is simply the echo of Neoplatonism in the Mussulman intellectual atmosphere. We inherited this culture altogether from the Persian literature.

The late J. E. W. Gibb, the celebrated author of "A History of Ottoman Poetry" has summed up the general opinion of the most competent criticists and scholars in these few lines which I am obliged to reproduce here:

"The philosophy of the Turks", says Gibb, " is of course derived from the Persian and Arabic writers, but is ultimately Greek, being little more than a modification of the neo-platonism of the fifth and sixth centuries which combined Aristotelianism with the mysticism of Jamblicus. In Turkey the philosophers while accepting the Alexandrian doctrine of emanations, gave their chief attention to the Aristotelian aspect of the system. The çoufis on the other hand while acquiescing in the Aristotelian explanations of natural phenomena devoted themselves almost exclusively to the theosophical side. "

Gibb is quite right! Those who have carefully studied and examined the Oriental mysticism will certainly agree with him.

Now let us proceed in a systematic way to get an idea of this philosophy, and then to cast a glance of the mystic doctrine which is the foundation stone of all the çoufi sects.

"The problems of speculative philosophy", says Borden Bowen, an American philosopher, "may be summed up in two questions: How is knowledge possible? And what is Reality? The former question belongs to Epistemology ?, the latter belongs to Metaphysics or Ontology".

How the çoufism can answer to these questions.

We must take in consideration the starting point, and follow the dialectics of the çoufi thinkers, in order to see how they are proceeding to find out an answer to the first of these questions just now postulated by the American philosopher.

The phenomenal world - thinks the çoufi - with which we are in continual contact is ever changing. It seems to a boundless and restless ocean whose waves are succeeding each other without intervals. The stream of phenomena is continuous; we can never find the beginning and the end of it as long as we follow its course in the past or in the future. We may actually discriminate - it is true - individualities in the sensible world, but they have no stability at all; they vanish as soon as they appear. They look just like the drops of water produced by the waves of the stormy Ocean drops which stand up for a moment and then fall down back again into the ocean, wherein they are at once absorbed and dissolved. So the sensible world with all its individual beings, is no more than a mere illusion of our senses; something as a dream, a phantasmagoric vision which has no reality. A wonderful mirage.

You may at once acknowledge that this conception of things, denies the authority of sensualism, because it considers the senses not as means of true knowledge but as a dishonest witness, as a liar. What they tell us is a lie, what they show to our conscience is nothing but an illusion So the antagonism, and incompatibility of the çoufi doctrine, with sensualism, materialism, pragmatism, and every kind of experimental philosophy is essential, and comes from the difference of its epistemological view.

But do not suppose that the çoufi thinker, is necessarily a sceptic because he begins to establish his creed on the negation of the sensible world.

He has no doubt of it. He is not a sceptic at all. His position before those who believe in the reality of the outer world, is absolutely like Bishop Berkeley's attitude of mind. The illustrious English philosopher

philosopher defending his dignity against the charge of scepticism, had replied to his opponents: "I have no doubt, I am firmly convinced that the sensible world, is pure illusion produced by the activity of our senses; I am denying only the existence of matter, but not at all the Reality itself. Reality is Spirit; God is the Almighty and eternal Spirit, and we all are spirits."

Well, many great çoufi thinkers, had before Bishop Berkeley defended themselves against scepticism absolutely in the same way, and even using the same words.

Every criticist recognises today that idealism is the epistemological foundation stone of çoufism; and that the negation of the sensible world does not imply necessarily nihilism, which means the denial of Reality. That is what we mean in philosophical language by an idealistic view in epistemology.

We are obliged to recognise the weight and importance of such a reasoning. There is a logical necessity indeed which compels the human mind, to suppose a cause ~~fixxxgxxxx~~ for everything, even delusive unreal. We can deny the reality of the phenomenal world, but we cannot be absolutely satisfied with mere negation; because negation is neither an answer, nor a solution of this transcendental problem. Truly! if all these things which I am actually perceiving as existing independently of my will, and somewhere outside of my conscience, are mere shadows, they must be of course the shadows of something really existing; something which reflects these shadows before my eyes. If my vision is simply a mirage, it must be also the projection of something else! If what I am actually seeing is a dream, there must be a dreamer. My own self at least! If it is only a charm or a fascination, where is the charmer?

Briefly speaking, the denial of the visible world does not mean the negation of the absolute being if we still believe in the principle of causality. And truly, we cannot help believing in it; because this principle, is the key for interpreting all the facts objective or subjective relating to our personal conscience, which is certainly the most amazing riddle the most wonderful problem of existence. It is impossible to deny our own self. Conscience is the only firm ground on which we can base and build up our argumentations in order to prove the reality of a Supreme intelligent Power.

The çoufi method is absolutely the same. After having been convinced of the untrustworthiness of our senses, and the vanity of the sensible world as a logical consequence, the oriental mystic tries to examine the value of the human intellect, and denies its authority as well, because the absolute reality which Philosophy seeks to discover and know transcends our intellectual capacities. An intelligible God, says the çoufi, is no more God, but only an idol made by ourselves after our own conception and fashion, for our own satisfaction. God really is beyond the limits of our intellectual capacities also. By consequence rationalism is rejected as well as sensualism, as a false system playing with empty words.

Now we have to consider the next fundamental question which contains the ontological problem: What is Reality?

To this important question çoufism answers just like the agnostics, proclaiming that the only Reality is which means in Arabic He, and besides him there is nothing else, but illusion of senses. Alone he has been, alone he is and will be for ever.

So He is alone the Reality, the absolute and perfect Being. We may easily recognize here the theos agnostos of the neoplatonicians.

Well! but who is He? And if the world sensible was brought into existence at once how and where did all things come from? Where He was, before the sensible world come to be? and then, what is the

the kind of relation between our shadowy existence and this absoulte Real Being?

All these secondary questions arise of course by a logical necessity from the fundamental ontological problem. They imply some other problems as for instance the mystery of creation etc.

In the language of the çoufi He is before all (hag taala - the supreme truth), though he is the unknowable, the hidden central point of all mysteries. We cannot know him, as He is in Reality, in his own splendour and perfection, in his essence, but only through his infinite attributes manifested to our conscience. As the Koran says:"There is nothing bearing any resemblance with him". Our soul is but a sparkle of this radiant eternal sun, what desired to be known, and manifested himself through his creation, the real cause of creation being his divine love for himself. Our souls are partaking of the divine nature of this eternal and most Holy Spirit. The yearning of our soul after a communion with him is nothing more than the manifestation of his eternal love animating our conscience. He is the true beloved . He is alone the beloved one of the lovers and every one who loves a human being, loves but him because he discovers through the relative beauty the ever shining splendour of the absolute Beauty. He is absolute perfection, then absolute Good, absolute beauty. True knowledge is to become united with him; true felicity is to be annihilated in him. If your intellect is blind, if our senses are liars, there is still one way to attain to the supreme truth. That is revelation. The intuition which begins by contemplation, and comes in a moment of ecstasy, because ecstasy breaks down all the ties which bind up the soul with the material elements to the earthly desires and vile passions. If we can purify our conscience from the dirts of egoism and sensibility by an absolute denial of our self, then the supreme truth shines in our conscien this beatific vision is the true knowledge. The true knowledge is the identification of the knower with the known. That is what the çoufi (union) and Holy men who become identified and united with God, are the (vasilin) those who have attained the supreme truth and have been united with him.

I do not need to explain all along that this remarkable conception leads to the apotheosis of man; and contains the doctrine of epiphany, of transsubstantion, and even of redemption, which are rejected by the Orthodox Mohammedan creed as blasphemy. The çoufism being as a philosophical system an idealistic pantheism, and having accepted the Alexandrian theory of emanations as the best explanation of the mystery of creation, comes forcibly to consider the human being as the highest possible manifestation of God who is confounded with the absolute Being. That is why man is called the greatest text wherein God is manifested in its best possible perfection.

The theory of emanations implying an evolutive process of manifestation has led the çoufism to the important conception of the"perfect man" who must not be confounded with the Uebermensch of Nietzsche. According to the çoufi conception the perfect man, has attained through innumerable manifestations the highest possible degree for a contingent Being. He is united with God, and then sent back again to human society in form of a human being as a leader as a saviour, as the representative of the divine grace between God and Men; He is the "Kotb-ul-Arifin" the pole of the sages. His essential function is to lead the people, on the right way and to reveal the truth. To sacrifice himself in this way, is easy because

because such a man has no self; being already annihilated in God's love.

While the so called Uebermensch of F. Nietzsche is, as I understand him, something as a governor of some dark African colony, a very arrogant and selfish bureaucrate absolutely careless of the rights of others.

This çoufi conception of the perfect man, is pretty well a Christian conception. That is why, an Oriental mystic understands the divine mission of the Saviour, while the Orthodox Mohammedan doctor repudiates it.

As the çoufism has wholly accepted the neoplatonic theosophy, and as this eclectic philosophy may contain and digest innumerable elements of thought and feeling, coming from any religion, çoufism is remarkable for its extreme liberalism, and tolerance towards all other creeds.

The most ignorant dervish is not scandalized with the Trinitarian doctrine for instance, because he believes in the threefold manifestation of the eternal power, having already accepted the three hypostases of the Alexandrian thinkers, and so on.

the greatest sheikh, as he is called, tells us, that if the mystic sage is really a sage, he must not be bound up exclusively with a single creed, but he must find a relative expression of the supreme truth in every creed.

That is why a real çoufi is not convertible to any other religion; the extreme laxity and elasticity of his pantheistic philosophy puts him above all sects and religions.

There is another remarkable point: if the agnostic conception which plays such an important role in mysticism, instead of being a positive creed, becomes a negative one, then çoufism falls altogether in nihilism. Then the absolute Being becomes "a nameless nothingness".

[illegible] I should like to give you another lecture on this [illegible] some great

Platonicism in Relation with Orphic and Eulesian mysteries.

The critical study of the history of philosophy, has an attractive charm for those who inquire into the secret relation of speculative philosophy with the mystic and symbolic form of Religion. In our modern times, Archeology, linguistic, anthropology and some other new born sciences have discovered many things in that way, throwing sufficient light and helping to see clearly the nature of the relation spoken of just now. It is really quite an interesting and very significative fact from a philosophical viewpoint to see how far this relation is deeprooted in the unconscious mind of humanity. It is only when we discover the ~~very~~ true signification of this relation that we can conceive and understand the reason why all kind of liturgic performances are in the same way the symbolic expression of the Religious sentiment born within us, as soon as we think that we are constantly in intimate touch with a supreme truth wich the intelligence of man can not penetrate or grasp it's nature. Mysticism is, and will for ever remain the invisible source of the religious sentiment which can only be expressed in a symbolic language.

II.

all the investigations conducted on this ground and directed towards this goal, have helped the historians of philosophy and Religion to adopt a comparative method, and respect even the most stupid superstition which has survived to innumerable generations and resisted to many tremendous revolutions. It was acknoweledged – after long inquiries – that the so called superstitions have their own meanings, that they represent in a symbolic form a creed which was at one time, the living source of practical wisdom and the shining sun of moral energy moving a society towards an ideal, keeping at the same time the equilibrium and the best possible harmony between it's members; inspiring to them also fear and respect about an invisible power which controls the human will and desire, but transcends the intelligence of man. It is well established that such an equilibrium was, and still is the greatest factor in the conservation and the evolution of human societies; then, an efficient cause of civilisation.

The layman, and the ignorent people can hardly believe that those horrible, monstruous statues we can see still now in the temples of India, or the paintings or ingravings of the same

Kind ~~in~~ on the walls of Luxor in Egypte, have kept alive the ideas of good and evil in the minds of men, inspiring them with the sentiment of duty realising the meaning of a civilised life. Even the average educated man belonging to our modern society, can not fully understand how the fearful looking Sphinx personified during (6000) years in the mind of the enlightened elite of humanity the torturing riddle of human destiny, representing at the same time the metaphysical agnosticism underlying every positive Knoweledge and supporting every religious Creed. I dare say ~~can not find any real difference between~~ that these monstruous idols or paintings are ~~and the apocalyptic vision St John. the one is the~~ the concrete expression of the ~~other~~. All such apocalyptic visions of the past civilisations and their material expressions spring out of the same spiritual source; I mean to say that they are all the symbols of the tourmented human mind, wishing to each a glimpse from the eternal mystery, the everlasting mystery of life and death, of ~~spirit~~ the supreme Spirit controlling the destinies of men.

Every thing which reveals the mysteries of the past ages, and gives us a hint about the activity

of dissipated forces, is a symbol which covers in a concrete form, a life, an activity of a foregone time. this view holds true even in the field of natural phenomena. the footprints of events, visible everywhere in the world ~~ought are just~~ have their own signification, as the hieroglyphic inscriptions. they are the symbolic expression of the natural history. the only difficult task is to find the way of reading them.

~~It is~~ The same opinion holds good when we consider the symbols of Religion. the most stupid rituals of the savages has a meaning; it is the symbolic expression of the peculiar state of mind when the human soul is confronted with the fearful ~~readles~~ of some transcendental power with which we are continually and intimately in touch. therein ~~no~~ must be found the common source of Religion and philosophy.

When we study the old civilisations we are struk by a capital point of difference. ~~between our own organization and~~. In the old ~~civilisations~~ times the ruling power was a clerical oligarchy constituting a sacerdotal aristocracy. this enlightened minority had an unlimited authority over the ignorent masses of common people. In

Some countries like Egypte for instance, this clerical organization was so strong and so well established that it resisted and survived to every kind of political changes and social revolutions, while more than fifty dynasties succeeded each other and passed away.

The egyptian priests were the treasures of the most valuable and sacred science; It was not possible to make a comparison between their broad minded wisdom, and the primitive ignorence of the great masses of men overruled by them. There is no doubt to day that when the common people was still in a period of stupid fetichism, or a crude paganism, the clerical body was in possession of a high philosophy ~~teaching it~~ keeping it secret and revealing it's tenets and principles to the most advanced individuals chosen amongst the intellectual and social aristocracy. They used to administrate this secret and sacred knoweledge by gradual initiations and revelations. There is no doubt that in those remote times and primitive civilisations science and philosophy, was a kind of masonic institution. There is even a special hypothesis which conjectures that the highest form of Religion, monotheism particularly in the secret intimacy of the sacerdotal mysteries long before springing out as an exoteric common Religion for all.

VI.

Accordingly there was a common Religion in it's primitive form, suitable to the primitive mind of the mob; and another enlightened Religion represented by the highest form of theosophy including an esoteric philosophy as a nucleus of it's substancial doctrine. It is remarkable that even in the democratic Greece the teachings of laïc philosophers was esoteric for the initiated minority, and exoteric for general audience. A Realistic philosopher like aristotle, who had altogether neeleeted the theosophical side of knoweledge used to divide his lessons into acro-amatical which means esoteric, and ~~exoteric~~ public or exoteric courses according to the capacity of his pupils. I dare say that still to day this system prevails, and what we call (the vulgarisation of science) is a non sens, because, the highest form of scientific and philosophical Knoweledge is hardly possible to be vulgarized, being very abstract and complex truths requiring a peculiar education to be understood and assimilated.

Philosophy, art, science are essentially aristocratic; this truth was perhaps duly considered by the sages of the antiquity. the mystic wisdom of the egyptian clergy, being intimately connected with their religion the temples were the sanctuary of that wisdom

and - the fact is to be noticed with great importance - that this sacred Knoweledge had not exclusively a nationalistic caractere. It is well established to day that there was among the initiated people many strangers belonging to the (élite) of different nations, some greeks above all. the celebrated attic philosopher Plato, the glorious founder of Idealism, whose relation with the esoteric philosophy is the special subject of my lecture to day, is said to be one of those strangers initiated to the mysteries of the egyptian priests.

You know how and why this question is warmly discussed to day; it is a very important matter interesting the history of civilisation to ascertain, wether the former greeks are indebted to the egyptians or not for the splendid civilisation they have performed. Had the egyptian Culture played any rôle in awaikening the greek genius or not?. that is the general question. If it had, what is the amount of indebtedness of Platonicism to the egyptian theosophy?. this is the special question.

there are so many evidences which authorize us to answere affirmatively to the first question, emphasising at the same time the sublime originality of the

Greek Culture in it's full developpement. For the second, there is no doubt that Plato had been deeply influenced by the teachings of the pythagorician philosophers, and that Pythagoras the founder of the so called Italic school had been initiated to the mysteries of the egyptian priests. the writings of the former greeks bear testimony on behalf of this thesis.

There is another testimony furnished by the most trustworthy records of the Greek history; that is the report of the former greeks about the origin of the Elusian mysteries.

The old greeks and Latins.

Platonism in its relation with the Elusian and orphic mysticism, and the secret teaching of Egyptian Clergy.

VI

Well I do not know precisely what is your opinion about all these problems, but I believe firmly that they are all deeply rooted in the problem of the soul which is — as I told you before — the most inextricable riddle standing in front of our bewildered intelligence, as a fearful Sphinx. If we could discover how conscience appears and disappears in the unconscious Universe we could explain every thing relating to our subjectif phenomena and to our life and death. But we do not know very much about it. It true that since the beginning of true civilisation a good many philosophers and theologians gave many definitions for the Soul; they said, that it is an immaterial substance, a pure spirit moving the body etc. But this is not a real and satisfactory explanation, it is a tautologie as the logicians say in their own technical language; ~~it is the way of explaining an unknown thing by means of a more unknown thing.~~ To pretend: they mean to say that it is the wrong way of explaining an unknown thing by another much more unknown thing. Indeed what does it mean to say, that the Soul is a spiritual substance, when the nature of spirit remains for ever an unknowable riddle for me. these two terms are quite equivalent; and they are two names for one and the same

two possible ways,

Now there are two ways of answering for these imperious and opressing questions: the scientific and the Religious one ~~interpretations~~! I am not concerned here with the scientific method, but in order to point out much more clearly the essential difference between these two systems, I can say in few words that science starts from the objective ground of observation, which is controlled by a rational experience organised and directed according to the logic of the facts themselves, I mean that the interpretation follows the natural concadenation of the facts duly observed, in order to reduce by an analytical judgment every phenomenon to it's natural and mechanical causes. You understand at once that scientific interpretation ~~of some fact or event~~, is a pure mechanical way of wiewing things, excluding deliberately any emotional factor and supernatural, or miraculous ~~factor or~~ cause.

~~I must confess, as a man of science~~ today the greatest men of Science acknoweledge and confess, that the so called scientific method of investigation comes short in apprehension and proves to be quiet unsufficient when we try it for the solution of such metaphysical and theological, ~~even psychological~~ questions, because, it is acknoweledged to day by the greatest scientists that our soul ~~Conscience~~ is like an Ocean whose shores are unknown and unseen, and what we call Conscience is a very small surface of that unlimited Ocean, lighted by our own intelligence. Observation is only possible on this little surface, but there is no doubt to day that our aspirations towards an unvisible goal our inspirations, our hopes, our everlasting fears and anxieties for the future are coming ups from the darkest and the deepest regions of our Soul, that is our unconscious self, our subliminal self - the

The philosophy of Plato in relation with theurgy and properly with orphic and Eulensian mysteries.

The critical study of the history of philosophy has an attractive charm for the inquirers, who direct their view especially towards the secret relation of speculative philosophy with the mystic and symbolic form of Religion. In our modern times, Archeology, linguistic, Anthropology, and some other new born sciences, have discovered many things in that way, showing how much this relation was deep rooted in the unconscious mind of Humanity; all the investigations directed in that way have helped the historians of philosophy to adopt a comparative method, and respect even the most stupid superstition which has survived to many generations and revolutions. It has been acknowledged that the so called superstitions have their own meanings, and that they represent in a symbolic form a creed which was at one time the living source of practical life and the shining sun of moral force moving the body of a society towards an ideal, keeping at the same time the equilibrium and the harmony between it's elements, inspiring to the individuals fear and respect about invisible power which transcends the human intelligence, and controls the human will and desire. It is well established that such an equilibrium was and still is the greatest factor for the conservation and the evolutions of human societies. The ignorant man would hardly believe that those horrible and monstruous statues we can see still in the temples of India, or the paintings of the same kind on the walls of Luxor in Egypte, have kept alive the ideas of good and evil, in the minds of men, inspiring them the sentiment of duty, and so realising the meaning of a civilised life. Even the average educated man of the modern society can not understand – if not tought about – how the fearfull looking Sphinx, personnified during 6000 years in the minds of the enlightened élite of Humanity the tortuning question of human destiny, representing at the same time the philosophical agnosticism underlying every positive knoweledge, and every religious creed. *

Every thing, which reveals the mysteries of the past ages, and gives us a hint of the activity of dissipated forces, is a symbol which covers in a concrete and strange form, a life, an activity of the foregone ages. This view holds true even in the field of the most concrete

When considering them from this philosophical point of view

* I can not find any difference between these monstrous ~~statues~~ idols or paintings, and the apocalyptic vision of S Joan: the one ~~former~~ is the concrete expression of the other ~~same things, and~~ all these visions, and their materialised expressions came ~~out~~ and sprung out from the same spiritual source; I mean they are all the symbols of the tormented human mind, wishing to each a glimpse from the eternal ~~but living and~~ mystery, the ever-lasting mystery ~~level~~ of life and death, of Spirit and matter, and ~~by consequence~~ of the destinies of man.

Ibn Yémine e.a.d. Benjamin.

Je suis venu du Néant invisible planter ma tente sur le désert de l'Être, et j'ai fait un voyage du monde minéral au monde végétal et je m'en suis allé; après cela la tendence de mon âme fut vers le monde animal, et quand je suis arrivé à cet étappe de l'existence j'ai passé par là ~~pour~~ et je suis allé ailleurs, pour résider et me purifier dans le cœur de l'homme comme une perle dans ~~le nacre~~ sa coquille de nacre et j'ai fait ainsi, de la petite goutte de mon existence quelque chose de très précieux, ensuite je suis allé avec le cortège des anges tourner en procession autour du temple sacré ~~auquel~~ sur lequel j'ai jeté un regard bienveillant et j'ai ~~passé outre~~ continué mon voyage; enfin je me suis dirigé vers lui et je suis devenu, comme Ibn yamine je suis devenu tout à fait Lui, et j'ai laissé tout autre.

Oh toi, dont l'ancienneté de tes amoureux pour te connaître perce leurs cœurs comme une flèche perce la cible, tout un monde s'occupe de toi, et tu es absent d'entre nous. Quant à moi, je me retire quelque fois dans un monastère (pour y méditer) et ~~B~~ quelques fois dans une mosquée (pour y prier), c'est-à-dire que je te cherche dans chaque maison. Le pélerin se met en route pour arriver à la Kâaba, tandis que moi je ne veux que la vision béatifique de ta face. Le pelerin cherche la maison, et moi son propriétaire. mon but de visiter la maison et le temple païen c'est toi, rien que toi! C'est toi seul qui est l'objet de mon désir; la Kaaba et le temple des idolâtres ne sont que des prétextes. Chacun fait le louange de tes attributs en un language spécial, l'amoureux par des chants mélancholiques et le musicien par la mélodie. Le défaut de Khayâli est dû à l'espérence qu'il a de ta généreuse providence, et il n'y a pas de meilleur prétexte pour te faire pardonner ses péchés.

Parménide 540 A.C.
Platon 429 - 347 A.C.
Héraclite 576 - 480 A.C.
Epicure 341 - 270 " "
Erigène 833 mort en 880 P.C. Charles le chauve.
Jamblique IVème Siecle P.C.
Plotin 205 - 270 P.C.
Porphyre 233 - 304 " "

Voici un joli quatrain du fameux poète et philosophe mystique Djamî, qui définit la Docta ignorentia.

Oh toi, qui n'as pu encore purifier ton cœur des rapports avec le monde sensuel, ne bavarde pas sur la connaissance des verités; par ce que dans la sphère de la connaissance divine ignorence est science, tandis que science est ignorence.

Du moment que les corbeaux ont dressé leur tente sur la prairie, les rossignoles se sont tus pour se frapper la poitrine. Les gnostique qui ~~se sont~~ ont bu à la cuve de la vérité, ont connu des secrets et ils les ont couverts; à quiconque ils apprirent le mystère de l'affaire, ils lui ont cousu la bouche et apposèrent leur sceau dessus.

Oh toi qui est la copie des mystères divins, Oh toi qui est le miroir de la beauté impériale; Aucune chose de tout ce qui existe dans le monde n'est en dehors de toi. Demande et cherche en toi-même ce que tu veux, car tu estout.

Homme très instruit pour son époque.

Voici quelques beaux exemples de quatrains et de prose philosophiques fortement teintés de Zoroastrisme, qui est tout de même en parfait accord avec le ~~texte~~ sacré. le Korân.

Al gazzâli dit textuellement dans un tout petit ouvrage philosophique qu'il avait écrit aux derniers moments de sa vie, intitulé (مشكاة الانوار).

(Sache que la lumière de la Vérité est Dieu et que le nom de lumière est employé métaphoriquement pour tout autre chose, que lui. Le Dieu suprême est la lumière suprême et extrême, et on emploie ce terme pour faire allusion à l'émanation de la divinité sous formes concrètes, etc.

Voici un beau quatrain :

Dans l'Univers et dans l'espace il n'y a rien d'évident qu'une lumière unique. Cette lumière s'est manifestée par diverses émanations. La Vérité Suprême est la lumière et la diversité de ses émanations constitue l'Univers. Telle est la doctrine de l'Unité divine, tout le reste est vanité de l'imagination.

Exemples de quatrains
sur la lumière

XI

Even if you possess a hundred thousand hells, I shall not enter any of them. did not you tell us that your name was (the merciful) and you were the forgiver of all our sins? Well then forgive me are you a lier?.

XII

If you should forgive me, will that lessen your Majesty? Even Kings disregard such rebellions. What could your treasury loose if you should pardon my falts. Are you a collector of sins?...

XIII

You find mistakes in us, does that suit your Glory?.. You abide and walk in every heart. You bestow us many souls then you take them back. Are you the ledder of transporting-caravan?..

XIV

You know that I am the servant, and you my Sultan. In my heart you are my prayer, at my tongue, my interpreter. In my soul, you are my soul-visitor. You are the beloved of my heart How you may be a stranger to me?..

XV

You make me a medium, and you talk through me, then you blame me, and from the highest point you contemplate us all. You have nothing to do but contemplation. Are you a Contemplator?. —

You created the earth, the sky, the men and the spirits. Oh Master-Architect are you curiosities seller too?.. You brought into being the moon, the sphere and the constellations. Oh the absolute ~~being~~ might, are you a jeweller also?..

II

You created the oceans without lids. You made the waters run without feet or hands. Yous support the earth without any foundation and the sky without props. Are you really the sustainer of all things?

III

You direct the wind without any wing. Did you use shovels when you built up those mountains? How do you kill your alive creatures?.. first you give us a soul, then you take it back. Are you a merchant of souls?

IV

You made eight paradises for Adam — Your name is great forgive my sin — But then you sent him away. Why?... Why do you care so much for wheat so much?.. are you a miller?..

V

While your name was one, you made it a thousand. I never saw any craftsman like you. You make the trees fresh, then you dry them again. Why? are you a gardner?.. or are you a forest-guard?...

Tu as créé la terre, le ciel, l'homme et les djinns,
Oh chef des architectes est-tu un peintre de bâtiments?
Tu as porté au seuil de l'existence la lune, le soleil et la sphère,
Oh toi qui possède l'espace, est-tu exhibiteur (ou vendeur) des choses brillantes?

---

c'est toi qui créas les mers sans couvercle,
~~c'est~~ et tu fis marcher les eaux sans mains ni pieds
Et tu tiens les cieux sans basements et la terre sans support
Ça m'étonne! Est-tu le supporteur de toutes ches choses-là?

Tu te sers du vent sans qu'il ait des ailes
~~e~~ est-ce avec une pelle que tu fis ces montagnes?
Et pourquoi tu tues les vivants après les avoir fait pour vivre
Tu donne ~~la vie~~ âme et tu la reprends, est-tu vendeur d'âmes

---

Tu as bâti huit Paradis pour l'homme
Ton nom est grand, pardonne-lui sa faute.
Mais tu l'as expulsé du Paradis. Pourquoi?
Qu'as-tu besoin du blé, est-tu

VI

You talked to Gabriel behind the veil. But again it was you who listened to your words at Ka'ba. What are you going to do with fire, with the Hell?.. Do you have a bath, and are you the stoker

VII

You retired to the realms of imperceptibility to contemplate us from there; and you tortured the understanding of the short-sighted ones. You suspended a bridge thinner than the hair. Do you have running waters?.. are you a gardner?..

VIII

To oppose the winters, you made the summer. Against the spring you created the autumn. You created a balance with double scales. Are you a grocer, or do you keep a shop?..

IX

They tell us that you possess boiling tar in cauldron, and fishes playing under the ground; also a dragon ten times bigger than this earth. Are you a magician, or a snake-dancer?..

X

Are you a slave-merchant that you have put negroes into your hell?.. Are you a teacher that you read and write books? or, are you a notary secretary that you keep our accounts? Do you have dues to collect, or are you an inn-keeper?...

بیك بر اسماء الحسنی به اشارت ایدیور !

IV

Though your own name was one, you made it a thousand. I have never seen a business-master like you: You make the wood grow green and you dry it again. Are you a gardner, or a forest-guard?.

VI

You were talking to the (Angel) Gabriel from behind the veil, and then going down to the the house of God (the Kaaba!) to listen to it again. What were you doing with this fire of Hell?. Oh my dear fellow, have you a (Roman) Bath, or are you a stoker of a bath!

VII

You retired to hidden-ness and stood up for contemplation. You tired up the mind of those who's intelligence is quite uncapable of attaining (to the truth!); and you made a dridge thinner than a hair and you established it (on the Abiss of Gayyâ!) Do you have a running water are you a vegetable gardener?.

VIII

You have made the summer as a substitute for the winter, And the autumn for the Spring. You made also a balance with two scales equal to each other; well! are you a grocer or a shopkeeper?!.

IX

I was told that your Tar was boiling in boilers, and that you had fishs playing beneath the earth; I was told also that you had a dragoon ten times bigger than this world (of ours). Do you sell Sorbet, (a preventive drink against the poison of the viper), Are you a snake-tamer?.. (a juggler with snakes)?.

X.

Et tu as mis des nègres aux Enfers, est-tu marchand d'esclaves?
Est-tu professeur, tu lis et tu ecris des livres
Es-tu essentiellement secrétaire, (c'est-à-dire secrétaire ou plutôt comptable)
Tu tiens la comptabilité. As-tu un octroi, si non, est-tu un innkeeper?

XI

Si tu avais même 100,000 enfers, je n'entrerais dans aucun d'eux.
Le Nom de miséricordieux n'est-il pas descendu de toi?
N'as-tu pas dis: ~~que tu es~~ Je ~~tu~~ pardonne très généreusement les péchés?.. Alors Pardon mon péché, est-tu menteur. (Si tu n'es pas menteur.)

XII

Si tu me pardonnais tomberais-tu de ta gloire? (de ta dignité!),
Même les Rois (de la terre!) se passent de telles révoltes.
Que tomberait de ton trésor, ou que lui manquerais-il?
Ne peux-tu pas me pardonner? n'est-tu qu'un chercheur de déficits?.

XIII

Sied-t-il à ta gloire de ne voir que des déficits?
(Tandis que) tu habite chaque cœur et tu t'y promènes.
(Mais pourquoi) tu prends tant d'âmes et les restitues après?
Es-tu un ~~conducteur~~ chef de Caravane conduisant et ramenant ces âmes

XIV

Tu sais bien que je suis ton serviteur et tu es mon Sultan.
Tu es une litanie dans mon cœur et un interprète par ma langue.
Tu es en mon âme le hôte de mon ame. Tu es le bien-aimé de mon cœur; Comment tu peux m'être un étranger.

XV

بو راده دليل قلا غور معناسنه
دكل بو هانه معناسنه كلير. (*)

Tu te sers de moi comme d'une preuve (دليل) et c'est toi-même qui parles, et dans ton for intérieur tu passes comptes tout ça au compte nom de Azmi. Tu contemples (tes créatures) de haut de très haut. Es-tu un contemplateur et n'as-tu vraiment autre chose à affaire qu'à contempler le monde ?.. (et ton affaire n'est-elle que contemplation ?!)

Dans ce quatrain qui est le dernier, le poète mentionne son nom comme s'il s'agissait de mentionner une tierce personne. C'est une coutume depuis longtemps établie pour désigner la personnalité de l'œuvre. Il se sert du mot (délile دليل), qui a un sens équivoque. D'abord (دليل) veut dire guide

Azmi Baba,

(1)

You have created the earth, the sky, the man and the jinn; (*)
Oh! Master Architect (chief Architect) are you so much arrogant
(for what you have done?).. You brought into being the moon,
the sphere, the constellations; Oh you, the possessor of the Space
Are you making glittering things (marvels?)

(2)

You have created the seas without cover,
You made the waters walk (run) without feet and hands.
You keep the earth without any foundation and the sky without
props; Are you the sustainer of everything?

(3)

You make use of the wind without wings, ~~did you use a~~ have you made
~~shovel to make~~ these mountains with shovel? .. What for you are making
up the living beings, and then (killing them?) you are giving them
a soul and taking it back again; are you a soul-seller? . .
(creating!) making them away?(

(4)

You made up eight Paradises for Adam; - Your name
is great forgive his sin. - You have expulsed ~~Adam~~ him from
Pardise, Why?.. Do you care so much for wheat?.. are you ~~an~~
~~agriculturist~~ (a thresher of grain?) (*)

(*) (هرمن جی), is not a turkish word, the original (خرمن) is persian; ~~it means~~ the
agriculturist opens in the field a circular place, and cleans it up, for threshing
the grain. that is the (خرمن) of the persians, the ottoman turks have got the
word it with a little difference in prononciation (Harmanjee) is the man

there is a word in this first quatrain which is the original very difficult to be translated into any foreign language exactly because even in turkish text its real signification is impossible to be determined. that is the word (الوانجی سی); for it can be read as (اُلوانجی سی = elvanjea meesing) or as (اُلوانجی میسی = Ulvanjeemesin.) the reason of this equivocal position of the word is the defectuosity of our old system of orthography which could not represent the wewels by a letter in writing.

In this first quatrain, the word (الوانجی سی), is perplexing ~~indeed~~ because it may be red in two ways: either (مفتوح) as (elvanji misin) or مضموم as ul-vandjimisin. this is due to the defectuosity of the old system of orthography which could not represent the vowels by a special letter in writing. Whence this equivocal meaning of the word: (Elvân) means colours (Ulvân) means, Pride, Haughtiness; and Ulvanji, is called a man who gives himself airs of ~~pride~~ pride and haughtiness. Some one boasting in every secasion. We say in our familiar turkish for such a man: (حریف زه علوانه صاتیور) this fellow is selling boasting to us. Here I am prefering to read the word as (علوانه) because (الوانجی سی) seems to be a non sense.

1

The theory of [the perfect-Man الانسان الكامل] according to the teachings of the Oriental mystic philosophy.

Ladies and Gentlmen!

I am very glad to have at last the pleasure of meeting you to night; I must express – beforehand – my gratitude for your kind hospitality and present Mr with my thanks for all he did ~~for~~ in order to introduce me to your honorable Society.

I had promised long ago ~~to my good friend Mr~~ to give you a lecture on some original philosophical subject ~~which I had studied with a keen interest during many years~~; but unfortunately I have been compelled to postpone it ~~my lecture~~ for many reasons which kept me unpleasantly busy until to day.

It would seem to you very funny or rather extravagant to say how I was glad to be ill, a little bit, and isolated for nearly two weeks in the hospital of my excellent friend Dr Wallah; because this fatality proved to be the best condition ~~in order to realize the oportunity of~~ for preparing ~~for you~~ this lecture which was written indeed during the peaceful hours of my convalescence. I wished anyhow to have written it down ~~and in order to handle~~ for giving you with a concrete document summing up the substance presenting ~~of my patient investigations about unto the very spirit of the [illegible]~~ (esoteric sects مذاهب باطنية) common the

So I wish to entertain you to night on the conception of superman according to the teachings of the Oriental mysticism. I hope you will find it quiet interesting, because my lecture will not only throw sufficient light on some secret tenets and doctrines concerning the peculiar views of the esoteric mohammedan thinkers about some ~~unsolvable~~ of my opinions on some important ~~problem~~ religious problem which have interested me much more than many other questions.

II

fundamental theological problems, which seem to be unsolvable riddles, such as the ultimate Reason of the Creation and the annihilation of things; the Revelation of God, and the Communion of man with the supreme Being; the destinies of man; the very meaning and the Goal of life here and hereafter etc; but you will see also very clearly how the mystic thinkers started from some essential postulata or formulated beliefs, and how by the dialectical method they developed these fundamental axioms, following the logical concadenation of the main ideas drawn out of them; you will see how this disposition of mind led them forcibly to acknowledge the divine nature of man in General; at last you will understand why and how this creed Culminated in the apotheosis of the superman who is supposed to be the incarnation of the divine power, even the personal representative of God in this world, and the Saviour of Mankind.

I daresay without any exageration that this creed is the most important, the most substantial and central doctrine lying at the very bottom of every kind of mystic philosophy or any esoteric sect. this is the very creed recurring and reappearing periodically in the historical ground of Religious evolution from Boudhdha Çakiamouni down to Abbas effendi the celebrated Bahaï prophet who died just before some years ago. The doctrine of the Apotheosis of the superman is in reality the Alpha and the Omega of all the mystic philosophies, and the very substance of the teachings of all the (esoteric sects مذاهب باطنيه).

It will be very easy for me to show you later on that this was and still is the Common substantial creed between the adepts of

most important, the most substantial and rather the co[illegible] doctrine lying at the very bottom of every kind of mystic philo[illegible]sophy, and constitutes the spirit of every esoteric sect. This is the very creed recurring and reappearing quite periodically on the historical ground of the Religious evolution, from Boudhdha Çakiamouni down to Abbas effendi – the illustrious Behaï prophet who died just before some years ago – the doctr[illegible] of the Apotheosis of the man (superman) which implies and includes the doctrine of Epiphany, is indeed the Alpha and the Omega of all the mystic philosophies and the very substance of the teaching of all the (esoteric sects مذاهب باطنية).

I am insisting upon this thesis not only because I have devoted some twenty years of my life for studying the various creeds in the light of the history of philosophy and religion, but because I have been initiated to many secret religious sect and I have controlled practically my philosophical knowledge about all this serious problems. I have studied the Vedanta philosophy, the Neo-platonicism, the jew's Cabalism, the Çoufism, the Babism and Behaïsm, and the Creed of the so called converted jews believing the divine incarnation of Sabetaï Çevi, and I [illegible] the apotheosis of the superman was indeed the co[illegible] substantial creed between all these sects what[illegible] mal and ritual differences between them, or [illegible] their appearent relation to the grand dogmatic Religious systems like Judaïsm, Christianism, and Islamism.

I must confess honestly and sincerely here, that my knowledge

IV

about the esoteric sects and the mystic lore constituting the ground of all these religious constructions procured a very great pleasure for me and gave me the firm conviction that the real Spirit of Religion is one and the same notwithstanding the formal differences between the sects, which may be considered from the mystic viewpoint rather like political parties representing in their shismatic divisions some common social interests, and not the one undivisible, uncorruptible Religious truth.

III.

the old indian Vedanta philosophy, and the neoplatonists, and the old Cabalists jews as well as the recently converted jews believing in the divine revelation of Sabetai Şevi, and the ~~recent~~ Bahaïs and all other esoteric sects whatever may be the ritual or formal differences between them; and whatever may be their apparent relation to the great dogmatic Religious systems like Judaïsm Christianism and Islamism.

آتشان

I.

The theory of [the Perfect-Man الانسان الكامل] according to the teachings of the Oriental mystic philosophy.

Ladies and Gentlmen!

I am very happy to have got at last the oportunity of meeting you to night. I most ~~express~~ ~~beforehand~~ ~~my gratitude for your kind regards towards me~~ ~~and~~ present Mr A. C. Harte with my best thanks for all he did in order to introduce me to your honorable society.

I had promised long ago to deliver a lecture on some original subject, but unfortunately I have been almost compelled to postpone it for many reasons which kept me unpleasantly busy until to day, even in these later days I was taken ill and isolated for two weeks

~~It would seem to you very funny or rather extravagant to say how I was glad to be a little bit ill and isolated in the hospital of my excellent friend Dr ; because so this fatality proved to be the best condition for preparing~~ and this lecture, ~~which~~ was written ~~indeed~~ there during the ~~peacefull~~ lazy hours of my convalescence. I wished anyhow to have written it down for presenting you with a concrete document summing up the substance of my opinions on a very important religious problem which have interested and attracted me much more than many others ~~questions~~ that is the mystic

~~So I wish now to entertain you on the~~ Conception of the Superman according to the teachings of the Oriental ~~mysticism~~ Çoufis. that is the subject on which I will entertain you I hope you will find it quite interesting because my lecture will not only throw ~~this~~ to night

II

a sufficient light on the secret tenets and doctrines ~~concerning the peculiar views~~ of the esoteric ~~Mohammedan~~ thinkers about some fundamental theological problems — which seem to be unsolvable riddles — such as the Ultimate Reason of the Creation and the annihilations of things; the Revelation of God to the human conscience; the Communion of man with the Supreme Being; the destinies of man, the very meaning and the highest aim of life here and hereafter; etc etc; but the natural course ~~of and the~~ of our conversation on this subject will show you quite clearly, how the mystic thinkers used to start from some essential postulata or formulated beliefs, and how by the dialectical method, they develop these fundamental axioms, following the logical concadenation of the principal ideas drawn out of them. You will see — in consequence — how this peculiar disposition of mind led them forcibly to the acknowledgement of the divine nature of man in general as the very source of Revelation, and inspiration. You will understand then why and how this creed culminated naturally in the apotheosis of the (Perfect-Man انسان كامل) who is believed to be the incarnation of the Divine Power, the personal representative of God in this world, and the Saviour of Mankind.

~~I wish to give you an idea about this secret creeds in few words unfortunately, because my time quiet is limited. But if you were trying to discover them by yourself yourselves after being initiated in some mystic corporation, it would require some twenty years of hard penitential life spent as a derwish, somewhere.~~

I daresay without any exageration that these creed is the

whatever may be the formal and ritual differences between these sects, or whatever may be their apparent relation to the grand dogmatic religious systems like Judaism, Christianism, or Islamism

of all of them). This is also the everlasting creed recurring under many different forms and reappearing quite periodically on the historical ground of the Religious evolution, from Boudhdha Ça-Kiamouni down to Abbas effendi – the illustrious Behaï prophet who died just before some years ago. All these extraordinary men have been regarded as the personal incarnation of God, by their faithful followers.

I am insisting upon this thesis not only because I have devoted some twenty five years of my best life to the study of the various creeds under the searchlight of the history of philosophy and comparative history Religion, but because I have been also initiated to many secret religious sects, and to the free massonery as well. I have seen and discovered the same creed at the bottom of the venerable Vedanta philosophy, the Alexandrian neoplatonicism, the jew's cabalism, the Çoufism, the Babism and Behaïsm, and many other minor Religions. A very learned friend of mine Harbi Avram Danon, who had inquired into the secret book of that very peculiar sect of Mâamîm, (the so called converted jews of Salonica), and sent me over his very clever little monography on Sabetaï Cevi and his mystic teachings, I was not surprised at all to find again the same creed and the same doctrine again at the base of this shismatic cabalistic sect also.

Now after this very short introduction I can proceed to the analytical study of our subject matter.

and his mystic teachings; I was not surprised at all to find again the same creed and the same doctrine at the base of this shismatic cabalistic sect also.

Now after this very short introduction I can proceed to the analytical study of our subject matter, with quite an impartial attitude of mind and a deep respect that I have always been inspired by the sacred creeds of humanity.

× × ×

You know, surely that the problem of our being, I mean our existence as a conscious personality is among all the mysteries of Nature — the greatest riddle striking our inquisitive intelligence and asking for a solution. We are deaply interested in this capital question because, it implies and comprehends the problems of life and death. Life is for us an actual Reality, the only Reality of which we can have a vague but immediate Knoweledge; that knoweledge is what we call Consciousness. Death also is another Reality not less evident than life, though we can not get any kind of Knoweledge about it; because death is the complete annihilation of Consciousness, which is of course the only possible source and means of Knoweledge for us. The theosophists and the spiritists pretend to know something about death. Life and death so intimately connected with each other are perhaps the two principal modalities of our existence, or even they are the two faces of the same medal. We do not know anything about it really; but when we are confronted with this bewildering, this fearful riddle, and began to think deaply and seriously about it we understand, we acknoweledge that this is the (centre of gravity) of all our possible thoughts and perhaps the real source of all our emotions and feelings.

All the philosophical and religious problems are springing up which was so terribly but adequately symbolized by the old egyptian Sphinx

here the ground of observation is not only very limited, but ever changing and floating; and what we can observe ~~at~~ our own states of mind which ~~are~~ can not be directly communicable to others, unless they observe the occurence of the same states within their ownselves. that is the reason why introspection can not be a general method, and that is why the scientists deny and reject it. And yet Observation does not mean experience. ~~Can you~~ Do you believe that you can make experience within your own soul in order to inquire for instence how and under what conditions you can believe, or hope, or love, or fear, or deny, or have such conception or such emotion ?. and can you actually realize in the laboratory of your Conscience all the conditions and the factors capable of giving birth to such states of mind as belief, or unbelief; love or hatered; hope or despair etc ?.. I confess that such an experience is impossible for ever. Observation and experience requires Consciousness as a first condition. ~~Consciousness~~ How then experience is possible in the unlimited darkness of our unconscious self, where the most superficial observation is even forbidden! ~~unthinkable~~, ~~there is a second condition for~~ you know I ~~assume~~ presume that the validity of all experience based on sound observation ~~that~~ is the stability of the ground I mean the facts on which observation and experimentation are to be made, and the uniformity of the laws, and the regular recurrence and recapitulations of the same facts.

V All the philosophical and religious problems are springing from that inscrutable, unexplorable mysterious source as soon as we try to investigate unto our own spiritual nature in order to discover the very reason of our mental and moral existence. What a wonderful thing is our own Conscience! how it came to be?. and why? Is our conscious and spiritual existence an undispensable element for the general harmony of the Universe? What part do we play in the Concert of these innumerable wonderful beings surrounding us from every side and changing all the ~~time~~ while?.. wherefrom we are coming?.. Wherto we are going?.. What is the orbit of our evolution?. What is the Goal — if there is any! — towards which we are almost tending conciously or unconsciously?... In one ~~and lay down~~ word: Is there any reason or any finality in the creation?..

These are some of the many important questions, we can easily formulate when we think about the problem of Being; but we can not find any satisfactory answer for them at all. Yet we are compelled anyhow to find a solution ~~for all these~~ ~~ideas~~ or at least ~~we must find~~ some hypothetical solution if we could, for all these problems because the conduct of our life depends on the answer we can give for these principal questions. the ~~question of the~~ conduct of life — as you know certainly — is the most pressing need and the most imperious duty ~~and need~~ for us, if we do not want to live in absolute skepticism, or in the darkest ignorance. the principle of Conduct is drawn out of the possible solution to be ~~given~~ or the rational hypothesis to be given about this questions; and there is no doubt that our happiness and salvation depend strictly on our conduct in practical life.

Philosophy, Science and Religion ~~could not exist~~ ~~any more~~ would no more exist.

VII

Now Sience, Religion and Philosophy try to answer to these very imperious and pressing questions from different possible ~~points~~ of viewpoints and in their own ways. I will ~~here~~ absolutely exclude the philosophical view, because philosophy is ~~[illegible]~~ can not be absolutely here impartial may be Religious or Scientific as well, so we can postpone ~~it~~ this subject for an other possible lecture. ~~Here~~ then I will deal with scientific and Religious views only.

~~There are indeed two principal ways ~~indeed~~ two possible ways ~~indeed~~ of answering~~

I will tell you something about the scientific interpretation and method, though I am not concerned directly with it at all here; but I wish to let you know what are the principal opinions of those thinkers who deny the competence of science and the absolute validity and trustworthiness of it's interpretation in matters above and questions which are beyond the reach of observation and the controle of experience; I mean beyond the proper domaine of scientific investigations. Do not consider ~~please~~ these critical opinions as my personal objections against science. I am a man of science, I ~~believe~~ trust scientific knowledge above all, though I know it's limits; on the other hand I believe firmly also in religion but in my own way. ~~But~~ what I am relating here to you are the objections and opinions of others including some very eminent and genial scientists like Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir W. Crooks and many other celebrities. Those thinkers say: that science starts from the objective ground of observation, and study only the phenomenal world in order to discover some universal and constant relitions between them, this is what we call the immutables laws of Nature. Objective observation is then the first ~~[illegible]~~ path in scientific method of inquiry, then the next is to controle the duly observed facts by a rational

Oh, He يا هُوَ.

I will stope here in order to make some remarks and show you, that this agnostic conception of Godhead is the fundamental Doctrine of every form of mysticism in general; be it of Indian origin or neoplatonician or Jew.

I am sorry I have no time now to deal now with every form of mysticism, but I can point out and remember you that the same doctrine is developped in the Neoplatonistic philosophy, ~~and~~ the famous Plotinus the greatest thinker and the systematiser of this philosophy, stated that at the beginnings, there was only the (δυνάμις πρῶτι) which is of course the قدرالازليه

Seven Degrees of Mysticism
Mahkum

(ii) theory of the perfect man نظرية الإنسان الكامل

[illegible] to the creed of Oriental mysticisme

[illegible]

[illegible] delivered at the [illegible] (rough copy)

[illegible] Duran Duran

[illegible] with the [illegible] esoteric mysticisme

[illegible] of the old Egyptian clergy.)

You know gentlmen that the problem of Religion has ever been a subject of the fiercest controversy between the most prominent and most devoted spiritual or intellectual leaders of the cultured societies. This antagonism, very unfortunately divided humanity unto many factions animated with the must destructive fanaticism against each other. (Religion is the highest and universal institution we ever know; its sacred mission is to establish peace and brotherhood among mankind through sympathy and love, as to make of a savage hord of man a civilized society. that is the greatest religious miracle. then it becomes evident that the uncurable narrow-mindedness, the horrible fanaticism, and the untreatable sectarianism

Lecture delivered on Friday evening (18th Nov. 1932) at the American University of Beirut.

Ladies and gentlmen,

I accepted most willingly your kind invitation for delivering a lecture to night, before ~~your~~ this honorable audience. I beg you to accept ~~also~~ my sincere feelings of gratitude for all your kindness.

I thought it would be rather interesting to [illegible] on a subject which may encourage ~~you~~ furthermore ~~in~~ your good will for promoting – among the representatives of every creed and confession — a humane sympathy, throug the radiating influence of ~~some~~ a noble Ideal, which leads you to the moralizing teachings of a common belief.

So ~~I will~~ have a friendly talk ~~with you this night~~ if you please on (Oriental mysticism).

All the scholars who have devoted themselves to the study of Soofism – as we call it – acknowledge the fact that Oriental mysticism is not a particular sect in the true acception of the word; it is not even a religious sect at all. It is only a very broad-minded idealistic conception, keenly elaborated unto a system of Religious philosophy, which is very much akin to the greek neoplatonism. this philosophy can satisfy every earnest man who believes in the true spirit of Religion, without insisting too much on its outward form and frame.

Soofism existed long before christianity, and has appropriated – during its historical evolution – some fundamental principles of creed from Bouddhism, Brahmanism, jewish cabalism, mohammedanism; and such doctrines as epiphany which is the manifestation of the holy Spirit of God in man, and redemption. which these are considered as exclusively christian doctrines, are also some

(3)

of the essential doctrines of the oriental mysticism; the mystic Sheikhs and poets of the near East have, in the course of time, appropriated all these elements of thoughts and creeds, and made up ~~and built up with them~~ a system of religious philosophy, which is quite attractive as mosaïc work, attractive as an old byzantine mosaïc picture. It has a peculiar poetical ~~artistic~~ charm, and - of course! - it is sympathetic to every form of creed simply because it contains them all in substance, very harmoniously represented. that is the reason why it is utterly liberal and tolerates every creed absolutely. ~~For the same reason~~ also it is in flagrant antagonism with every kind of sectarian narro-mindedness.

(4)

are altogether a profanation, absolutely in contradiction with the holy Spirit and the moral teachings of true Religion particularly of christianism. I have no time also to give you an opinion about the conflict of Science and Religion which was another calamity. It is sufficient to say, that the extraordinary progress realized in every department of Knowledge since one century nearly, has given us quite a different disposition of mind to consider quite impartially the real meaning of Religion and the real value of Science.

I am happy to acknowledge that your has got a much better

It has been the highest privilege of man alone, to be able to meditate about such problems as the origin and the end of things, the mystery of life and death, the destinies of man and the Universe etc. Such a meditation has given birth to philosophy when strictly confined within the limits of purely intellectual speculation. But man

certainly

is not only an intellectual being. Our emotional Nature is ~~the~~ the most essential and important part of our real personality. ~~Our emotional nature~~ It has always been and it is still the unexhaustible source of Religion, poetry, fine arts and all our social and moral virtues, which are the main factors of civilization and Culture. So the religious sentiment is very deeply rooted at the bottom of our emotional self. All the religious creeds formulated in words are but the outword forms the clothings by which, man wanted to embody this ~~overwhelming~~ impersions sentiment of his; ~~and~~ he wanted to express it in some way, although this intense deep and confuse emotion can not be expressed totally and truely by any possible means. That is the reason why our conception of Religion, our formulæ of creed ~~has~~ have ever been changing whith the progress of our ~~o~~ understanding, while our natural emotivity remains the most chacteristic repre~~sents~~sentative of our real personality still. That is the divine sparkle

— as the christian says — which shines and lives within us; that is the living Jesus Christ within us according to the quakker also. ~~that is.~~ In matters of Religion, our starting point and our leading light is this emotion which is the source of every creative inspiration.

This is exactly the starting point of the oriental mysticism also. there lies the essential difference of view and method between mysticism properly so called, and that purely intellectual and conventional philosophy which we are teaching in our Universities.

As our time is quite limited, I will ~~neglect the ...~~ not tire you with the purely discursive & philosophical part of our ~~side of this philosophy, & in order to~~ subject for I will sketch you, in few words the fundamental ~~mystic~~ doctrine of the oriental mysticism, so clearly as you may ~~and you will~~ get a fair and true opinion of it.

Now, listen to the following confession which I have abstracted from the most beautiful poems and other works of the

prominent mystic teachers, the most of them being persian poets and philosophers:

(the most amazing — they say — problem which captivates our intelligence and requires a solution is certainly the Reality of things, ~~and~~ of which our own ~~intelligence~~ self seems to be a ~~brilliant~~ marvellous manifestation. that the Sphinx standing before us.

As long as we are conscious and feel ~~all around us and~~ within us ~~and all around us~~ this continuous stream of life, and that unrestrainable universal motion all around us, we are obliged to believe in an eternal absolute and immutable Being; otherwise we are compelled to suspect or to deny altogether our own existence, for we are carried on with the universal stream of things, without knowing where to? and we are changing without understanding why!.. the phenomenal world, of which we are ~~a~~ but small particle, looks just like a boundless and restless Ocean, whose waves are succeeding each other without

interruption. We can never find, never conceive even, the beginning and the end of it as long as we follow its course in the past or in the future. there are of course palpable and visible individualities in our world, but they have no stability at all; they vanish as soon as they appear. According to Mawlânâ Jelâl ud dine Roomi, the greatest mystic poet individualities are like the drops of water produced by the waves of the stormy ocean; they stand up for a moment and then, they fall down back again into the Ocean, wherein they are at once absorved and dissolved. that is the symbolic expression of our individual life and death. So the sensible world, with all its individual beings, is nothing more than a mere illusion of our senses!. something as a dream then! a phantasmagoric vision of phantasms which has no reality at all! or it is perhaps a wonderful mirage!?)

Here, I will stop a moment to tell you that these considerations and thoughts are the fairest and the best possible expression

of what we call in philosophical language (the idealistic view of the world) which is just the contrary of the common materialistic thesis. ~~I must tell you also that~~ this was exactly the view of the old Indian Vedanta Philosophy which considers the visible world as (Mâyâ) which means (great illusion). Such considerable european philosophers as Leibnitz, Hegel, Fichte and Schopenhauer in Germany; the illustrious Irish philosopher Bishop Berkeley, the scotch Prof. Alexander Bain, the English J. S. Mill and many others have confessed just the same idealistic opinion on the phenomenal world.

Let us follow the reasoning of the Oriental mystic thinker:

"(There is no doubt — he says — that this illusion must be the dim shadow of a truth; that behind the veil of this ever moving and ever changing appearence, there must be an absolute immutable unalterable Reality; there must be, of course, an ever active, all pervading,

Omnipotent, Intelligent ~~and~~ eternal ~~Force~~ creative Force as the first cause of all the Universe. that is what we mean by God. It does no matter how to name Him; but he can not be something ~~else~~ else than a Spirit, for all the material beings are changing and doomed to vanish; ~~and~~ and because, ~~before we~~ as long as we are conscious of our existence we feel His presence, in our own conscience ~~before anything else~~.] this intimate sense ~~[illegible]~~ is capital.

~~(Can we ever know Him and how?..)~~

~~I must stop here again, to remind you of Wordsworth, that~~ this considerations reminds me of the beautiful poem of W. divinely inspired Engl. Poet of our times, for he described this intimate ~~feeling in the most Sublime style, in his much~~ he described this intimate sens in the must sublime style famous poem on Tintern Abbey. He said just as a sufi poet would like to say:

... a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round Ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thoughts,
And rolls through all things.

the mystic thinker concludes:

then, ~~it means~~ that Reality is Spirit; and the Absolute Reality commonly called God is the Almighty ever active Eternal Spirit, ~~and we all are spirits~~ ~~even material things~~

No need to say that this idea is the corner stone of Bishop Berkeley's philosophy too.

Now can we know exactly the supreme Reality?

To this perplexing question, the oriental mystic gives a very fair and reasonable answer; he says:

(As He is, or aught to be in His mysterious Realm of absolute existence, no human mind can ever concieve Him in His Glory. In that case to give Him even a name would be a gross error. We use the pronoun (هو = Hoo) in arabic, which means (He) without any qualification or determination. For as the Kor'an says: (there is nothing bearing any ressemblance with Him = لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ).

(there is nothing but He - لا موجود الا هو) as the Kor'ân says. Alone He has been since eternity, Alone He is and will be for ever; He is the unknowable mystery of all mysteries.

we may call Him (the Supreme truth حق تعالى) only; ~~But as the~~ A truth, being far above the sphere of our intellectual capacity and far beyond the reach of our perceptive senses. An intelligible God, is no more the real God, but only an idol created by our own imagination and according to our own ~~image~~ pattern. Mohammed had exclamed: (I glorify the oh Well Known God, for we could not Known ~~you~~ thou as ~~you~~ thou really art. سبحان ما عرفناك حق معرفتك يا معروف)

(that is, ladies and gentlmen the agnosticism of Kant Spencer and many other philosophers.)

But the mystic is not discouraged with that agnosticism, he says:

(As He is the ever active primary cause of everything, it is possible to each a glimpse of Him through His creation which means manifestation, and not to make something

out of nothing. By consequence, the mystery of creation ~~is~~ must to be considered not only as the marvellous and infinite manifestations of His Will, but as the expression of His Divine love and the dazzling Beauty of His Grace. (we can see that in the mineral, in the vegetal and the animal Kingdoms but) The human mind is His highest manifestation for He created man according to His own image. then we may call Him ~~now~~ also the Absolute Good and the absolute Beauty and perfection ~~too~~. Our Soul is but a sparkle of this ever radiant Sun of Universal life. Consequently the most Holy Spirit is dwelling within us; and that Spirit is the divine love. The natural attraction of our soul towards truth beauty and goodness, is certainly the yearning of our soul after a communion with God who is, ~~(as we can see Him through His work of Creation,)~~ the Supreme truth, the perfect Beauty and the Absolute Good. ~~Our attraction towards Him, is the thrillings~~

of His undescriptible love enlightening our conscience. In one word He is (the true beloved one المحبوب الحقيقي), (the beloved one of the spiritual lovers محبوب العاشقين). the real mystic is a lover. True knowledge is to be in communion with Him through love. True felicity is to be annihilated in Him at last. this may be possibly realized by means of a peculiar mystic training of which there are some steps: first (contemplation تيران), then (deep meditation مراقبه), and then (ecstasy وجد). Ecstasy breaks down all the ties which bind up the soul with material elements to the earthly desires and to the vile passions of the flash. If we can purify our conscience from the dirts of egotism and animal sensibilities, forgetting absolutely our shadowy and illusory personality in the moment of the rapture of Divine love جذبة العشق, then the Supreme truth shines at once within our soul, just as the

Sun is easily and fully reflected on the polished surface of a clean mirror. this beatific vision, which we call Revelation is the true knowledge. that is called also (communion وصال). the holy man who attains thus the Supreme truth and felicity, becomes identified with God) this is the real meaning of (the ascension معراج) of the prophets. and what we call commonly prophet, is such a (perfect man انسان كامل), who after his communion with God, returnes back again from (the realm of Godhead لاهوت), to (the realm of mankind ناسوت), being invested with the power, the dignity and the sacred mission of leading mankind on the right way to God; and God is love.)

(It is evident that the prophet is apparently a man like others, and he says to others (Am I not verily a man

like you ? إنما انا بشر مثلكم), he is a man in form but a man possessing Divine powers. His main virtue is holiness. He is actually (the representative of God on earth خليفة الله في الارض). He is (the pole of the world - قطب العالم); (the greatest helper and the Saviour of all mankind الغوث الاعظم). He is all powerful for doing (good الخير) and absolutely uncapable for (evil الشر). It is very easy for him to sacrify himself for the salvation of humanity, because such a holy man has no individuality, and no fear from death being already annihilated in God.)

Now ladies & gentlmen, I call your attention, on this description of the perfect Man, as god's prophet. You will very easily recognize in this admirable portrait the divine physonomy of Jesus Christ, the Saviour.

~~No christian will refuse to share his these doctrines the Saviour. If you can remember what I could tell you in this short~~

If you remember what I said on soofism, and follow in your mind the natural growth and development of its central doctrine you will see that by the logical necessity of thought the oriental mysticism would come to the apotheosis of man; I mean to the theory of the deification of man through a long process of moral and spiritual evolution. that is the culminant point, the goal which soofism attained. I can say without exageration, that no philosophy, in the world, has laid so much stress on human dignity and human morality as soofism has done. To consider man's conscience as the dwelling place of Godhead and the highest sphere of His evershing grâce; to believe that the heart of man is the true Ka'ba, the Beït ullah (the house of God) and to concieve God as an all embracing love; to consider Holiness as the highest moral goal to be attained only by good deeds and by personal sacrifice; to believe

that redemption is to begin a new beatific life in communion with God; to believe that evil is only relative, as being the natural consequence of the animal selfishness; well!.. all these, are the highest opinions which constitute the principles of faith in every true Religion. We are obliged to admire such a philosophy!

Now you can easily understand how and why this exceedingly emotional philosophy has exercised such a deep influence over the whole litterature and poetry of the Near East, from My regreted friend the late Prof. E. G. Browne of Cambridge, says, in his very valuable monography on Oriental mysticism, that: [It is impossible to over-estimate the influence of soofism on persian poetry. How rich a litterature it is, everybody knows. Yet were we to eliminate every portion of it which bore the

impress of Soofi' thought very little, and that as a rule, the least attractive part, would remain.]

this words of the illustrious orientalist is true for the turkish litterature as well.

I wish I had an illimited time, to give you many examples of the sublime mystic poems selected from the works of such highly inspired poets as Mowlânâ Jalâl ud dine, Jâmi Ibn Fâredh, Mahmoud i Shabastari, Fakhreddini Irâki, Faïzi i Hindi, and many other poets of the first Rank. But let me give you an exemple of the noblest mystic poems which has ever been written in any language, and so to clause our conversation. I will give you an opinion of this beautiful poem, because it is a long one, composed of five Cantos from 30 to 48 verses each, and because it is impossible to render exactly in any foreign

language the charming melody and the fascinating eloquence of the original persian. this is the famous Poem of Hâtif born in Isphahân some two hundred years ago, nearly. He relates his wanderful religious experience, when the divine love stirred up his religious emotion and obliged him to wander all the night as a somnambule. He says in substance:

[... Being consumed with the fire of Divine love and rapt by the joy of His Grâce I wandered everywhere last night as a crasy. It happened that I went first by chance to the Mogs (Fire worshippers) temple. (and he describes how perfect a brotherhood he has seen in the temple before the sacred fire); I was feeling ashamed of my being a mohammedan – he says – and set down apart secretly in a corner. the old man, the high priest remarked my presence and said who is the new visitor? they replied him, that I was a restless a wandering

lover. Well !. he said give him a cup of the purest wine, though he is not an invited guest. then the cup-bearer has ~~given him~~ poured down in my cup a burning liquid fire. As soon as I have drunk it neither understanding nor feeling remained in me. this on cup of wine has burned altogether the belief and the atheism in me. I felt down absolutely untoxicated and just at that moment I heard this words from all my veins and arteries that: [He is One, and there is naught but Him, there is no God, save Him alone.

then, he get out perplexed and goes after wandering somtime to a christian church and adresses to a christian youth - with whom he holds converse, ~~say~~ this objections saying: [How long will ye

Lecture on
Mysticism
delivered at the
Am. Univ. of Beirut

Mysticism, in it's general acception, is a peculiar attitude of mind, tending towards a philosophical conception of the Universe and the destinies of man. It is manifested under some specific psychic and social conditions, worth while to be Keenly Studied.

There is no doubt that continual wars with all their calamities, horrible miseries, devastations and the chronic anarchy resulting from such a fearful situation are capable of suggesting to the mind, the vanity of everything in this world. Such considerations inspired with a deep feeling of despair gave to mysticism it's emotional element which is essential and characteristic. On the other hand, it seems that when dogmatic philosophy can no more satisfy the irresistible aspirations of the soul, yearning after the (Supreme Truth) by the mere rational explanation of the riddles of existence, the vanity of human Knowledge also becomes evident. Then everything is a mystery! This conviction contains the rational framework of every kind of mystic philosophy, both in the East & West.

It is quite natural that the human mind, after having exhausted nearly all it's forces and resources without getting any satisfaction, gives up altogether the so called science and philosophy as useless and deceptive systems of Knowledge built up on mere words and false opinions only. It is not possible to trust any more in such a disposition of mind neither the discursive, nor the experimental Knowledge, but it is yet possible to hope for catching a glimpse of the radiant Beauty of the [Supreme Truth] by a direct communion with Him. that is Revelation; the only possible way – according to

2)

the conviction of the mystics — to know God, who is the only Being really existing; veiled as He is by this phenomenal world of illusion.

Here is again a remarkable point of the utmost importance: it is evident that (the doctrine of the immanence of God) is the foundation stone of theosophy; as (the doctrine of the transcendence of God) is the basal ground of dogmatic theology. The consequence of conceiving God, hidden in the creation (to use the expres of «Yonoos Imray» a famous old turkish mystic) is very far reaching indeed. Such a conception culminates in the apotheosis of man; while a transcendental God has no relation whatever with his creation except as a Creator, and the primary cause of it.

This is the reason why a mohammedan mystic acknowledges the Divinity of Jesus Christ and any other prophet while the orthodox musulman rejects it with horror as the gravest Blasphemy.

We all know that our means of knowledge are very limited. If we can not trust any more the witnessing of our senses, and get the conviction at the same time that our intelligence also is limited with antinomies — those incompatible, irreductible, essential logical contradictions! — there remains only one way to get out from Nihilism, which is far more fearful than atheism. That way is Revelation: the sudden appearence of the truth to our inner sense in a moment when our soul is illuminated by a favourable inspiration for seeing it.

That is the simplest but the basal ~~and general~~ theory

of Knowledge admitted generally in mysticism. But in matters of belief, (form) is the most valuable and distinctive thing: the characteristic, the essential thing, I dare say!. We all believe – for instance – in the existence of a supreme power, which is beyond the reach of our perceptive and conceptive faculties. Call Him what you like, but be sure that we are obliged to believe in such a Reality, if we do not suspect or deny our own existence. Yet this belief does not characterize any religious creed exclusively, though* constitutes the first principle and the essential condition in the teachings of every religion. I wish to say that religion is not only a creed, but a formal creed.

It is the same with Çoufism; it is not a vague and general mysticism, but a characteristic one, quite different from that of the indians for instance!... It is a very elaborate system of theosophy, but it is not a Religion although it has given birth to many sects, which during centuries troubled the islamic world with successive politico-religious revolutions. We have no doubt to day that these revolutions weakened and even ruined the theocratic unity of Islam, dissolving beforehand the fundamental Mohammedan Creed which was a politico-religious conception of God and His Kingdom, so typically Semitic in it's form.

By consequence, the study of çoufism under the light of historical Spirit, may give the Keynote of a scientific interpretation

the islamic power

for all these revolutions which have cut off into thousand pieces and stopped at once it's conquests.

At the begimings Çoufism was certainly misunderstood and considered as the highest expression of the original mohammedan philosophy. It's most venerable representatives were at first some very pious ascetic men almost persians, born and brought up in the islamic religion. they were (gnomic) thinkers; ~~they expressed some ideas and ecstatic sentiments in short sentences, never written books~~ these holy men used to express their opinions and feelings in a moment of ecstasy by short sentences; aphorisms or gnomes as we call them.

Later on, when mohammedan doctors, have organized and established on a firm ground the dogmatic theology, çoufism was denounced and repudiated by them as the most pernicious and dissolving heresy. the mystics were then and thence fiercely persecuted, even burned (*)

Since the 18th century a good many european scholars – some of the most genial and eminent orientalists above all – devoted themselves to the analytical study of the oriental mystic literature with such a keen interest that they succeeded in discovering the real sources and meaning of Çoufism. there is no mystery about it now.

the so called oriental mysticism is neither original nor very mohammedan, but thoroughly greek. It is – as I remarked

(*) In adrianople five centuries ago.

5)

at the beginning of this study — simply the echo of neoplatonism in the musulman intellectual atmosphere. there is no doubt that we inherited this theosophy altogether with the persian culture and litterature.

the late J. E. W. Gibb, the celebrated author of (A History of Ottoman poetry) has summed up the common opinion of the most competent criticists and orientalists in these few lines which I am obliged to reproduce here:

« the philosophy of the turks — says Gibb — is, of course derived from the persian and arabic writers, but it is ultimately greek, being little more than a modification of the neoplatonism of the fifth and sixth centuries which combined aristotelianism with the mysticism of Jamblicus. In turkey the philosophers while accepting the alexandrian doctrine of emanations, gave their chief attention to the aristotelian aspect of the system. the çoufis (mystics!) on the other hand while acquiescing in the aristotelian explanations of natural phenomena devoted themselves almost exclusively to the theosophical side. »

Now let us proceed in a systematic way to get an idea of the method and planing of this philosophy, and then to cast a glance of the central mystic doctrine which is the foundation stone of all the çoufi sects still living in the near East.

« the problems of speculative philosophy – says Borden Bowen, an american philosopher — may be summed up in two questions : How is Knowledge possible ?... and What is Reality ?. the former question belongs to epistemology ; the latter belongs to methaphysics or Ontology. »

We must take in consideration the starting point, and follow the dialectics of the çoufi thinkers in order to see how they are proceeding to find out an answer to these two fundamental questions so fairly postulated by the American philosopher.

the phenomenal world – thinks the çoufi – with which we are in continual contact, is everchanging. It seems to a boundless and restless Ocean whose waves are succeeding each other without intervals. the stream of phenomena is continuous ; we never find the beginning and the end of it as long as we follow it's course in the past or in the future. We may actually discriminate – it is true – individualities in the sensible world, but they have no stability at all. they vanish as soon as they appear. they look just like the drops of water produced by the waves of the stormy ocean ; drops which stand up for a moment and then fall down back again into the Ocean, wherein they are at once absorbed and dissolved. So the sensible world – with all it's individual beings – is no more than a mere illusion which has no reality. A wonderful Mirage !.. (*)

(*) I am reproducing in these statements very faithfully the meaning of some of the most beautiful mystic persian poems.

You may easily recognize here the (Mâya): (the great illusion) of the indians; and acknowledge at once that this view implies the denial of every kind of sensualistic, materialistic and experimental philosophy; ~~and knowledge~~ because it considers the senses not as normal means for the acquisition of knowledge, but as a dishonest witness, as a liar. So the antagonism between the Çoufi doctrine and the scientific philosophy is essential, fundamental and lies in the incompatibility of their epistemological views.

But it would not be true to suppose that the Çoufi thinker is necessarily a skeptic, because he proceeds to assert his creed by ~~the negation of~~ denying the sensible world. He has no doubt in what he asserts. His position, before those who believe in the reality of the outer world, is just like Bishop Berkeley's attitude of mind. the illustrious irish philosopher, defending his dignity against the charge of skepticism had replied to his opponents saying: ((I have no doubt !. I am rather firmly convinced that the sensible world, is pure illusion produced by the activity of our senses. I am denying only the existence of the material world but not at all the Reality itself. Reality is Spirit. God is the Almighty Spirit, and we all are spirits.))

Well !. Many great çoufi thinkers had, before Bishop Berkeley, defended themselves against the charge of skepticism absolutely in the same way, and even using the same words.

Every scholar recognizes today that idealism is the epis-

temological foundation stone of Çoufism; and that the denial of the sensible world does not imply necessarily nihilism, which is the denial of Reality absolutely.

We are obliged to consider and acknowledge the importance of the mystic way of reasoning. I mean to say their (dialectics). there is a logical necessity indeed which compels the human mind to suppose a cause for everything, even unreal, delusive. We can deny the reality of the phenomenal world, but we can not be absolutely satisfied with mere negation; because negation is neither an answer, nor a solution for a transcendental problem. truly (*) [If all these things which I am actually perceiving as existing independently of my will somewhere outside of my conscience, are mere shadows, they must be of course the shadows of somethings really existing! If what I see actually is a simple mirage, it must be the ~~reflection~~ projection of something else. If it is a dream, there must certainly be a dreamer; my own Self at least! If it is only a charm, a fascination, where is the charmer?]

Briefly speaking, the denial of the visible world, can not release the mind from the deeprooted belief in the principle of causality; because this belief is the Key of interpretation for all kinds of facts – objective or subjective – relating to our personal consciousness, which is certainly the most amazing riddle, the most perplexing problem of existence. It is impossible to deny sincerely our own Self. Consciousness is the only firm ground

(*) these phrases are the litteral translations of sentences taken from the best çoufi works.

soufi

on which we can base and build up our argumentations in order to prove the reality of a Supreme Intelligence, or to deny every thing except our own actual existence.

The çoufi method is absolutely the same. After having been convinced of the untrustworthiness of the senses, and the intellect, he denies - consequently - the reality of the world and the authority of the intelligence for the discovery of the Supreme truth, which transcends all human capacities. He considers that an intelligible God, is no more God but only an Idol made by ourselves - after our own conception and pattern - for our own satisfaction. God, really, is beyond the limits of our understanding. By consequence Rationalism ought to be rejected as well as Sensualism. they are all baseless systems of false philosophy playing with mere words, leading to Agnosticism.

Now we must consider the next fundamental question which expresses and contains the ontological problem.

In this respect çoufism proceeds from an agnostic viewpoint, proclaiming that the only Reality is (He) (*) and besides Him there is nothing and no one else, but illusions of the senses. He is alone, He was and He shall be forever.

But Who is He ?.. And if the world was brought into existence by Him at once, how and where did all things came from ?.. Where He was before the sensible world and the spiritual realm came to be ?. And then, what is the kind of relation between our shadowy existence and the Absolute Real Being ?..

(*) viz: the absolute Being without any determining attribution.

the çoufi' answers to all these questions, and says:

[He is before all (Haq Taala – the transcendental truth); though He is (the unknowable hidden central point of all mysteries). We can not know Him as He is in reality: in His own resplendissant perfection, in His essence, in His (Ipseity); but only through His infinite attributes manifested to our conscience. As the Koran says: ((there is nothing bearing any ressemblance with Him!)). Our soul is but a sparkle of this Radiant Sun; He desired to be known, and manifested Himself through His creation; the real cause of the creation being His divine love for Himself. that is the reason why our souls are partaking of the divine nature of this Eternal and most Holy Spirit. the continual yearning of our soul after a communion with Him is nothing else than the manifestation of His eternal love animating our Conscience. So He is (the true beloved one = Al mahboob-al-Haqiqui); and whosoever loves a human being loves but Him, because He is manifested in man. He is the absolute perfection, then the absolute Good. true felicity in eternal life, is to be annihilated in Him, to become united with Him. If your intellect is blind, if your senses are deceitful liars, there is still the only one possible way to attain to the Supreme truth: that is Revelation!. It comes only in a moment of ecstacy when the absolute forgetfulness of the

material world breaks down all the ties which bind up the Soul with the sensible elements to the earthly desires and vile passions. If you can purify — with a pious discipline — your conscience from the dirts of sensuality and egotism, then the Supreme truth shines within your Soul as the Sun reflected on a clean mirror. this beatific vision, is the true and most certain knowledge. that is what we call Communion = (weesal). Happy is the holy man who has attained to this lofty degree of mystic knowledge and power. He is then and thence the personal incarnation of God, His mighty representative = (Khalifat) on earth. He is Jesus, and can ressuscitate the dead.] (*)

I do not need to explain all along that this remarkable dialectics leads to the conception of (the apotheosis of man), and implies the doctrine of epiphany, even that of Redemption which are thoroughly christian. Such doctrines are rejected with contempt by the orthodoxy of Islam as the most horrible blasphemy. the çoufism being — as a philosophical system — an idealistic pantheism, and having accepted the Alexandrian (doctrine of emanations as the best explanation for the mytery of the Creation, comes forcibly to consider the human being as the highest possible manifestation of God. that is why man is called (Noshat al Kobra) which means in arabic (the greatest text book) wherein God is manifested in His best possible perfection.

(*) All these considerations are faithfully translated from the best works of the çoufis.

the theory of emanation implying an evolutive process of divine manifestations has led the çoufis to the important conception of the (Perfect-man); the (insaan al Kaamil) as they say in arabic. the perfect man of our mystics must not be confounded at all with the famous (Uebermensch = the superman) of the german philosopher F. Nietzsche. According to the çoufis, the perfect man is he who obtained through innumerable divine manifestations the highest possible degree for a contingent being like man. He is united with God first, and then sent back again to the human society in the form of a man as a leader as a Saviour, as the representative of the divine Grace between Godhead and mankind. that is his mission; and they call him (the pole of the sages = Kotb-al-Arefeen). His most holy duty is to lead mankind to the right way, and to sacrifice himself for saving humanity in this way. Such a sacrifice is very easy for him because such a man has no Self, being ever since annihilated in Divine love.

the superman of the german philosopher is — as far as I understand him! — something as a governor of some dark african colony: a very arrogant, selfish and aristocratic bureaucrate absolutely careless for the rights of all others, because he supposes himself above the good and the evil.

the çoufi conception of the perfect man, is on the contrary pretty well a christian doctrine! that is the reason why an oriental mystic understands the divine mission of the Christ

as a Saviour, and the orthodox mohammedan does not!

As the çoufism has accepted integrally the neoplatonistic theosophy, and as this eclectic philosophy may tolerate and digest all kinds of elements of thoughts and feelings, as I had said before, no sect or philosophy can be more liberal and tolerant than the oriental mysticism, as it is certainly. the most ignorant illiterate poor derwish is not scandalized to acknowledge any religious doctrine incompatible with Islam.

the greatest Sheikh (Mohyeddine Ibn al Arabi) who died nearly eight centuries ago in one of his aphorisms, says: (If the gnostic sage, is really a sage, he must not be bound up with a single creed exclusively, but he must try to accept all kinds of creeds. Every one of them expresses in one way relatively the Supreme Truth.

that is why the real çoufi is not convertible to any formal, dogmatic Religion. the extreme laxity and the elasticity of his pantheistic philosophy puts him above all religions and sects. Dogmatic theology thrills fearfully before the tolerant mystic pantheism which dissolves everything. Spinoza was persecuted only for this reason!.. and they are many others of course.

Now there is one more remarkable point which is the most interesting in our discussion, for it reveals the dissolving influence of mystic pantheism over dogmatic theology in general; and it is this:

If the agnostic conception which plays such an important role in mysticism, instead of being a positive creed, turns out to be a negative one, then çoufism falls altogether into Nihilism, keeping mor or less it's outer conditions such as ascetism and that fatalistic

(14)

disinterestedness apathy called quietism. then the true signification of the (Unknowable absolute Being) becomes (a Nameless Nothingness). Some esoteric sects went as far as this peculiar form of mystic atheism by the curious logical [redacted] of their elaborate dialectics simply jumping, in one step, from the positive form of agnosticism to it's negative acception. This is very easily possible for we have many exemples among the modern scientific thinkers as well.

Now there are some secret sects which reached this very bewildering hights or depths of nihilism, yet calling themselves mohammedans. What a terrible organization under the veil and in the bossom of a Religion ?!..

Without the careful and analytical study of such secret sects with all the religious and political [redacted] antagonisms which gave birth to them, sociology would be a childish story.

Z Rizalewfit

Lecture on
Mysticism
delivered to the Amer.
missionary students in
Beirut

Broad-minded Oriental Mysticism considered as a reaction versus the rigid and dogmatic formalism of the (Religion d'Etat) imposed by Conquest.

[πόλεμος παντῶν πατήρ ἐστι.]
War is the father [the origin, the cause ?!] of every thing.
Heracleitus.

One of the most lamentable calamities of war, is it's demoralizing and dissolving effect upon the humanitarian morality, which is undoubtedly the living [illegible] in every true Religion. I mean to say: in every Religion considered and conceived in it's universal-cosmopolitan acception; or — as they use sometimes to say — in it's Catholic signification and bearing.

Religion only preaches, teachs and represents verily, still now, the immutable old idealistic belief in the possibility — nay! — in the necessity of the (World's Unity), by submitting mankind to a system of general and uniform education, based on the ground of a (Universal-transcendental-dogmatic) creed common acceptable as such.

II.

This, implies the idea that Religion is indeed the most powerful principle of Unity in belief and Conduct as well. If really so, it must be — by a logical necessity! — absolutely irrespectful of racial bias, national prejudices and social or other conditions which are to be considered among the most effective factors of discord and division in the human society. Yet any Religion-as far as I know — has not been capable of performing such a wonderful Miracle as to unite under it's banner all the mankind, and realize totally this much-desired Ideal. On the contrary the imperious vital needs — the animal needs I would say! — of the formidable human masses, have been, from times immemorial, the real causes of discord and friction. Besides that, the uncontrolled increase in the population, came to sharpen and envenimate this antagonism so much as to degenerate unto war.

That is, in few words, the faithful expression of the realistic or naturalistic philosophy ~~of life~~ : (the survival of the fittest in the struggle for life) .. ~~and~~ on

a quite limited field of competition!.

So Malthus, Darwin and Spencer – with the scientific authority of their realistic philosophy — are confronted here with all the prophets, who have very sincerely and decidedly, preached (~~and~~ even partly realized) the idealistic humanitarianism according to the principles of a revealed Religion.

Here is the dilemma!..

But the historical fact is, that the same fatal discord and strife had - from the very beginnings - divided Religion itself, into many antagonistic sects, by the intrusion of political passion (which always represents party-interests!) or personal ambition in the religious confraternity. We have only to open any book of history and see what was the nature and the consequence of this (esprit de discorde) so badly in contradiction with the very meaning of a Religion. the reality is that narrow-minded Sectarianism and not Religion (taken in it's broadest humanitarian acception) is predominant in the minds, regulating, canalizing everything, just like the (esprit de corps) of the political parties in modern democracies.

Our historical experience emphasizes the pragmatistic view, for it proves that it is not monism but pluralism which was the accredited philosophy in matters of Religion as in politics and social affairs altogether. So much that words like (Unity), (Religion), (Humanity) etc, seem to be very similar to the (abstract notions) well known in metaphysics. they are mental entities and not real ones! some one would like to say. they sound like the famous (Universals) indeed, which were at one time, and for many centuries the subject matter, the center of gravity and the meeting ground of the fiercest controversy between the schoolman of the Medieval ages. Are we: the naturalists and the idealists resuming the same discussion of nominalism and realism?..

I do not know!.. but we can not blame the behaviour of our generous humanitarians who are endeavouring to defend such ideas and Ideals. the tendency of the human mind towards Unity is not only natural and impulsive, it is also the regulating principle we have ever been able to discover in science. Besides that we must consider the fact that we have never succeeded yet in the total realization of the Ideal in any department of science, even in mechanics, which is the most positive

V.

ground of knowledge!.

I am sure, the highest mathematician can not hope to realize totally the transformation of energy to mechanical action, for he knows better than anybody else that it is practically impossible to prevent – for instance – the dissipation of energy by radiation, friction etc. the only thing he can expect to do is to reduce and minimize – as far as it may be possible – the loss of heat by perfectioning the machine more and more. But ~~non the less~~ the ideal ~~mech~~ mechanical law is none the less true.

Why not to apply the same scientific method, to the study of the functionment of the much more complicate machine of the human society, to prevent friction?... Which is the essential cause of war, and loss of the most valuable vital energy. It would be better than to resume the academical discussion of the old times on Idealism and Realism. Let us ~~live~~ leave this discussion to pure philosophy. Let us make scientific inquiries into the nature of the political - social - economical facts and conditions which are suspected to be the real factors of discord among us. this is certainly a true scientific study of the highest vital importance!

I was pushed on to be confronted with these problems long ago by the acute curiosity of inquiering into the philosophical doctrines underlying the substantial Creed of some secret re

ligious sects. the so called mohammedan esoteric confraternities! They were predominating in Turkey even in the highest classes, until Moustapha Kemal has put an end to their activity. I have been duly initiated to some of them, studied with an impartial philosophical insight their essential dogmas, their curiously significative symbolism, their moral principles and political views; for more than twenty years! At last I have got the firm conviction that all these shismatic sects are nothing else and nothing more than a (block of opposition) against the inflexible orthodoxy and the untolerant narrow-mindedness of the State-Church and the Khalifate of Islam. that these sects were born from reaction and deep contempt against a semitic Religion imposed by the arab conquerors to the collective conscience of the conquered nations, particularly of the Iranians (Persians!), who had long before Islam a religion of their own, responding so faithfully to the spiritual needs and aspirations of their national Soul.

This tremendous movement of religious reaction (animated with persian patriotism!) has, on one side, and under favourable political circumstances, given birth to (sheism), (*) which is a distorted form of the original arab Religion; and on the other side, culminated — under the influence of the all pervading greek culture — to sufism? which is (oriental mysticism). that is to say the neoplatonism of Jamblicus and Proclus acclimated in the mohammedan countries.

(*) that is the (Religion d'Etat) insituted by the illustrious adventurer Shah Ismaïl-i-Safawee who is the founder of the Safawide dynasty, who had so desperately lost the war against Selim the 1st

It is a melting pot containing in dissolution every kind of religious creeds and philosophical doctrines which have lost their original organic forms. Let us use the proper definition of the oriental mystics and say: « Çoufism is the annihilation of every particular creed in One Supreme Truth. »

It is to be remarked that Pantheism, dissolving every kind of creed, is of course, the most tolerant religious philosophy. this is a remark of capital importance.

Mysticism