

In Search of Support: Ibn ¼ufayl's Evaluation of the Muslim Philosophers

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özet

Ibn ¼ufayl, ; ayy b. YakýĒn isimli eserinin başında yer alan 'Giriş' mahiyetindeki kısımda, kendinden önceki Müslüman filozofları, onlardan iktibaslar yaparak bir değerlendirmeye tabi tutmaktadır. Bu makale, İbn ¼ufeyl'in bu değerlendirmesinin bir değerlendirmesi niteliğindedir. Makalede İbn Tufeyl'in, filozoflardan yaptığı iktibaslar, filozofların kendi eserlerindeki orijinal metinlerle karşılaştırılarak verilmekte ve İbn Tufeyl'in girişte yaptığı değerlendirmenin, kitabının geri kalan kısmında roman tarzında ortaya koymaya çalıştığı kendisinin tasavvuf teorisi için seleflerinin yazdıklarında destek bulma niyeti taşıdığı, filozofun tasvib ve tenkidlerini bu gözle yaptığı savunulmaktadır.

anahtar kelimeler:

; ayy b. YakýĒn, ¨-fý ittiÜad ve ittiöÉl, el-FÉrÉbý, İbn SýnÉ, İbn BÉcce, el-ĖazÉlý

A. Introduction:

Ibn ¼ufayl's "Introduction" to his work ; ayy *İbn YaqýĒn fĒ AsrĒr al- ; ikmah al-Mashriqiyyah*¹ (*Hayy ibn Yaqzan: on the Secrets of Oriental Wisdom*) is very critical to the intended objective of the book. Its importance stems

1 Ibn ¼ufayl, *RisĒlat ; ayy İbn YaqzĒn fĒ AsrĒr al- ; ikmah al-Mushriqiyyah* [sic], edited by L. Gauthier, Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1936. In the title of this edition, the letter *mĒm* in the word *al-mashriqiyyah* is especially vocalized so as to be read as *al-mushriqiyyah*, which surely does not reflect the correct way of reading it. This work will henceforth be mentioned as *Hayy*; throughout the article, page references will be made to this edition, which was translated into English by Lenn E. Goodman in *Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzan: a Philosophical Tale* Los Angeles: gee bee tee, 1996.

not only from the fact that in it he presents to the reader a critical summary of the preceding Muslim philosophers' views relevant to his objective stated at the very beginning of the book, but also from his use of these views in the construction of his theory. His stated objective is to "unfold, as much as [he] can, the secrets of the Oriental wisdom mentioned by the chief master Ibn Sina" to a friend who asked about this particular subject. This request apparently made an astonishing impact on Ibn ¼ufayl in such a way that he was drawn into a flux of ideas that subsequently caused him to reach a sublime state of ecstasy. And he felt with this experience, which he had never had before, that he entered a world that is very different and cannot be depicted by ordinary language. The indescribability of this joy attained through the intimate experience is expressed by a couplet that al-Ghazali used to portray it: "*It was what it was...*" Al-Ghazali thus avoided divulging the secret, which, according to Ibn ¼ufayl, is due to his being a learned man and having sufficient theoretical knowledge as to keep it to himself. However, Ibn ¼ufayl complains, some Sufis who achieved that state made utterances revealing their self-claimed union with God, because they lacked theoretical and intellectual background necessary for being able not to reveal it. Thus it becomes clear that Ibn ¼ufayl finds it important to have such knowledge prior to having a moment of ecstasy in order not to reveal it to the public, since after all the religion does not allow such utterances.

Accordingly, after he had his visionary experience, Ibn ¼ufayl seems reluctant to divulge it to his friend. He advises his friend to go through the necessary steps, i.e., he should master the theoretical principles before those steps lead him to the final destination, the actual experience; because, Ibn ¼ufayl himself claims to have reached the truth first through his intellectual efforts, research and contemplation and now by the taste of the actual experience. He claims that before this experience, he checked all that his predecessors had put forth regarding such instances and compared them with each other and gradually he came up with his own view on this matter, and had a taste of that ecstatic moment. It appears that in the introduction he summarizes this project of his; that is, this is the whole idea behind the composition of the introduction. And now Ibn ¼ufayl insists that his friend follow the same route; otherwise, it would be nothing more than *taqlid* (following blindly), which is not what Ibn ¼ufayl wants his friend to have. To this end, as he explains, he wishes to present him a glimpse of the path he went through in this mystico-philosophical story (ıayy, 20).

According to Ibn ʿufayl, on the way of the seeker of the truth toward the sublime state, there are a number of stages that are expounded by Ibn Sina. Ibn ʿufayl quotes a passage from Ibn Sina's *Isharat wa al-Tanbihat*, without mentioning the name of the book, and apparently adopts them since he sees them fit in his own framework (p.6-7). But he stops his exposition on how he achieved his experience at this point.² It seems to me that although he begins with a specific statement regarding his objective, later he starts to develop his own theory, a new mystical framework combining the metaphysical knowledge as the initial step and the ultimate union as the end, in a way that would be certified by the works of the masters dealing with the same issue.

What Ibn ʿufayl tries to accomplish here, particularly in the Introduction, is to establish a background to justify for his own experience and thus to support his position on the issue of mystical union with God. It is my contention that the mystical experience Ibn ʿufayl claims to have attained is the very basis on which he is standing when he attempts to prove the truth of his mystical perspective. My reading of the introduction and Ibn ʿufayl's critical evaluation of his predecessors on the very issue of mysticism led me to think that one of his main concerns in the book is to demonstrate the feasibility of mystical conjunction with the divine without any intermediaries. To do that, he examines the Muslim philosophers' opinion on this very issue (with perhaps the exception of al-Farabi), and adopts what he finds in support of his views and criticizes what he falls short for his mystical understanding. This is clear particularly in the case of Ibn Bajjah.

The content of *ḥayy ibn Yaqẓān* has been discussed in modern scholarship in terms of the major themes of the book. Among the themes that were claimed by the writers to be found in the book include mystical experience, introducing philosophy in society and the reconciliation of religion and philosophy; natural development, philosophical mysticism. As was suggested above, in this paper, however, I will not deal with this particular point in the way it was discussed by various writers;³ instead of following

2 His own description of the whole progress comes much later in the main text of the book when he explains how *ḥayy*, the main character in the story, achieved that mystical experience.

3 See G.F Hourani, "The Principle Subjects of Ibn Tufayl's *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*," *JNES*, 15, 1956, 40-46; also Sami Hawi, *Islamic Naturalism and Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1974), part of which appeared as an article entitled "Ibn Tufayl's Appraisal of His Predecessors and the Influence of these on His Thought." *Islamic Studies* v. XIII no.3 1974, 135-177, which includes a lengthy analysis of Ibn ʿufayl's Introduction. Also see some related articles in L.I. Conrad (ed.) *The World of Ibn Tufayl: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, Leiden: Brill, 1996;

and inspired by Ibn ¼ufayl's aim stated, I shall examine how Ibn ¼ufayl treated his predecessors in such a way to enhance his conception of philosophy in the making of his own mystical cosmological scheme, whatever that may be, and how he evaluates those ideas in terms of their utility values in his project. So my aim in this paper is twofold: to compare the texts Ibn ¼ufayl reproduces from the works of Muslim philosophers he examines with the passages in their original works he quotes from, and to suggest an impetus regarding his use of the views of the philosophers based upon Ibn ¼ufayl's stated aim of composition of this very book in his Introduction to it. In this article, I shall not delve into what the essence of what I assume to be Ibn ¼ufayl's mystical project may be. Nor shall I go into whether or not the term *¼ikmat al-mashriqiyyah* in the title of the book of ¼ayy could possibly be considered to have adumbrated a line of thinking which was later to culminate in the philosophy of *ishraq* of al-Suhraward, since it merits a separate study.

B. Evaluation of the "Evaluation"

IBN BAJJAH:

Even though Ibn ¼ufayl mentions such books by Ibn Bajjah as *Risalah fi al-Nafs*, and other books on logic (*Risalah fi al-Maniq*) and physics (*Risalah fi al-¼abi, ah*), he does not quote from them. Ibn ¼ufayl also resents that Ibn Bajjah left his books incomplete, and the complete ones are only short *risalahs*. The passages that were reproduced partly in ¼ayy are from Ibn Bajjah's *Tadbir al-Mutawa¼¼id*⁴ and *Risalah fi Ittil al-, Aql bi al-Insan*.⁵ Beginning with Ibn Bajjah, I shall follow the order Ibn ¼ufayl observes in his quotations:

Take a look at the statement of Abu Bakr al-Sa'igh [Ibn Bajjah] appended to his discourse on the depiction of the conjunction [with the Divine]. [He says]: when the intended meaning is understood, thereupon it will be clear that it is impossible for anything that is learned through the practiced sciences in circulation to be on its level. And now that the meaning is grasped, its conception occurs on a level on which it sees itself as disparate from all preceding convictions of other things that are not material. And they are more sublime than to

especially Conrad's article in this book "Through the Thin Veil: on the Question of Communication and the Socialization of Knowledge in *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*"; And for a review of Islamic philosophy from Ibn ¼ufayl's point of view, see M. Mahdi, "Philosophical Literature" in the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature*, eds. M. J. L. Young et al. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

4 In *Ras'il Ibn Bjjah al-Ilhiyyah* (Opera Metaphysica), ed. M. Fakhr, Beirut, 1968. Henceforth *Ras'il*.

5 In *Ras'il*, op. cit.

be ascribed to the physical life, purified from the composition of the physical life; [so] it is appropriate to call them *a'wwal* (mystical states/moments), which God bestows upon those of His servants He wishes. (; ayy, 5)

This passage is at the end of *Risalah fi Ittiðâl*, where Ibn Bajjah expresses, as Ibn ¼ufayl states, his feelings about his unclear statements on how blissful moments occur. The full passage in the original form can be translated as follows:

However there is an indication to it [what Ibn Bajjah intended to convey] there. When [the intended meaning] is given its proper expression and the meaning is understood, it will thereupon be clear that it is impossible for anything that is learned through the practiced sciences in circulation to be on its level. And now that the meaning is grasped, its conception occurs on a level on which it sees itself on [this level] as disparate from all preceding convictions of other things that are not material. And they are more sublime than to be ascribed to the physical life, rather they are *a'wwal* (states= moments of ecstasy) of the blissful. So they are purified from the composition of the physical life, and it is appropriate to call them mystical states/moments, which God bestows upon those of His servants He wishes. (*Ittiðâl*, 172-173)

Ibn ¼ufayl then criticizes Ibn Bajjah for censuring the Sufi for the pursuit of this joy and claiming their understanding of union to be a product of their imagination. Ibn Bajjah makes this claim especially in regard to al-Ghazali's view of attaining the mystical "*dhawq*." This passage occurs in Ibn Bajjah's *Risalat al-Wada* ,⁶

A book of a man known as Abu ; amid al-Ghazâlî, which he called *al-Munqidh*, has reached us. He describes in [this book] a part of his autobiography, and says that he saw in his seclusion some divine things (*umuran ilahiyatan*) and had a great pleasure (*dhawq , a'yîm*)⁷, portraying it [as follows]:

It was what it was, I can't describe it.

All this is "*yunun*" (personal opinions) and things that he substitutes with the images of truth. He is erroneous, or he is misled by the fantasies of truth. He further explains that he made it [his] aim to see the intellectual world ... and to take pleasure of wondrous things a person sees in that world.⁸ (*R. al-Wada* , , 121)

6 In *Rasâ'il*, op.cit.

7 In the *Munqidh*, Ghazâlî claims: "... during these periods of solitude there were revealed to me things innumerable and unfathomable" and "With the first stage of the way there begin the revelations [*al- mukâshafât*] and visions [*al-mushâhadât*]..." M. Watt's trans. *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazâlî*, Chicago: Kazi, 1982, 60 and 61 respectively.

8 *Rasâ'il*. 121. In the lines following this passage, Ibn Bâjjah seems to concede that al-Ghazâlî's view may be argued for based on what Aristotle says about the wicked and the good. According

Ibn Bajjah explains how this illusion happens by what he calls the “common sense” (*al-’İiss al-mushtarak*). According to him, in terms of conviction or belief, things are either truthful or deceitful; and their knowledge is obtained either through essence or through accident; or it could be certain or conjectural (*Tadbir*, 51). Furthermore, in the soul there are three faculties that exist in the spiritual forms (*al-’uwar al-ru’ûâniyyah*): the memory, the imaginative faculty, and the common sense, the faculty that perceives the sensibles through the senses.⁹ The spiritual forms can be truthful or deceitful; the best spiritual forms are the truthful ones, or the ones that can pass through the common sense. Some forms do not get confirmed by the common sense, as in the case in which we imagine something that belongs to the remote past, or when we imagine, for example, the land of *Ya’juj* and *Ma’juj*. Since these do not pass by the common sense, they are mostly deceptive. However there may be some forms that can be veracious, and yet do not get confirmed by the common sense. A name or something else may point to them, in that case with the help of memory they pass through the common sense via representation, e.g. when we imagine Socrates. However, this can also be deceptive, as in the case of “*Kalilah wa Dimnah*,” things that can be found in the invented stories. Ibn Bajjah goes on to explain other cases of spiritual forms. Then he talks about the certainty of the sensibles that are peculiar to specific senses, i.e., color for seeing, and sound for hearing. However, he continues, there are some sensibles that are not sufficient to attain certainty through one single sense until other senses cooperate with it, and at this point there may be a need for the contemplative faculty (*al-quwwah al-fikriyyah*) to come to a conclusion via reasoning. He then comes to how the imagination of the Sufis works:

So the sense brings about certainty in the specific forms. Sometimes reasoning does [the same thing] as in this example, ‘this wall is built, so there is a builder of it,’ although reasoning can only bring about the spiritual contemplative (*al-ru’ûâniyyah al-fikriyyah*) form of something. That is why it falls into conflict with the common sense on what this something actually is, or on the formations that the sense perceives of it. Hence the common sense varies in getting the image of the builder [of the wall] according to those who perceive the structure [of it]. The reason for this variation is that it [=the common sense] does not join together [i.e. agree] with the three faculties that brings along the spiritual forms as it is the case in its corporeal existence. For that reason, when the three

to Ibn Bâjjah, Aristotle says in his *Ethics*: If a happy man is happy truly and performs the acts of happiness, he is in a permanent happiness and in divine gifts, ...” So al-Ghazâlî, when in seclusion, saw divine things and heard divine sounds, and attributed these to pleasure-taking.

9 For his elaboration on the common sense, see *Ilm al-Nafs*.

faculties agree, they fetch the spiritual form, as if it were something sensible since when they concur, truth comes necessarily; and amazing [things] can be seen emerging from their act. This is what the Sufis think is an ultimate purpose for human being. ... Due to their shortcomings in their pure spiritual forms, this spiritual form takes the place of the former (the veracious spiritual forms) with them. Whenever this is the case, (falsehood occurs in the case of separation [of the faculties], and they become aware of the truth in the case of the agreement of the faculties) they assume their agreement to be the ultimate happiness. Whenever some strange forms and potential sensibles appear to him in whom [the three faculties] joined together, they assume that the end is to achieve that. That is why al-Ghazali says that he achieved spiritual cognitions/realizations and saw spiritual substances, and presented with greatness whatever he saw with a line of the poet:

It was what it was [...]

For this reason, the Sufis claimed that achieving the ultimate happiness sometimes comes without study, perhaps through being free [from everything else], and through not withdrawing from the “*dhikr*” of the Absolute even for a moment. For whenever someone does this, that means that the three faculties have concurred, and this becomes possible. And this is all a subjective opinion, and an effect that they assume to be something from out of nature. So this end, which they only assumed [to be real], even if it is truthful and can be an end for the solitary, is then achieved by accident not by essence. (*Tadbir al-Mutawa'wid*, 55)

In sum, Ibn Bajjah claims that the Sufis only think that their alleged conjunction with God is real. It seems that it is as if the deceptive spiritual forms play tricks on the Sufis' imagination.

Ibn ʿufayl rightly refers to a passage in the *Ittiḍāl* when he refers to Ibn Bajjah's promise for a clear exposition on the nature of the ecstatic experience after his criticism of the mystical conjunction:

Ibn ʿufayl says:

[Ibn Bajjah] even promised to describe how the *ḥāl* (state) of the blissful ought to be with an explicatory and lucid statement (*Hayy*, 10).

Ibn Bajjah's promise is found in the following passage in *Ittiḍāl*:

On the existence of this [...] and on how to have such moments of ecstasy, there is more to say. [However] the length of the statement and the lack of time drew me off from establishing it. God willing, I will do it, in an explanatory and clear way and I will communicate it to you... (p. 172)

It appears that Ibn Bajjah himself was not satisfied with his expounding the idea of conjunction of the intellect with human beings. However, true to Ibn ʿufayl's resentment, Ibn Bajjah apparently did not have a chance to meet what he had promised: “The man did not do anything of this sort, nor anything equivalent to it,” and “what prevented him from this, it

seems, was that, the scarcity of time and his being busy getting down to Wahran” (*Hayy*, 10). Or, Ibn ¼ufayl speculates, Ibn Bajjah may have deliberately left his books incomplete just because “he noticed that describing such a state would have obliged him to say things containing a rebuke for his lifestyle and a denial for his affirming the urge to accumulate wealth and expediting the ways of subterfuge to acquire it” (¼ayy, 10). That is why, according to Ibn ¼ufayl, “his only completed works are brief books and perfunctory epistles (¼ayy, 13). Ibn ¼ufayl’s judgment on why Ibn Bajjah never completed his works seems to be based on only reports about the latter since he never met him in person (¼ayy, 13).

We next witness Ibn ¼ufayl launching a personal attack on Ibn Bajjah’s behaviors and his lifestyle. First he accuses him of talking about something that he does not know, or better yet, something he has not experienced. Ibn ¼ufayl appears to be in two psychological moods: first, having a concern to prove his point on mystical union as distinctive from Ibn Bajjah’s conjunction, he behaves like someone who is about to lose whatever he has just earned just because somebody else claimed it to be useless or baseless; second, experiencing an intimate taste, he seems to look down on Ibn Bajjah’s commenting on things he never had acquaintance of. (¼ayy, 10)

Now taking advantage of Ibn Bajjah’s self-criticism, Ibn ¼ufayl furthers his attacks on him; the latter’s quote appears to be true to the original confession:

Ibn ¼ufayl says:

He himself explains ...that the intended meaning was [to be shown] demonstratively in *Risalat al-Ittiðâl*, [for which] this expression [of it] does not give a clear understanding, except after [undergoing] severe hardship and coercion ...” (¼ayy, 13)

Ibn ¼ufayl again correctly refers to Ibn Bajjah’s statement regarding what is wrong with his text and what should be done:

Ibn ¼ufayl’s quote continues:

... and that in some places the organization is not so perfect; and if he had had more time, he would have been inclined to make changes in it. This is as much as I can find out about the man, since I never knew him personally (¼ayy, 13).

Ibn Bajjah’s passage:

...when I read it, I saw its shortcoming in understanding what I had intended to be understood. The intended meaning was [to be shown] demonstratively, for which this expression [of it] does not give a clear understanding, except after [undergoing] severe hardship and coercion ... (*Ittiðâl*, 172)

Ibn Bajjah’s passage at the very end of the *risalah*:

Thus I found the arrangement of the statements in some places to be imperfect. There was not enough time to make changes, and I rely on you on this [task]; ... whatever you find of this sort, change the arrangement of

expression to a clearer one, and act on my behalf in this substitution ... (*Ittiðâl*, p.173).

Again despite all these kinds of criticisms, what Ibn ʿufayl is coming to in the end, in my opinion, is that he appreciates Ibn Bajjah's intellectual efforts and rational achievement, and personal intellectual conjunction with the Active Intellect, and accepts this achievement as a step necessary for the kind of union Ibn ʿufayl has in mind, an aim that is higher and more sublime than the one which is reached by theoretical perfection, and which is analogous to the case of a blind man who has excellent intellect and yet does not see the truth as clearly as the men of taste. Hence the real distinction in Ibn ʿufayl's observation between his and Ibn Bajjah's theories of conjunction appears to be a matter of rank in their achievement, even though both ways are concerned with the same thing (*ʿayy*, 9); that is, as Ibn ʿufayl claims, one can see more wondrous things and see them more clearly at the level he reached than at the level reached by use of intellect only, which is Ibn Bajjah's union:

The level to which Abu Bakr refers is reached by theoretical science and intellectual inquiry. There is no doubt that he reached it and he did not traverse beyond it. As for the level to which I referred at first is something different from that. Even if this in itself is of the notion in that nothing revealed in it can be contrary to what is revealed in the former, it differs from it [=the former way] in terms of increase in clarity and vision through something we cannot call [anything] but a "faculty" (or power) only figuratively ... (*ʿayy*, 5)

Cosmologically speaking, Ibn ʿufayl traverses all the way to the Divine, which is realized through what he calls a 'faculty',¹⁰ whereas Ibn Bajjah gets to be criticized by him for being satisfied only with the rank of the Active intellect.¹¹

He compares his moment to that of Ibn Bajjah, and he explains the difference with an analogy. According to Ibn ʿufayl, the states and the achievement of union, as Ibn Sina describes them, cannot be reached by theoretical perception through syllogistic deductions, postulating premises and drawing conclusions. Now it is appropriate for Ibn ʿufayl to explain

10 Gutas seems to resent that Ibn ʿufayl borrows Ibn Sina's "sacred faculty" and perhaps overestimates its value and distorts its status in the latter's philosophy; see his article "Ibn ʿufayl on Ibn Sina's Eastern Philosophy," *Oriens*, 39, 1994, 236 ff.

11 *ʿayy*, 5-6. Ibn ʿufayl sounds confident that Ibn Bâjjah reached that point, yet he had more to achieve.

in the difference between this group of people and the others (i.e., probably between his experience and Ibn Bajjah's intellectual conjunction) by an example (ıayy, 7). To do that, he employs the analogy of a blind man who is endowed with an excellent faculty of perception, and intuitive powers (*quwa al-Ûads*). Those who are competent in theoretical knowledge and thus achieve through that knowledge only the state that Ibn Bajjah did are likened to the blind man who learns about the city he lives in by using means other than his sight. That way he obtains a full theoretical knowledge of the city, which after gaining sight appears not so different from what he expected to be. The only difference is his experience of the city in a clearer and more joyful way this time. Accordingly, people of theoretical knowledge see less than what the other class do in their experience. Further, the former group lacks the clarity in what they apprehend in their state, while the latter would have a very clear view and greater delight as the analogy indicates. One can only obtain clarity in what is to be seen by jumping to a higher stage, in which one can be united with the Truth, which is analogous to the blind man gaining his sight afterwards. Again, as was mentioned, there is no essential difference between the two ways of apprehension in terms of what is revealed in the state reached.

In the end, Ibn ¼ufayl's feelings are ambivalent; he shows harsh and unfriendly attitude toward Ibn Bajjah and acknowledges his intellectual achievement by praising the soundness of his point of view, the veracity of his vision, and the sharpness of his mind. Then Ibn ¼ufayl resents about the fact that "the world preoccupied him until death carried him away before the manifestation of the treasures of his knowledge and the unfolding of the secrets of his wisdom. Most of his books available are incomplete and broken off at the end..." (ıayy, 12). Considering all these feelings, one can even speculate that Ibn ¼ufayl was resentful about the unfortunate fate of the books and the untimely death of Ibn Bajjah, perhaps because Ibn ¼ufayl may have wishfully thought that if Ibn Bajjah had not been preoccupied with mundane affairs, he would have completed his works; more importantly, he would have explained the whole series of steps leading to the union, without which Ibn ¼ufayl seems to have considered it all as incomplete. Perhaps Ibn Bajjah would have discovered the path which Ibn ¼ufayl did. After all, he does not reject Ibn Bajjah's theory entirely, but thinks of it as a necessary, yet incomplete in a sense, step that needed to go further.

AL-FARABI

In a general evaluation of al-Farabi's works, Ibn ¼ufayl asserts that most of his books are on logic, and those on philosophy have a lot of mistakes and inconsistencies. So Ibn ¼ufayl touches upon a few points hastily and sum-

marily. I will examine Ibn ʿufayl's only passage on al-Farabi in two parts, since in such a short passage he levels serious criticisms against the Second Teacher:

A) In the first part, Ibn ʿufayl stresses al-Farabi's inconsistencies in his works regarding the problem of immortality and what happens to the souls after death. He mentions three book titles and what the author of them says about these issues therein:

i) "In *Kitab al-Millah al-Faṣīlah*¹² al-Farabi affirms the permanent stay of the wicked souls in infinite torments after death." (ḥayy, 13)

ii) "Then in *al-Siyasah al-Madaniyyah* he clarifies that they will dissolve and end up in nothingness (, *adam*) and that there is no immortality except for the virtuous and perfect souls." (ḥayy, 13-14)

Al-Farabi elaborates on the happiness in the other world in his *al-Millah al-Faṣīlah*, however we still cannot find there the statement that Ibn ʿufayl quoted him as saying. Al-Farabi mentions this kind of happiness when he talks about the views that are found in *al-Millah al-Faṣīlah* (the Virtuous Religion). These views are two kinds: a) theoretical (*naʿyari*), and b) voluntary (*iradi*). The issue of happiness in the next world comes at the end of the list of the ideas belonging to the theoretical part. After the mention of the attributes of God and the spiritual beings, their statuses before God, and the existence of the world, etc. the happiness issue comes to the fore, parallel to the statement found in *al-Madinah al-Faṣīlah*:

... then the existence of human being, the acquisition of the soul therein, the intellect and its rank in the universe and its status before God and the spiritual beings (*al-ruʿṣāniyyūn*); then depicting what prophecy is, and how revelation is, and how it takes place; then that by which death and the next world are depicted, and the happiness which the virtuous and the good achieve, and the misery that the wicked and the vile achieve in the next world. (*Kitab al-Millah al-Faṣīlah*, 45).¹³

At this point, al-Farabi does not go further to elaborate the nature of this happiness and misery in the next world. Another mention of the happiness in the next world is made at the very end of the book without any detail. In the book, al-Farabi elaborates on his political views and the worldly happiness. So we find quite a few passages on happiness in this world, which appears to be al-Farabi's major concern in his philosophy. He consi-

12 Another manuscript reads "*Kitāb al-Madīnah al-Fāṣīlah*." See *Hayy*, 13, n. 22.

13 Edited by M. Mahdi in *Kitāb al-Millah was Nuṣūṣ Ukhrā*, Beirut: Dār al-Mashriq, 1968.

ders happiness as one of the subject matter of political thought. Although he does not state explicitly, one may even claim that al-Farabi thinks that happiness in the next world depends on happiness in this one, so he puts a lot of emphasis on the latter. However, for al-Farabi, happiness in the afterlife seems superior to that in this world.

A parallel passage conveying the same idea can be found in *al-Madinah al-Faṣīlah*, although Ibn ʿUfayl does not mention this particular book:

Common things that must be known by the members of the virtuous city are: Knowledge of the First cause and His attributes; ... the virtuous city and its people and happiness toward which their soul proceed, and the cities opposed (*muṣāddah*) to it; and that to which their soul will return after death—some to happiness, some to nothingness (, *adam*). (*Al-Madinah al-Faṣīlah*, 121)¹⁴

As for *al-Siyasah al-Madaniyyah*,¹⁵ in my reading of the book, I failed to see anything related to the issue about which Ibn ʿUfayl claims al-Farabi says. One may suspect that he may possibly have mixed up the book titles.

iii) “In the commentary on the Book of *Ethics* [Aristotle’s book], he describes human happiness, then [claims] that it exists only in this life and this world. Right after that he makes a remark that tantamount to that all that is claimed besides this is only drivels and old wives’ tales.” (ı ayy, 14) However, since we do not have at our disposal this commentary Ibn ʿUfayl ascribes to al-Farabi, I will not go into it.

B) In the second part, Ibn ʿUfayl attacks on al-Farabi’s views on certain issues:

i) Regarding al-Farabi’s statement in the commentary on Aristotle’s *Ethics*, he says: “...This makes all people despair of God’s mercy, and it puts the good and the wicked on the same level, since it makes nothingness everybody’s destiny. This is an unspeakable lapse, an incurable fall.” (ı ayy, 14)

Ibn ʿUfayl concentrates on two points against this particular view of al-Farabi: it makes people despair of God’s mercy, which is totally contrary to what the Qur’an preaches; since the Qur’an forbids its believers from despairing of God’s mercy, so he perhaps appeals to the religious fundamentals to refute it. As for the second point, he makes a rational argument against the idea on the ground that it places all people on the same level,

14 *Kitâb Mabâdî Ârâ Ahl al-Madînah al-Fâdîlah*. Ed. A. Nadir Beirut: Maḍba, at Kâthûlîkiyyah, 1959.

15 *Kitâb al-Siyâsah al-Madaniyyah*. Ed. by F. M. Najjâr, Beirut: Maḍba, at Kâthûlîkiyyah, 1964.

regardless of their acts. This could also be of religious significance, because the Qur'an definitely separates the statuses of these groups of people.

ii) Regarding the issue of prophecy, Ibn ʿUfayl rejects al-Farabi's preference of philosophy over revelation and prophecy. This is again, as I see it, based on religious foundations: "... this together with his false belief he stated about prophecy that it belongs to the imaginative faculty as well as his preference of philosophy to prophecy" (; ayy, 14).

At the beginning, my point of departure was the idea that Ibn ʿUfayl looked for in the philosophers' works for views that he could use to substantiate his idea of mystical union and its necessary stages. The reason for searching philosophical views on the issue may well be that he considered himself as someone who had enough theoretical knowledge to differentiate his status from others and thus regarded himself as a philosopher.¹⁶ That is why he reproached the extreme *ʿuḫfīs* on the ground that they revealed what they should have kept as a secret and attributed this behavior to the lack of sophistication and theoretical education.

In an attempt to connect this point with the case of al-Farabi, I suggest that Ibn ʿUfayl first set out to search for what al-Farabi thought about the case about which he was developing an idea (; ayy, 18). Unfortunately, al-Farabi had not written on mysticism or mystical union in the way Ibn ʿUfayl understands it as much as, for example, Ibn Sina did later on. While Ibn ʿUfayl found some usable material in Ibn Sina to quote, he seems to be frustrated when he talks about al-Farabi and his books. So when he gets to the evaluation of al-Farabi, all he has to say is that al-Farabi's works are mostly on logic, and the one on philosophy are stained with doubts and inconsistencies, for which Ibn ʿUfayl's only example is al-Farabi's unclear stand on the issue of immortality of the soul, and the happiness in the hereafter. The third point that was subject to Ibn ʿUfayl's criticism is al-Farabi's preference of philosophy over prophecy.

Although there may be a way to link these issues with the one under his scrutiny, these issues do not have direct relation to his project. The closest relation could be created between al-Farabi's lengthy exposition on the issue of worldly happiness centered in the intellectual and moral activities, and Ibn ʿUfayl's relative emphasis on intellectual training and his short-term joyful experience he achieved through the mystical path. Apart

16 Gutas's approach seems to be more cynical. He suggests that Ibn ʿUfayl distorted the views of the others, especially of Ibn Sina, to use them to support his own case, and more importantly that way he wanted to exploit their reputation and to be remembered in relation to their names, pp. 240-241.

from that, Ibn ʿufayl could not find any direct connection. If we look closely, we can see that Ibn ʿufayl dwells in the introduction primarily on the philosophers' writings regarding the mystical experience. However, in the short passage about al-Farabi, we do not find anything about mystical experience; that is, Ibn ʿufayl does not examine al-Farabi specifically on this issue. Rather, he reprimands him for his inconsistencies on the issue of human happiness and his view of prophecy. Doctrinal differences is involved in these issues and Ibn ʿufayl tries to refute his view by appealing to religious fundamentals. Another issue on which Ibn ʿufayl apparently disagrees with al-Farabi is the latter's view on immortality. He rejects it with a rational argument: it is untenable, because it places the wicked and the good on the same level. For Ibn ʿufayl, this is a big error, because a philosopher of al-Farabi's caliber should have noticed the conclusion of this reasoning. He should have seen where he was going with this view. So it is too big a mistake for al-Farabi to make. That is why, it seems, Ibn ʿufayl employs the words "unspeakable lapse" and "irrecoverable fall" to describe that statement.¹⁷ After Ibn ʿufayl is finished with his criticism of al-Farabi, he leaves it at that and moves on to Ibn Sina, of whom he speaks very highly, and whose Oriental philosophy was the basic framework in Ibn ʿufayl's composition of his book.

IBN SINA:

Ibn ʿufayl's examination of Ibn Sina has more problems and some misunderstanding or even distortion involved.¹⁸ Ibn ʿufayl relates his experience of the divine taste directly with what Ibn Sina says about what appears to be mystical stages culminating in the communion with the divine. This is

17 This is usually viewed as a criticism of being politically incorrect with regard to the status of the philosopher in the city of religious strictness. Mahdi, for instance, suggests that Ibn ʿufayl does not disagree with al-Fârâbî on the ground that he does not say that al-Fârâbî's views are false or that he himself holds another or contrary view ("Philosophical Literature," 98). However, these examples above clarify the ambiguity that Ibn ʿufayl finds al-Fârâbî's view incorrect. His criticism of al-Fârâbî's method in the next passage for its being a huge lapse does not veil the fact that Ibn ʿufayl here finds a rational incoherence in al-Fârâbî's view. It is my impression that Ibn ʿufayl does not necessarily mean to say that al-Fârâbî should have revealed this idea to the public, rather, as another way of reading would suggest, he was calling attention to the graveness of the mistake al-Fârâbî made as a philosopher.

18 In his article on Ibn ʿufayl's treatment of Ibn Sina's Eastern Philosophy, Gutas presents an interesting analysis of what Ibn ʿufayl might have been doing. Gutas claims that Ibn ʿufayl clearly distorts Ibn Sina's passages in order to fit them in, and to support, his own theory (pp. 222-241). For an analysis, referring the reader to that article, I will only point in this section of the paper to the differences and similarities between Ibn ʿufayl's quotes from Ibn Sina and the original texts of those quotes.

the first quote from the master and it is in the Ninth Class of *al-Isharat wa al-Tanbihat*, entitled as “on the Stations of the Knowers” (*maqamat al- ,ârifîn*). Before the passage in question, Ibn Sina expounds his views on the ascetic and intellectual training of a “*zâhid*” and “*,ârif*.” Then he proceeds to the other levels that are exposed in the passage at hand. In fact this passage consists of partial reproduction of five chapters (*faðls* 9-10,12,16,17). Below I shall provide the texts and highlight the parts that Ibn Tufayl skipped in bold face print:¹⁹

[Fasl.9]: “Furthermore, if the will and the spiritual exercise bring the knower to a certain limit, he will encounter pleasurable stolen looks at the light of the Truth, as if these looks are lightening that shines over the knower and then turns away from him. **[These stolen looks are what they call ‘moments’ (awqat). Every moment is surrounded by two ecstasies: an ecstasy for the Truth and an ecstasy over the passing away of the Truth.]** After that, these overwhelming moments multiply if the knower persists in the spiritual exercise.” [Fasl.10]: “He is then absorbed in those overwhelming moments until they overcome him even while not exercising. Thus, whenever he catches a glimpse of a thing, he returns from that thing to the side of sanctity, remembering something of the latter. He is then overcome by a fainting spell. Thus he almost sees the Truth in everything.” (**[Fasl.11] is skipped altogether**) [Fasl.12]: “After that, spiritual exercise carries him to a point at which his moment is converted into tranquility. Thus, that which is stolen becomes familiar, and the lightening becomes a clear flame. He acquires a stable knowledge of the Truth, as if this knowledge is a continuous accompaniment **[in which he delights in the rapture of the Truth. If he turns away from this knowledge, he will do so with loss and regret.]** (;ayy, 6-7, *Isharat*, 86-88)

Until here, Ibn Tufayl considers these as a gradual progress of the seeker and moves to the last stage of this spiritual journey, again in Ibn Sina’s words:

[Fasl.16]: “**[If he crosses from spiritual exercise to attainment of the Truth]**, his innermost thought will become a polished mirror with which he faces the side of the Truth. The lofty pleasures are then poured on him, and he is pleased with himself due to the traces of the Truth that these pleasures involve. To him belongs a glance at the truth and a glance at himself—for he is still reluctant. [Fasl.17]: Following this, he abandons himself. Thus, he notices the side of sanctity only. If he notices his self he does so inasmuch as it notices

19 Translation from Shams Inati’s *Ibn Sinâ and Mysticism, Remarks and Admonitions: Part Four*, London: Kegan Paul International, 1984, 86-87.

the Truth, **[and not inasmuch as it is ornamented with pleasure of having the Truth]**. At this point, the arrival is real. (*Isharat*, 92-94; ۱۰۷۷, 6-7).²⁰

This is the point which Ibn ¼ufayl claims Ibn Bajjah never reached; because, the achievement of union as Ibn Sina describes here cannot be attained by theoretical apprehension. This moment is like regaining sight after blindness for Ibn ¼ufayl.

And finally, Ibn Sina, who commented on Aristotle's philosophy, composed his *Shifa'* in partial accord with Aristotelian thought; but, according to Ibn ¼ufayl's reading of his prologue to the *Shifa'*, Ibn Sina stated that the truth for him is something else. So he urged the reader to read the truth as exposed in his other book on *al-falsafah al-mashriqiyyah*. However, Ibn Sina does not say anything, at least explicitly, to that effect in the passage to which Ibn ¼ufayl refers. The actual passage reads as follows:

I also wrote a book ... in which I presented philosophy as it is in itself and as required by an unbiased attitude which neither takes into account in [this book] the views of colleagues in the discipline, nor takes precaution here against creating schisms among them as is done elsewhere; this is my book on Eastern philosophy. But as for the present book [the *Shifa'*], it is more elaborate and more accommodating to my peripatetic colleagues. Whoever wants the truth [stated] without indirection, he should seek the former book [i.e., the one on *al-falsafah al-mashriqiyyah*]; whoever wants the truth [stated] in a way which is somewhat conciliatory to colleagues, elaborates a lot, and alludes to things which, had they been perceived, there would have been no need for the other book, then he should read the present book [i.e., *al-Shifa'*]."²¹

This statement of Ibn ¼ufayl, as Gutas observes, is a misinterpretation of the passage in Ibn Sina's prologue to the section on *al-Manðiq* in his *al-Shifa'* as it is at our disposal. Given the text above, Gutas seems to be right in accusing Ibn ¼ufayl of distorting what Ibn Sina intends to convey to the reader. Moreover, the passage is fairly clear and hardly open to such interpretation Ibn ¼ufayl made. Despite its clarity, Ibn ¼ufayl interprets, or distorts, the passage as if Ibn Sina said that his exposition of truth in the *Shifa'* represented the peripatetic views, while his work on Eastern philo-

20 *Remarks* (Inati's translation), 87-88.

21 *Al-Shifā', al-Manðiq I: al-Madkhal*, Eds. G. Anawatī, M. al-Khudayrī, F. al-Ahwānī, Cairo, 1952, 10. I took Gutas's translation of the passages in question provided in his article, pp.226-227.

sophy revealed the esoteric truth that he did not dwell on in the former book. In fact, all Ibn Sina says, it is clear, is that these books were written in different styles and methods in an attempt to provide the truth according to people's varying capacities to grasp it. Nowhere in that passage does Ibn Sina speak of any essential differences between the two works.²²

AL-GHAZALI

Ibn ʿUfayl's examination of al-Ghazali can be confusing due, in my opinion, to the latter's special situation, which I will touch upon later on. Ibn ʿUfayl starts by criticizing al-Ghazali's statements for being inconsistent; for example: "he makes things a matter of unbelief, then he makes them permitted" (ʿayy, 15). In the first section, he quotes from al-Ghazali's three works and presents these quotes as if they constituted a case for inconsistency in al-Ghazali's thought. He further tells us that many such cases can be found in his books and explains away this seeming problem with al-Ghazali's preaching to the ordinary people. (ʿayy, 15-16).

In the first section, the focus is on the problem of the denial of bodily resurrection after death:

- I. "Among the examples is his [al-Ghazali's] charging the philosophers with unbelief in *Tahafut al-Falasifah* for their denial of the resurrection of the bodies and their affirmation that reward and punishment are for the souls only." (ʿayy, 15)
- II. "Then he says at the beginning of *Mizan al-ʿAmal*, that this belief is that of the ʿuʿfis." (ʿayy, 15)
- III. "... then in *al-Munqidh min al-ʿalal wa al-Mufaḍḍiʿ bi al-Aʿwāl* he says that his own belief [on this issue] is like the ʿuʿfis' belief. As a matter of fact, he mastered it only after long searching." (ʿayy, 15-16)

With the way Ibn ʿUfayl lines up these quotes, they certainly seem to suggest that al-Ghazali says things that are contrary to each other.²³ I will not here assert that al-Ghazali is always consistent throughout his works. I am full aware of the fact that this is a very hard claim to make about any

22 Since Gutas meticulously analyzed the passages in a comparative fashion, I would refer the reader to his abovementioned article for more elaboration on this problem.

23 In his translation of ʿayy, Goodman's rendering of "thumma" as "but" at the beginning of each passage above makes too much contribution to what Ibn ʿUfayl is doing. Although Ibn ʿUfayl's combination of these quotes seems to be purposive for his project, the quotes are in a certain order, perhaps, corresponding to the stages of al-Ghazali's intellectual quest. So the word "thumma" should be rendered as "then." Even so, Ibn ʿUfayl tries to create a problem from this gathering of the quotes.

author of so many volumes in so many subjects. However, one should observe two points here: firstly, al-Ghazali's special circumstances, by which I mean the stages which he went through when he underwent an intellectual and spiritual crisis during which he composed his books. So a particular idea of his may well be representing a particular intellectual stance he held during a particular phase in this crisis. Ibn ʿUfayl seems to neglect this fact. Secondly, he does not seem to quote the passages in their context, so when he puts together ideas or quotes from the works of different orientation, it may produce a totally different picture of the same author. Nevertheless, when we see the ideas and the quotes in their original context, they do not appear as problematic; or more correctly put, they do not appear problematic any more than they do in al-Ghazali's books of different focuses.

The first book that is mentioned, *Tahâfut*, is devoted exclusively to the refutation of the Muslim philosophers, so al-Ghazali may have left out the ʿûffîs simply for this reason. This issue constitutes the last one of the twenty problems that al-Ghazâlî considered as one of those views leading to unbelief on the part of the *falâsifah*. In his lengthy discussion, he argues against the philosophers' arguments culminating in the denial of bodily resurrection in the hereafter. Al-Ghazali relies on rational arguments and the Qur'anic verses in his argumentation. Since the philosopher's view on this matter clearly amounts to the denial of bodily resurrection, this stands clearly against the Qur'anic teaching expounded in many verses.²⁴

As for the second passage, there is a little background: at the beginning of his *Mizan*, al-Ghazali discusses happiness. By happiness he means that in the next world. This happiness is an endless continuity, painless pleasure, and sorrow-free bliss. And once we believe its existence, there will be no urge to obtain it, because the urge must come naturally (*Mizan*, 180).²⁵ On his view, happiness, which is everybody's desire, can be attained only through knowledge (*ilm*) and practice (*amal*); both are needed for the comprehensiveness of happiness (*Mizan*, 179).²⁶ Al-Ghazali classifies people in four groups with respect to their attitude toward happiness in the hereafter. According to this classification, in the first group, there is the majority of Muslims, who believed in *ʿashr-nashr* (the Day of Resurrecti-

24 *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah*, 212, (Marmura ed.).

25 Al-Ghazali, *Mizân al-Amal*. Ed. by Sulaymân Dunyâ, Cairo, 1964.

26 According to him, lack of interest in happiness or slackening in pursuit of happiness is nothing but foolishness. Disinterest in it is due to weakness in the belief in the Last Day. However, slackening in the belief in the next world, even if it is stupidity, does not entail slackening in the pursuit of happiness at all (pp.181-182).

on), paradise and hell, and so on—all things mentioned in the Qur'an regarding the next world. In the second group, al-Ghazali places some Muslim philosophers who recognize this kind of pleasure (*ladhdhah*) but see it as an intellectual pleasure rather than something related to the heart. As for the third group, here we have people who totally deny the sensory pleasure. This line of thinking is ascribed by al-Ghazali to the *ʿuḫfī* masters and some theist philosophers. According to him, they claim that

death destroys the soul's relation with the body, which is its instrument for imagination, and the rest of the sensations. Moreover, the soul never resumes governing the body after the soul discards it. So there remain only sorrows and pleasures, and they are nothing sensational, but are greater than sensation (p.183) ... This is the way the *ʿuḫfīs* and theist philosophers went. (*Mizan*, 185)

What is immediately understood from this passage is that al-Ghazali does not attribute the idea of the denial of bodily resurrection to the *ʿuḫfīs* in exclusion of the philosophers. In fact, as it is evident from the text, he mentions both the philosophers and the *ʿuḫfīs* with respect to that particular idea, excluding only *some* of the philosophers. Hence it is not so easy to conclude that al-Ghazali ascribes the idea to the philosophers in one place and to the *ʿuḫfīs* in another. However, one may notice the nuance in the severity of his attitude toward the *ʿuḫfīs* and the philosophers on the same issue. While he repudiates vehemently the propositions of the philosophers and makes those propositions into religious issues to be argued against, he does not treat the Sufis as harshly.

In the third passage, taken from *al-Munqidh min al-ʿalal*, al-Ghazali expresses his final station. After the examination of *kalam*, philosophy, and the teaching of “authoritative instruction” (*al-taʿlimiyyah*), al-Ghazali explains what the *ʿuḫfī* method is all about, the method that he finds the best of all:

When I had finished with these sciences, I next turned with set purpose to the method of mysticism (or Sufism). I knew that the complete mystic ‘way’ includes both intellectual belief and practical activity; the latter consists in getting rid of obstacles in the self and in stripping off its base characteristics and vicious morals, so that the heart may attain to freedom from what is not God and to constant recollection of Him. The intellectual belief was easier to me than the practical activity. I began to acquaint myself with their belief by reading their books ... I thus comprehended their fundamental teachings on the intellectual side, and progressed, as far as is possible by study and oral instruction, in the knowledge of mysticism. It became clear to me, however, that what is most distinctive of mysticism is something which cannot be apprehended by study, but only by immediate experience (*dhawq*—literally ‘tasting’), by ecstasy and by a moral change... I apprehended clearly that the mystics were men who had real experiences, not men of words, and that I had already progressed as far as

was possible by way of intellectual apprehension. What remained for me was not to be attained by oral instruction and study but only by immediate experience and by walking in the mystic way.

(*Faith and Philosophy of al-Ghazali (Munqidh)*, pp.54-55)

Thus becoming finally satisfied with the Sufi way, he seems to have stopped his intellectual quest and came to a rest. He even expresses the superiority of the Sufi method to the others he examined and experienced before. However, it is evident in the book that he does not confirm every idea and condone every behavior of the ²ûfî *shaykhs*. For instance, he clearly rejects any kind of union with God that the ²ûfî masters would utter, and finds them all erroneous:

The mystics in their waking state now behold angels and the spirit of the prophets ... later, a higher state is reached; instead of beholding forms and figures, they come to stages in the 'way' which it is hard to describe in language; if a man attempts to express these, his words inevitably contain what is clearly erroneous.

In general what they manage to achieve is nearness to God; some, however, would conceive of this as 'inherence' (*Ûulul*), some as 'union' (*ittiÛâd*), and some as 'connection' (*wuðâl*). All that is erroneous." (*Faith and Practice*, p. 61)²⁷

The bottom line is that this certainly does not mean in this particular case that al-Ghazali adopts an idea that he rejects in other books, even though he is certainly a self-claimed ²ûfî. It would be interesting to think of the possibility that Ibn ¼ufayl may have thought that once you become a ²ûfî you would have to adopt every idea and practice you find in the ²ûfî thought. It is equally interesting to see Ibn ¼ufayl think that al-Ghazali eventually became aware of the mistakes he had made; so the Andalusian philosopher interprets one of the passages at the end of the *Mizan* as an apology for those mistakes, even though the passage has nothing to do, at least explicitly, with the passages Ibn ¼ufayl brought together in the bunch given above. It is a nice collection of quotes from different works accompanied by an apology related to the mistake Ibn ¼ufayl creates out of this combination:

- IV. He offers some apology for this practice at the end of *Mizan al- ,Amal*, where he explains that a view/idea (*ra'y*) has three categories: a view that the majority shares; a view that is addressed to the questioner and the seeker of guidance; and a view that a person keeps to himself and divulges only to people who share his belief. (; ayy, 16)

27 The same criticism can be found in his *al-Maqðad al-Asnâ*, 163 f.

What Ibn ʿUfayl refers to here is a section on the nature of *madhhab* in the *Mizan* of al-Ghazali. There al-Ghazali sets about explaining what *madhhab* (which Ibn ʿUfayl replaces with the word “*raʾy*”) is all about. The explanation comes in the form of an answer to a question regarding his statements in the book, which are considered by an implied questioner as complying with the *madhhab* of the *ʿuḫfīs* and that of the *Ashʿarites*. If both *madhhabs* are correct, then how so? If not, which one is true? So what is the truth of this *madhhab*, on which there is no agreement (*Mizan*, 405)? People fall in two categories, according to al-Ghazali, with respect to what *madhhab* is. Here we are primarily concerned with the first group as it is the one to which Ibn ʿUfayl refers. According to this group, *madhhab* is a synonymous term for three ranks of thought: a) that to which people cling in competitions and discussions; b) that which makes people content in their instructions and guidance; c) that which a person believes of theoretical knowledge that is revealed to him. So there are three *madhhabs* in this respect: 1) the way of ancestors and forefathers, the *madhhab* of the teacher or that of the people of a region; 2) whatever holds suitable for the seeker in guidance and instruction, which does not appear in one form but varies according to the seeker’s capacity to understand; and 3) whatever a person believes as a secret between himself and God, a secret that nobody but God can know. That person would not share this knowledge/insight except with the one of the same level of apprehension as his; or he would reveal it only to him who achieved a level to grasp it.

One would think that Ibn ʿUfayl makes here a connection between this last kind of *madhhab* and the idea of the mystical experience to be kept as a secret. Moving from this assumption, I think that what by all this Ibn ʿUfayl means is that al-Ghazali kept his secret to himself, being in the third class, and divulging it only to those who are experienced. I also think that Ibn ʿUfayl refers to al-Ghazali’s success to keep his experience as a secret when he mentions it at the beginning of the book. So it would mean that since al-Ghazali talked only in symbols and allegories, the reader may become baffled. In other words, this is the nature of his teaching and most of it are symbols and allegories, from which nobody could benefit except those who mastered it with the perception of the soul (*baḍīrat nafsihi*) first and get instructions next, or someone who is prepared to understand it, and has an excellent nature (؛ayy, 16). So he tries here to explain that even if the reader did not know what he is saying, this would help him search the truth through inquiry and apprehension.

- V. After that, he says that if there is nothing in these words except that which makes you doubt your inherited beliefs, [even] this would suffice you as a

benefit. For he who does not doubt does not look; and he who does not look does not inquire; and he who does not inquire remains in blindness and error. (ıayy, 16)

This passage, as Ibn ¼ufayl says, is at the very end of *Mizan al- , Amal*. After his very lengthy expositions on mystical issues, al-Ghazali tries to convince the reader that the subject is very confusing, and if the reader is really puzzled, that is only normal and he should tried to see the good part in his puzzlement:

“If there is nothing in the discourse of this ideas except that which makes you doubt your inherited beliefs, so you might devote [yourself] to search, and [even] this would suffice you as a benefit; since doubts leads you to reach the truth. For he who does not doubt does not look; and he who does not look does not inquire; and he who does not inquire remains in blindness and error, from which we seek refuge to God” (*Mizan*, 409).

- VI. “In *Jawahir al-Qur’an* [al-Ghazali] mentioned that he had certain books that are not to be shared [with others] (*mañnun bihi*) in which he included the clear truth. So far as I know no such thing has reached al-Andalus; however some claim that some books that have reached us are indeed those books. This is not true. The books in question are *Kitab al-Ma , arif al- , Aqliyyah*, *Kitab al-Nafkh wa al-Taswiyah*, and the compiled issues other than these two. Even if these books contain pointers, they do not have but little for the discovering what is propagated in his well known works; [even] in *al-Maqðad al-Asna* can be found things more abstruse than in those [books], and he himself expresses that *al-Maqðad al-Asna* is not one of those [whose content is] not to be shared. Hence it becomes clear that these books that have arrived are not among [the kind of books] withheld [from others].” (ıayy, 17)

In the *Jawahir*, al-Ghazali expounds his views in the form of answers to questions asked by an impersonal inquirer. Al-Ghazali’s only passage closest in meaning to the one Ibn Tufayl quotes is as follows:

...Some of the principle of these four types of knowledge (I mean the knowledge of divine essence, of attributes, of [divine] actions (*af , ad*), and of *ma , ad*) and their confluence, which are that measure of knowledge with which we have been provided despite [our] short life, many preoccupations and calamities and few helpers and companions, we set forth in some of [our] works but did not disclose. [The reason for not disclosing it is that] most people’s understanding would be wearied by it, and the weak, who are most traditional in knowledge, would be harmed by it. Indeed, its disclosure is only beneficial to him who has brought his knowledge of outward acts to perfection, and has followed the path of God removing evil qualities from the carnal soul and [undergoing] the met-

hods of mortification, with the result that his carnal soul has become trained and is in good condition on the straight path so that he has no longer any pleasure in the [blameworthy aspect of the] world, he is provided with illuminating prudence, critical standing, it is unlawful for those into whose hands that book falls, to disclose it except to one who combines [in oneself all] these qualities. (*Jawahir*, 25)²⁸

It is unfortunate that al-Ghazali did not mention by title the books referred to in the passage. However, as Ibn ʿUfayl declares, one of the books entitled *Kitab al-Nafkh*²⁹ does not contain anything that Ibn ʿUfayl would regard as secret knowledge to be kept from public. This book is composed of questions and answers, and, as Ibn ʿUfayl says, may only have pointers to what he would expect to see.

As for the book *al-Maqḍad al-Asna*,³⁰ Ibn Tufayl rightly observes that this book has more material on mystical subjects such as *mushahadah*, *mukashafah*, etc.³¹ It clearly employs a predominantly ʿuḥfi terminology such as purifying the soul, getting closer to God, together with focusing on the *ma, rifah* throughout the book, and resorting to ʿuḥfi utterances in expositions. In his explanation of the term *al-Fattaḥ*, a name of God, he says that “sometimes He removes the veil from the hearts of the *awliyaʾ* (saints) and opens to them the doors to the Kingdom of His Heavens and the beauty of His Majesty.” (*Maqḍad*, 91) We find more explicit statements in the exposition of the meaning of the term *al-ḥaqq*, for example, since it is the God’s name that the ʿuḥfis employ³² in their mystical utterances when they are overcome by ecstatic states gazing at beholding the True Essence (*al-Maqḍad*, 139). He warns in the section called “*tanbih*” that the utterance “I am the Truth” is a mistake unless it is interpreted in one of two ways: it should be

28 Al-Ghazali, *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān*, Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīdah, 1977. Translation of the passage is taken from M. Abul Quasem, *The Jewels of the Qurʾān, al-Ghazālī’s Theory*, London: Kegan Paul, 1983, 44.

29 This treatise is published as a separate book by A.H. al-Saqā under the same title; however, first half the same text is also published in a book (containing collected treatises) called *al-Quḍūr al-ʿAwālī min Rasāʾil al-Ghazālī*, v.2. Ed. M. Abū al-ʿAllā, Cairo: M. al-Jundī, 1970, with the title of “*al-Ajwibah al-Ghazālīyyah fī al-Masāʾil al-Ukhrawīyyah*,” which is also entitled as “*al-Maḥnūn al-ʿaghīr*” as opposed to another treatise called “*al-Maḥnūn, alā Ghayri Ahlihi*” published in the same book (i.e., *al-Quḍūr*). The minor *Madnūn* seems to be later product perhaps by a disciple, and it does not make sense to entitle it as such due to the nature of its content, which contains answers to questions asked by probably students.

30 *Al-Maqḍad al-Asnā fī Sharḥ Ma, ānī Asmāʾ Allāh al-ḥusnā*. Ed. F. Shehadi, Beirut, 1971.

31 Ibn ʿUfayl reasons that by the testimony of the author, *al-Maqḍad* is not one of those books containing secret knowledge, and since it has more abstruse statements that his books that reached us, then those books cannot be the ones that al-Ghazali is talking about in the *Jawāhir*.

32 As opposed to the *Mutakallims* who tend to use the name *al-Bārī* (the Creator).

interpreted either a) “he is by virtue of the Truth (*bi al-Ḥaqq*),” which is a remote rendering, or b) “he was submersed in the Truth so much so that there was no room for anything else.” Al-Ghazali further elaborates his opinions on the ³³ ideas of “*intiḡal*,” “*ittiḤād*,” and “*Ḥulul*,” which he approaches cautiously.

- VII. One of the later scholars presumed from his words occurring at the end of *Kitab al-Mishkat* something big enough to make him fall into an inescapable abyss. It is his statement, after the discussion of the classes that are veiled by light and his moving to speak of “*al-waḡilun*” (those who reached the Divine), that they perceive that this Being is characterized by an attribute that negates the Pure Oneness. [This man] intended to infer from this that al-Ghazali believed that the True First, Glory to Him, has certain plurality in His essence, — He is high above all that the wrongdoers say, Exalted and Great. I have no doubt that master al-Ghazali was among those who attained this ultimate happiness and reached this sublime points. However, his books that are *mañnûn* covering *ilm al-mukashafah* have not reached us. (ı ayy, 18)

The person whom Ibn ¼ufayl accuses of ascribing to al-Ghazali such a belief is not known to me, but the original context of the statements regarding the alleged plurality in the Divine essence is as follows: in the third chapter of the *Mishkat* al-Ghazali explains the meaning of a *Ḥadith* that reads: “*Allah has seventy veils of light and darkness. If He were to open them up, then the splendors of His Face (wajh) would certainly consume all who apprehend Him with their sight.*” According to al-Ghazali, veils should be understood in relation to those who are veiled, and they fall into three categories: a) those veiled by pure darkness; b) those veiled by light combined with darkness; and c) those veiled by pure light. Al-Ghazali next explains each category by specifying the intellectual and moral standings whose adherents are placed in it and by giving examples from among people.

After the exposition of the three classes of the third category consisting of those veiled by pure light, he speaks of a fourth class which he calls “*al-waḡilun*” (those who achieved or attained). Before we go further, we should mention the beliefs or views of the third class in order to understand the term *al-Muḡā*, that comes up in the case of the “*al-waḡilun*”: according to the third class, al-Ghazali describes, setting the bodies (*al-aḡsam* = probably the heavenly bodies) in motion in a direct manner requires that there be service, worship, and obedience to God conducted by an angel. The relation of this angel to the pure divine lights is the same as the rela-

33 See *al-Maqḡad*, 163 ff.

tion of the moon to the sensible lights. So the members of this class assert that the Lord (*rabb*) is the “Obeyed One” (*al-Muôâ,*) with respect to this mover. And the Lord thus becomes the Mover of everything by way of command (*amr*) not by way of direct relation (*Mishkat*, 91).

Now going back to ‘*al-waôilun*,’ we learn from al-Ghazali that it becomes clear to this class that this “*al-Muôâ,*” is characterized by an attribute that negates the absolute oneness and utter perfection of God due to a mystery whose disclosure, al-Ghazali says, is not in the capacity of the book he is composing. They further claim that the status of the “Obeyed One” is like the status of the sun among lights. Hence they turned away from Him who moves the heavens and the bodies, and commands their motion, to Him who creates the heavens, the bodies, and the one that commands (*al-amir*) their motion. They thus reach the Existent that transcends all that human perception comprehends. At this stage, the “splendors of the *First and the Highest Face*” of God consume all that is apprehended by the sights and insights of the spectators. Now they find Him Holy and Transcendent of all. According to al-Ghazali, this class also divides up into subgroups. In the case of the first group, although all that their sights apprehend gets consumed and annihilated, they remain beholding the Beauty and Holiness. Another group of people can go further, and they are the elite of the elite (*khawaôô al-khawaôô*). The splendors of God’s Face consume them and the Glory covers them, then they get consumed, annihilated and obliterated in their selves. Nothing remains except the True One. That way they experience the meaning of the verse “Everything perishes save His Face”³⁴ with an immediate experience, taste in an ecstatic state. Here al-Ghazali refers the reader back to the first chapter of the book in which he explained how they achieve that union and now just they think or assume that they achieve it.

About this last quote, Ibn ¼ufayl seems confused a little. He left without a comment the accusation of believing in the plurality in God’s essence as perceived by the Sufis; yet he feels obliged to reveal that al-Ghazali reached the sublime state. It also appears that Ibn ¼ufayl explains away all the confusing statements by and about al-Ghazali with the idea that preaching common people and writing in allegory caused him to fall into inconsistencies. Using as a pretext the fact that al-Ghazali’s books characterized as “*maônun*” did not reach him, Ibn ¼ufayl is willing to ascribe any possible explanation to all the confusions to those books. This psychological state of Ibn Tufayl could be seen as defensive move on behalf of al-Ghaza-

34 Qur’ân Rahmân 55/26-27.

li, who, after all, can be a prototype for Ibn ¼ufayl's ideal Sufi (as far as his understanding of al-Ghazali's books goes.).

C. Concluding Remarks

In a general evaluation of the Introduction, one may conclude that Ibn ¼ufayl basically makes use of the views of every philosopher he examines by assessing their usability and mystical value for his own idea under development. His criticism and praise of the philosophers almost conspicuously depend on whether or not those views correspond to his perspective. In the case of Ibn Bajjah, for example, Ibn ¼ufayl would have accepted his ideas entirely if only he had completed his project and gone further in his idea of conjunction with the divine. Nevertheless Ibn Bajjah's ideas would serve as an initial step to Ibn ¼ufayl's mystical project, which he delineates in the story of ; ayy b. Yaqýân. In consequence, this makes the latter praise and criticize the former accordingly. As for al-Fârâbî, Ibn ¼ufayl show his disappointment with him since the former was not of any use to the latter in his construction of a new idea. Consequently, emphasizing the ambiguous position of al-Farabi on the problem of immortality, Ibn ¼ufayl directs his severe criticisms toward him. However, Ibn ¼ufayl finds in Ibn Sina, unlike al-Farabi, probably a description most articulate of the steps toward the ecstatic moment of the ° ûfi. Unfortunately, perhaps too much expectations of his from Ibn Sînâ or his reading too much into the passage by Ibn Sînâ regarding those steps led him to misread the master's statement, a judgment that is certainly based on the assumption that he did not do it on purpose. Furthermore, Ibn ¼ufayl admires al-Ghazali's being able to keep his unspeakable experience as a secret to himself, because the ideal Sufi of the former certainly has the same characteristic acquired through theoretical knowledge. Other than that, he is very critical of him for his supposedly inconsistent writings, although he later tries to justify the mistakes which he thinks al-Ghazali made. In the end, in some ways al-Ghazali stands as a practical exemplary for Ibn ¼ufayl's portrait of the ° ûfi.

In brief, in his attempt to prove the feasibility of the mystical union explained in philosophical terms, Ibn ¼ufayl finds in Ibn Bajjah the initial aspect of his project, since he failed to complete his journey. Ibn Sina provided the philosophical connection and the rhetoric for this new philosophico-mystical system, while al-Ghazali supplied the practical example as a practicing Sufi who reached the ultimate stage. And finally, having found in al-Farabi nothing worthy of mention in his new scheme, Ibn ¼ufayl just made use of his errors to show what not to do.