

had already sung of the light emanating through Adam via Muḥammad into the family of ʿAlī [see *SHĪʿA*]. The doctrine of light was dialectically expounded by Sahl al-Tustarī (d. 283/896) (see also Massignon, *Textes inédites*, 39, and SAHL AL-TUSTARĪ).

The first representatives of a metaphysics of light in Islam readily fell under the suspicion of Manichaeism, i.e. of the dualism of *nūr* and *ẓulma* (darkness) as the eternal principles. The tradition of al-Tirmidhī that God created in darkness [see *KHALK*] must have aroused misgivings. The physician al-Rāzī (d. 311/923), although a Hellenistic philosopher, adopted ideas from Persia and was for this refuted or cursed by various theologians and philosophers. Many mystics also (e.g. al-Hallāj; according to Massignon, *Passion*, 150-1, wrongly) were accused of this dualism.

But the speculations about *nūr* found powerful support from the 3rd/9th century in the monistic doctrine of light of the Neo-Platonists (we do not know of any Persian monism of light) which was compatible with the monism of Islam. The father of this doctrine is Plato, who in his *Politeia*, 506 D ff., compares the idea of the good in the supersensual world with Helios as the light of the physical world. The contrast is not therefore between light and darkness but between the world of ideas or mind and its copy, the physical world of bodies, in the upper world pure light, in the lower world light more or less mixed with darkness. Among the Neo-Platonists, the idea of the good = the highest God = pure light. This identification was also facilitated by the fact that, according to Aristotle's conception, light is nothing corporeal (*De anima*, ii, 7, 418b: [φῶς]... οὕτε πῦρ οὐθ' ἔλως σώμα οὐδ' ἀπορορῇ σώματος). From the context, which is however not all clear, it appears that Aristotle regarded light as an effective force (*ἐνέργεια*). This is however of no importance here. Many Aristotelian forces and Platonic ideas are described by Neo-Pythagoreans and Neo-Platonists sometimes as forces and sometimes as substances (spiritual). With Aristotle, *σκότος* (darkness) was conceived not as something positive but as *στέρησις* (*privatio*, the absence of light).

From this developed the doctrine which we find in the Arabic *Theology of Aristotle*. Not far from the beginning (ed. Dieterici, 3) it is said: the power of light (*kuwwa nūriyya*) is communicated by the prime cause, the creator, to the ʿakl and by the ʿakl to the world soul, then from the ʿakl through the world soul to nature and from the world soul through nature to the things which originate and decay. The whole process of this creative development proceeds without movement and timelessly. But God who causes the force of light to pour forth is also light (*nūr*; occasional synonyms: *ḥusn*, *bahāʾ*), the "prime light" (51) or (44) the "light of lights". Light (51) is essentially in God, not a quality (*ṣifa*), for God has no qualities but works through His being (*ḥuwiyya*) alone. The light flows through the whole world, particularly the world of men. From the supersensual original (150), the first man (*insān ʿaklī*), it flows over the second man (*insān nafsānī*) and from him to the third (*insān ʿajismānī*). These are the originals of the so-called real men. Light is, of course, found in its purest form in the souls of the wise and the good (51). It should be noted also that *nūr* as a spiritual force (*rūḥānī*, ʿaklī) is distinguished from fire (*nār*) which is said to be only a force in matter with definite quality (85). Fire, of course, like everything else, has its supersensual original. But this is more connected with life than with light.

The elevation of the soul to the divine world of light corresponds to the creative descent of light (8). When the soul has passed on its return beyond the world of

the ʿakl, it sees there the pure light and the beauty of God, the goal of all mystics.

Although the author of the *Liber de causis* is of the opinion that nothing can be predicated regarding God, yet he has to call Him the prime cause and more exactly pure light (§ 5, ed. Bardenhewer, 69) and as such the origin of all being and all knowledge (in God is *wuḍūd* = *maʿrifā*; see § 23, p. 103).

The light emanated by God may, if it is regarded as an independent entity, be placed at various parts of the system. Most philosophers and theologians connect it with the *rūḥ* or ʿakl or identify it with them, sometimes also with life (*hayāt*), but this must be more closely investigated.

The great philosophers in Islam, al-Fārābī and Ibn Sīnā, connected the doctrine of light with the ʿakl in metaphysics as well as in psychology. Al-Fārābī is fond of using many synonyms for the light of God and the ʿakl (*bahāʾ*, etc.; see e.g. *Der Musterstaat*, ed. Dieterici, 13 ff.). In the biography of al-Fārābī in Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa (*ʿUyūn*, ed. Müller, ii, 134-40), a prayer is attributed to him in which God is invoked as the "prime cause of things and light of the earth and of heaven". Like al-Fārābī, Ibn Sīnā takes up the doctrine of light in theology and further develops it. In his psychological writings he regards the light as a link of the soul and body (cf. Sahl al-Tustarī, who places *nūr* between *rūḥ* and *ʿaql* in the four elements of man). In the *Kitāb al-Ishārāt* (ed. Forget, Leiden 1892, 126-7) he even reads the whole metaphysical doctrine of the ʿakl of the Aristotelians into the light verse of the *Kurʾān*. Light is the ʿakl *bi ʿl-fiʿl*, fire the ʿakl *faʿʿāl* and so on. God's *nūr* is therefore like the *nous* of Aristotle! This discovery of Ibn Sīnā's was incorporated in the pious reflections of al-Ghazālī (in *Maʿāridī al-Kuds fī madārīdī maʿrifat al-nafs*, Cairo 1927, 58-9).

On the idea of light amongst the Ṣūfīs, see TAṢAWWUF.

*Bibliography*: Ch. Clermont-Ganneau, *La lampe et l'olivier dans le Coran*, in *RHR*, lxxxi (1920), 213-59; W. H. T. Gairdner, *al-Ghazālī's Mishkāt al-Anwār and the Ghazālī problem*, in *Isl.*, v (1914), 121-53; idem, *al-Ghazālī's Mishkāt al-Anwār*, tr. with introduction, London 1924. See also ʿAKL, AL-INSĀN AL-KĀMIL, ISMĀʿĪLIYYA, ISHRĀKIYYŪN, AL-SUHWĀWARDĪ (AL-MAKTŪL). (TJ. DE BOER)

**NŪR ALLĀH** AL-SAYYID B. AL-SAYYID SHARĪF AL-MARʾASHĪ AL-HUSAYNĪ AL-ṢHUSHTARĪ, commonly called Kāḍī Nūr Allāh, was born in 956/1549. He was descended from an illustrious family of the Marʾashī Sayyids [q.v.] and settled in Shushtar. He left his native place for India and settled in Lahore where he attracted the notice of Ḥakīm Abu ʿl-Faṭḥ (d. 997/1588) and through his presentation to Emperor Akbar (963-1014/1556-1605), he was appointed *kāḍī* of Lahore in lieu of al-Shaykh Muʿin (d. 995/1586). ʿAbd al-Kādir Badāʾunī, iii, 137, says that he was, "although a Shīʿī, a just, pious and learned man." He was flogged to death in 1019/1610, on account of his religious opinions, by the order of the Emperor Djahāngīr (1014-37/1605-28). He is regarded as *al-Shahīd al-Thālith*, "the third martyr", by the Shīʿīs and his tomb in Akbarābād is visited by numerous Shīʿīs from all parts of India.

He is the author of innumerable works, of which the following may be quoted: 1. *Hāshiyā ʿalā ʿl-Bayḍāwī*, a supercommentary to al-Bayḍāwī's commentary on the *Kurʾān* entitled *Anwār al-tanzīl*: see Asiatic Society of Bengal mss., List of the Government Collection, 16; 2. *Hāshiyā Sharḥ ḥadīd ʿalā ʿl-Taḥṣīd*, glosses to Kūshdjī's commentary on Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī's compendium of metaphysics and

theology, entitled *Taḍrīd al-kalām*: see Loth, Ind. Off., no. 471, xv; 3. *Ihkāk al-haḥk wa-izhāk al-bātil*, a polemical work against Sunnism written in reply to Faḍl b. Rūzbahān's work entitled *Ibāl al-bātil*, a treatise in refutation of the *Kashf al-haḥk wa-naḥḍ al-sidk* by Ḥasan b. Yūsuf b. 'Alī al-Hillī; see Bankipore Library, *Khudā Bakhsh* cat., xiv, 172; Farangī Maḥall Library, Lucknow, fol. 108; Rāmpūr Library, 281; Asiatic Society of Bengal (List of Arabic mss., 23); 4. *Maḍjālīs al-mu'minīn*, biographies of famous Shī'īs from the beginning of Islām to the rise of the Ṣafawī dynasty in Persian: see Bankipore Library cat., 766; Asiatic Society of Bengal cat., 59; Ethé, Ind. Off., no. 704, and Rieu, *Cat. of Persian mss. in the Brit. Mus.*, 337a. Printed at Tehran 1268.

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(M. HIDAYET HOSAIN)

**NÜR BĀNŪ WĀLIDE SULTĀN** (ca. 932-91/ca. 1525-83), **KHAṢṢEKĪ** (principal consort) of the Ottoman sultan Selīm II [q.v.] and mother of the sultan Murād III [q.v.]. She was born on Paros [see PARA] as Cecilia, illegitimate daughter of Nicolo Venier (d. 1520), the penultimate sovereign ruler of the island and of Violante Baffo. The identity of this "Venetian Sultana" is often confused with that of her successor, the *Wālide Sultān* Šāfiye [q.v.]. Some Turkish historians persist in ascribing a Jewish origin to her. At the time of the conquest of the island in 1537, she was selected for deportation to the harem of the Sultan's palace and presented to Prince Selīm (II). Henceforward she is known as Nūr Bānū. In 953/1546 she gave birth to her eldest son, Murād. While at Maghnisa [q.v.] her daughters **Shāh Sultān** (951-88/1544-80), **Djewish(-i Mülük) Khān** (? 951-86/1544-78), **Ismikhān** (**Esmākhān**) Sultān (952-93/1545-85) and **Fāṭima Sultān** (d. 988/1580) were born. Whether she was the mother of Selīm II's other six sons is not evident.

At the death of Selīm II (28 **Shābān** 982/13 December 1574), it was she who ordered the corpse of the monarch to be put on ice to postpone burial till the time when her son arrived to succeed to the throne ten days later.

During the reign of Selīm II, her influence mainly affected official appointments by introducing the sale of offices. The imperial harem gradually extended its influence in this way to affairs outside the palace. During the reign of her son, Nūr Bānū was able to establish what is called the "Women's Sultanate" (*kadīnlar salṭanati*). Apart from her daughters, the leading members of her clique were the princess Mihr-i Māh (d. 985/1578 [q.v.]), the *kedbānū* ("Mistress of the Female Household") from 991 till 1003/1595, **Djānfedā Khātūn** and **Rāḍiye Khātūn** (*Kāfā*) (d. 1005/26 June 1597), a lady companion since Maghnisa days. (cf. Selānikī, *Ta'rikh*, ed. İpşirli, 695). The Jewish *Kira* Esther Handali (d. ca. 1590) also played a role in external contacts, e.g. with the financier Joseph Nasi, duke of Naxos (1514-69) [see **NAKŞE**]. The *bābūsse'adet aghası* **Ghazanfer Agha** (d. 1603) and the leading *müşāhib* **Shemsi Ahmed Pasha** (d. 988/1580-1) belonged to Nūr Bānū's faction.

During her son's reign, one of her main preoccupations was the rivalry with Šāfiye, first *khaṣṣeki* of

Murād III whom Nūr Bānū was able to relegate to the Old Saray at the time of his accession.

In her day already, Nūr Bānū was compared to the queen (mother) of France, Catherine de Médicis (1519-89). The two exchanged letters in 1581 and 1582. The presents from the French "*Wālide Sultān*" to her Ottoman opposite number arrived too late in April 1584 and were redirected to Šāfiye Sultān by Esther *Kira* instead! Some letters of Nūr Bānū and her *Kira* to the Doge and Senate as well as to the *bailo*, Giovanni Correr (in Istanbul 1578-80), apart from the many presents and tokens of respect received, are evidence of the sultana's lasting favourable interest in the affairs of Venice.

Her regular income came from the so called *bashmaklık* ('slipper money') and *wakf* endowments [see **WĀLIDE SULTĀN**].

Nūr Bānū possessed her own palace near Edirne Kapı, where in 1580 her son retired during a serious attack of epilepsy (Charrière, iii, 922 and n. 1). The *'Atik Wālide* (*Eski Valide*) mosque complex at Üsküdar-Toptaşhı was built on her orders. Construction lasted from 978/1570 to 991/1583 (designed by Sinān [q.v.]). Two small mosques were built in her name elsewhere in Istanbul.

After an illness, she died in her garden palace near Edirne Kapı (according to Selānikī, *Ta'rikh*, ed. İpşirli, 141: Yeñi Kapı) on Wednesday, 22 **Dhu 'l-Kāda** 991/7 December 1583. Her son put on mourning dress (the first time ever reported of an Ottoman sultan on such an occasion). He carried her out of the palace gate and accompanied the coffin as far as the mosque of Fātiḥ, where the funeral *ṣalāt* was performed. Nūr Bānū is buried in the mausoleum of Selīm II at the Aya Sofya.

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**NÜR DJAHĀN**, name given to Mihr al-Nisā<sup>2</sup>, the famous queen of Djahāngīr, the Mughal Emperor. She was born at Kāndahār in 985/1577 when her father, **Ghiyāth Beg**, was migrating from Persia to Hindustān (*Ma'āthir al-umarā<sup>2</sup>*, i, 129). In the reign of Akbar she was married to 'Alī Kulī Beg, a Persian who had rendered distinguished military service to the Emperor and who, because of his bravery, was known as **Shīr Afgan**. The assassination of her first husband will always remain a matter of con-