A Revival of Iranian Tradition: Art and Philosophy on the Wings of Imagination

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Theories of art developed by philosophers of the Islamic era were in large measure unknown when I began my work. This was especially true of philosophers like al-Fārābī, who was unknown as a philosopher of art even in the context in which he is located, Persia. This has changed today. My own work, I hope, has contributed to that change. In this essay, I'll focus on my journey through art and philosophy and relate it to my theoretical work.

Key words: al-Fārābī; Ibn Sina; imagination; philosophy of art; Slavoj Žižek; medieval philosophy

> In the beginning was art, and art was with philosophy, and art was philosophy.

In the eighth to eleventh centuries when philosophy wasn't having a good time in Europe, it was thriving in territories under the rule of Muslims. Philosophers like Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb Al-Kindi, Abū Nasr al-Fārābī, and al-Ḥusayn ibn-ʿAbdallāh Avicenna were creatively experimenting with ideas of Greek philosophers to arrive at original ideas. The outcome of these experiments was partly discovered by forerunners of the European enlightenment and played a role in shaping early modern philosophy. The outcome of these experiments was a rational approach. Their rationalist tone was best transferred to Europe through Averroes, and it influenced philosophical contemplations of various figures from Aquinas to Descartes and Spinoza. But rationalism is not the only souvenir that philosophers of the Islamic era could have had for contemporary philosophy. When I started analyzing al-Fārābī's original texts, I realized that many aspects needed to be dusted off and presented, not to showcase their past potential, but to contribute to a present need. I am thinking here especially of issues related to philosophy of art. The theories developed by philosophers of the Islamic era were in large measure unknown when I began my work. This was especially true of philosophers like al-Fārābī, who was unknown as a philosopher of art even in the context in which he is located, Persia.

I never intended to become an expert in the field of philosophy of art. It just happened, the way my other life choices happened. In this essay, I'll focus not only on my journey through art and philosophy but also on how in that journey I came to dialogue with some remarkable philosophers and thinkers of our times.

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1 In the Beginning Was Art!

I was in love with both math and poetry in my childhood. But I chose to study mathematics at high school. My idea at the time was that I couldn't study math all by myself, contrary to poetry and literature. As a teenager, I became one of NODET's[1] select students in the second year of its foundation, 1977. In 1982, I was enrolled at Sharif University of Technology in my birthplace Tehran and started studying applied physics. In those days, I used to audit philosophy lessons at University of Tehran as a hobby. When I was 19, I fell in love with Iranian artist Hossein Nuri a playwright and a painter on a perfect day in Fall. It was so that philosophy met up with art in my life, as well as in my mind!

I first saw Nuri as he was invited to hold a lecture about the art of writing and producing plays at my university. Nuri was, and is, absolutely photogenic and handsome. He was already sitting in a wheelchair. I was captivated by his words rather than his appearance. In effect, I lost my heart and proposed to him. Nuri hesitated, because of how my future would be affected, but as he saw my determination he finally accepted. So I left my studies and family to live with him in the border town of Torbat-e Jām, which is located close to Afghanistan. It was there that our two sons were born.[2] A few years later we moved to Mashhad and then to Tehran.

Writing plays before marriage,[3] I learned painting from Nuri and held many exhibitions of my artworks along with him. So far, we've had two exhibitions in Paris in 2004 and 2010. In 2005 we displayed our works in Beijing and two years later in Berlin. In 2008 we went to Algiers for our next exhibition. The following stop was Beirut in 2010. The same year Austria was host to our paintings, three of which are still being taken care of by the UN.

2 And Art Was with Philosophy!

After marriage, many of our family friends were artists. Their knowledge of philosophy was sketchy. They discussed Mullā Ṣadrā and existence, Suhrawardī and illumination, what creates art according to these philosophers, what leads artists to creativity, where images of imagination come from, and so on and on. Those days I was studying while teaching undergraduates Islamic philosophy at the Seminary of Razavieh School in Mashhad, capital of Khorāsān-e Razavī ostān province, in Northeastern Iran where for the first time in my life I encountered philosophy seriously.

That somehow translucent ambience at home led me to explore what I believed to be the most basic philosophical notion related to art: imagination. I thought it should be the most logical place to start. On the wings of imagination, I moved to the concepts of creativity, inner and outer perceptions, definitions of art, and concepts of sciart/scientart[4] and philart[5] and developed insights about issues like panamatorism,[6] prophecy, and revelation. These are considered crucial corollaries for Muslim philosophers. But for me, they were just byproducts of what I intended to be the main story!

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According to my reading of al-Fārābī, imagination has three functions: preserving sensible forms, analyzing and synthesizing them, and representing sensible and intelligible forms by sensible ones. The public can obtain intellectual truths and happiness only through imagination. al-Fārābī offers imagination as an explanation for prophecy. According to him, imagination has political and social functions.[7] He discusses two kinds of art: art as it is, and art as it should be. The latter is utopian art. The former has desirable and undesirable aspects. But utopian art, the art of the utopian artist, consists of only that which is desirable. al-Fārābī explains how this art brings goodness and happiness into the imagination and moderates feelings. Undesirable and wicked art is just the opposite; it corrupts thoughts and inflames sensual impulses. In al-Fārābī's view, people come to comprehend intelligible truths and meanings through the use of their imagination. Furthermore, the arousal of people's feelings and emotions often originates in the imagination and is caused by imaginary forms. The ultimate utopian goal is for the public to achieve intelligible happiness. Given that the public, based on their nature and general habits, are unable to perceive intelligible truths, the path to intelligible happiness must be presented to them via imagination. The utopian artist represents intelligible happiness through the use of sensory and imaginary forms; thus, he/she brings intelligible happiness to people's minds through their imagination.[8] al-Fārābī put the artists on the second level of his utopia, seeing them as "the careers of religion." The first level, of course, belongs to God's prophet and his successors. It should be borne in mind that in his time it was rare for artists to be seen as noteworthy entities in a philosopher's utopia. This philosopher of course is deeply influenced by Greek philosophy, as it was the case for Islamic philosophy as a whole before Abū Ḥāmed Moḥammed Al-Ghazālī, the Persian theologian, shattered it into pieces in his book *The Incoherence of the Philosophers* (تهافت الفلاسفة Tahāfut al-Falāsifa, in Arabic), his eleventh-century landmark work. The level of importance that al-Fārābī envisions for the artists is hardly traceable in Greek philosophy or any other philosophy before him. This importance, however, comes at a price, for the artist has a task similar to that of the prophet. In the prophet's case, the angel of revelation bestows rational concepts onto his rational faculty and then to his imaginative faculty. The majority of people are not able to obtain rational happiness through reasoning because they do not tend to implement their rational faculty. So the prophet, who is well aware of the truth, conveys the truth to peoples' imagination through allegories and examples. The artist too, in al-Fārābī eyes, is a person who can transfer rational happiness to the minds of the masses through sensible and imaginative forms.[9]

In works, al-Fārābī and Avicenna turn to art, its objectivity, and miscellaneous functions. In their writings, art's aims and functions become pronounced; however, art's goals and applications can be deduced from their theory of imagination. The power of imagination can depict the sensory forms, imaginary forms, as well as intelligible truths. The ultimate goal of individuals is to provide the public with intelligible happiness; however, entertainment, wonder, and pleasure are reckoned as acceptable benefits of art. While Avicenna explicitly mentions wonder, al-Fārābī doesn't examine the case on its own merits. Both agree though on the objective of artists' activities and that final happiness allows entertainment and pleasure to a limited extend. They should allow one to pause for breath so as to strive toward ultimate cheeriness. While al-Fārābī underlines entertainment, Avicenna doesn't focus on the issue.[10]

When I started to work on al-Fārābī's philosophy of art and aesthetics as my PhD dissertation at the University of Teheran in 2007, I was told by my advisors that al-Fārābī was totally new in philosophy of art, people had simply repeated a few pages of al-Ghazāli's work. Today, my work is considered to

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be a revival of al-Fārābī's philosophy of art. My modern reading of Avicennia and Suhrawardī is considered to be unique in Iran too. For example, I worked on the concept of inner perception in Avicenna's books in the paper: "Farabi vis-à-vis Avicenna on Inner Perception."[11] Although both al-Fārābī and Avicenna seem to use some features of the Aristotelian theory of perception, they have expanded it. Conceptualizing imaginary perception with its functions, al-Fārābī deals with three primary activities: storing sensory forms, composing and decomposing sensory forms, and imagery. Avicenna defines what al-Fārābī calls the imaginary faculties as three inner perceptions: imagination, estimation, and memory faculties.

Also, I worked on Suhrawardī's theory of imagination in a paper entitled, "The Foundations and Consequences of Suhrawardī's Theory of Imagination"[12] and mentioned therein:

> The problem of imagination, as raised by Muslim philosophers, has several epistemic consequences in problems as diverse as ontology, prophecy, conceptualization and the functions of art […]. In the Illuminationist Philosophy of Suhrawardi, moreover, the topic of imagination bears a correlation to other problems. The principle of vision is the most prominent foundational pillar of Suhrawardi's theory of imagination. Developing it through multiple perspectives, he has accounted for imagination as the illumination of the soul. Apart from intuitive proofs, Suhrawardi's major argument for illuminationist imagination is the refutation of manifold cognitive faculties. It is based on this refutation that he devotes an echelon of the universe to suspended archetypes (incorporeal forms). He rejects the affinity between sensual and imaginative perception.

I'm delighted that my thesis, papers, and books opened a new way at looking at these thinkers.

3 And Art Was Philosophy!

Not being able to ignore my artistic taste, every now and then I put philosophical issues in my paintings and in verse.[13] For example, in the following poem I depicted Avicenna and Suhrawardi's understanding of the duality of body and Soul as follows:[14]

> As they said, as I heard/your soul is somewhat bird
> came down out of Heaven/going back when referred
> in this day and this age/your soul is in some cage
> But it can't wait so long/someday goes offstage
> The cage is your body/thought to be so shoddy
> The cage will be ruined/no doubt for anybody
> No sooner, no later/all go six feet under
> We all are going there/ready for hereafter

One of my paintings also depicts the beautiful tomb of Avicenna in Hamedan, Iran, while I have painted the tomb of the two other Iranian great poets like Hafiz[15] and Baba Taher Oryan Hamedani.[16]

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4 Global Impact of Art

Without art, I believe, philosophy will remain deprived of a broad outreach. In other words, art might well be the language of philosophy. So for me, art in general, and painting especially, could be deemed as a way of international and cross-cultural relations that I share deeply with my husband.

As an example, in terms of worldwide impact, CNN, among other major media outlets, mirrored his painting of Virgin Mary alongside my painting of Moses during reports about my husband's reaction to Danish cartoons. Ian Linden, professor of Religious Studies at SOAS who teaches on Christian-Muslim relations, recounts the story from his time in Tehran:

> When there was a demonstration in front of the Danish Embassy in protest against the cartoons negatively caricaturing the Prophet Muhammad, an artist, who had lost the use of both arms, had managed while holding the paint brush in his teeth, to create a beautiful painting of Mary. He displayed the image and asked a question: This is our faith. What is yours? (Hearden 2014: 116)[17]

This event is also mentioned in Linda Sartor's book:

> While visiting the Museum of Contemporary Art, two of us meet a man in a wheelchair, Hossein Nuri and his wife, Nadia Maftouni, who are both artists. They tell us that he was injured during the time of the Shah, losing the use of both his arms and legs. Later, by going to his website I learn that he was actually injured by the SAVAK[18] when he was in high school because he had produced a play about human rights. He also lost two brothers as martyrs in the Iran/Iraq War. Now because he cannot use his hands, he paints by holding the brush in his teeth. A couple of years ago when I was in Sri Lanka, I heard about a Danish man who drew a political cartoon that was very derogatory toward Muslim people. At that time, Iranians protested at the Danish Embassy. Nuri attended the demonstration in his wheelchair with his paint brush and canvas. He began painting a beautiful rendition of the Christian Mother Mary and later gifted it to Denmark to represent the honoring of all people of all religions. Despite these good reasons to dislike the USA, Nuri and Nadia gift us with a packet of postcards depicting their paintings and ask us to tell the people in the USA that they love us (Sartor 2014: 184).[19]

In my own poetry and paintings, I have also focused on Ibn Tufail's philosophical novel in a paper called "Concept of Sciart in the Andalusian Ibn Tufail."[20] In his remarkable feat, Ibn Tufail the philosopher, physician, and novelist explains the most complicated philosophical and mystical issues in his novel *Hayy Ibn Yaẓan*. Recognized as the first philosophical novel, *Hay Ibn Yaqẓan* depicts the whole philosophy of Ibn Tufail through the story of an autodidactic feral child raised by a gazelle on an island in the Indian Ocean. Ibn Tufail also elaborates the issues of human anatomy, autopsy, and vivisection there.

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5 Global Impact of Philosophy

In addition, to my university work at the University of Tehran, which is a leading university in Iran, I have hosted some twenty webinars with distinguished academics like Noam Chomsky, Slavoj Žižek, Bruce Ackerman, Dudley Andrew, Noël Carroll, and Nicholas Rescher. They have discussed topics in a variety of fields including philosophy of film, philosophy of law, philosophy of science, analytic philosophy, and so forth. These sessions were fruitful for both sides; it gave them a better insight into Iran's academia, and it updated us about their most recent work. Today, some of them serve on the editorial board of scientific journals run by members of the University of Teheran. They have also served as thesis supervision committees. This work has been well-received by the Iranian media.

Some of my guests and conversation partners in these talks praised my work during our dialogues (Lord Tony Giddens called my career "stellar"). But some comments helped me to critically evaluate my contributions to the field. Slavoj Žižek voiced the pretty long following comment on my work, comparing and contrasting it with some other works:[21]

> Here now I come with what the work of Nadia Maftouni means to me. Maybe this is a little bit of a wild reading but I will brutally impose my view. In her dealings of imagination, she demonstrates that already ancient Islamic philosophy went this way; namely she goes beyond Aristotle. Aristotle has a theory of imagination and if we take away some subversive hints it's a pretty traditional theory of imagination. My main point is this one. In the West we usually reduce imagination to something subjective as opposed to objective reality. Things are out there, they are what they are in their identity, maybe this identity is not fully known to us but it exists out there, and then imagination is subjective. We project something on the objects, we fill in the gaps in our knowledge and so on. But I think what we learn from your tradition which is close to me, to German idealism, Hegel and others in the 20th century, up to—if I may engage in this wild speculation—up to philosophical implications of quantum physics, is that objectively also things are not simply what they are. What a thing is imminently implies the space of some kind of, I would even call it, ontological imagination—imagination in the thing itself—what this thing might have been but didn't become, what is a secret potential in the thing. So, to understand a thing means not only forget about your mind, focus just on what that thing really is. Now, to understand a thing means to include into its identity, all these potentialities.

What Slavoj mentioned about my work was a macroscopic point. I noticed microscopic[22] points from Dimitri Gutas, professor emeritus of Arabic and Islamic Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Yale University. In our dialogue, I framed my reading of Suhrawardi and mentioned that despite his refusal of Avicenna's decimal classification of intellects, he approves the same system in his allegorical stories. Dimitri in response said:

> Thank you very much! I hadn't put all these ten numbers together. Well, I have not read Suhrawardi as carefully as you have. But it is very illuminating to me as well to see that this is so; perfectly fine! And there's always something to learn from everybody. So, thank you very much for that. This is really wonderful; especially the five internal senses which is real original innovation of Ibn Sina and a wonderful scientific advancement. I mean, this is after Aristotle that was the most major scientific advancement in psychology since Aristotle basically, and then

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> after that, I don't know, perhaps we'd go with Freud or whatever it is; it was a very big step forward, so to speak. So, it is interesting to see that he put together with the external senses of course to get the ten. That is wonderful. Thank you very much Nadia.[23]

Such conversation partners introduced me to a variety of new areas, especially in interdisciplinary fields. I learned a lot from them and began exploring new ideas.

I think philosophy would be more promising if philosophers try to make conversations aimed at exploring practical areas in all interdisciplinary fields. Based on my own experiments, I encourage my students to work on philosophy of art, philosophy of cinema, and philosophy of games and gamification, my latest research field.

In terms of philosophy, I would say joy and pleasure, as well as games are the issues that al-Fārābī reflected about. He considered them as necessary and useful artworks as long as they remained within the moral framework. For him, those who work hard and are serious about attaining their rational happiness should enjoy tranquility and rest in order to feel refreshed in following up their objectives. Game and amusement are often accompanied with imitative images. The word imitation or mimesis is used by Abū Bashār Mattā in the translation of Aristotle's *Art of Poetics*. Ibn Sīnā, Khwajah Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī, and ʻAllāmah Ḥillī also used this term in their works. For al-Fārābī, the meaning of mimesis is more than imitation and is associated with creation. In his view, the faculty of imagination contains three potencies: preserving, possessing, and imitating sensory forms. A human being in the third one juxtaposes a sensory form with another sensory form which is usually coupled with a meaning. Moreover, imagination imitates universal and philosophical concepts. Mimesis may take place with the aim of amusement or for a game. Since, in al-Fārābī's view, game and amusement are used in a moral sense, he did not perceive them as being indecent. Teachers can use games in their teaching. Teaching Islamic philosophy, gnosis, and logic in coronavirus period, I too began to use various games and the facilities of Moodle. Usually, cyberspace classroom is prosy as compared to the real classrooms, but there are certain merits in cyberspace classroom that real classrooms lack.

6 The Future of Philosophy in Iran

We are struggling in Iran to develop an interest in interdisciplinary debates within philosophy. Due to hyper-specialization within philosophy, interdisciplinary debates have failed to gain a foothold in the domestic academia. Crucially, one such area is philosophy of economics, which due to its vital role in the daily livelihood of the average person is very popular in industrialized countries. Many economic schools have been founded by philosophers. The influence of philosophy on economic policy becomes visible. In Iran, however, we have been trying to erect the superstructure of economics without forging its philosophical bedrock. This will have to be changed for the country's sustainable future. Going forward, this should be our immediate goal.

It is in this spirit that I would like my picture to be understood.

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Nadia Maftouni, Lady of Water

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For Maftouni's papers on imagination, see: with A. Qaramaleki, "Imagination in the Context of Justification and Explanation from Farabi to Mulla Sadra," *Kheradnameh Sadra*, no. 47, (2007a); with A. Qaramaleki, "The Position of Imagination in Farabi's Philosophical System," *Maqalat wa Barrasiha,* no. 83, (2007b); "Peripatetic Imagination, Ishraqi Imagination and Creativity," *Kheradnameh Sadra*, no. 55, (2009); "Images of Imagination for Iranian Philosophers," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 23, no. 1, (2018): 17–28; *Farabi, Imagination and Artistic Creativity* (Tehran: Sureh, 2010); "The Foundations and Consequences of Suhrawardi's Theory of Imagination," *Falsafe va Kalame Eslami,* no. 5, (2013); with Mahmoud Nuri, "The Relationship between Thought and Imagination: A Case Study of Suhrawardi's Tale of Occidental Exile," *Philosophy and Children*, no. 1/4, (2014a); with Mahmoud Nuri, "The Ladder-Like Process of Thinking and Imagination for Farabi," *Philosophy and Children*, no. 2–3, (2014b); with F. Tavanapanah, "The Place of Persuasion and Imagination in Leadership in Farabi," *Kheradnameh Sadra*, no. 82, (2015a); with F. Tavanapanah, "The Epistemic Function of Imagination and Persuasion in Farabi's View," *Theological Philosophical Research*, no. 66, (2015b).

For Maftouni's papers on philart and scientart, see: "Evaluating Imaginal Forms from Farabi's Point of View," *Ma'rifat-i Falsafi*, no. 32, (2011a) [in Persian]; "Conceptualization of Religious Art in Farabi's Philosophy," *Kheradnameh Sadra*, no. 63, (2011b) [in Persian]; "Art as Cultural Strategy in Farabi's Thought," *Strategy of Culture*, no. 10–11, (2012a) [in Persian]; "Art As It Is, and Art as It Should Be: An Analytical Study of Fārābī," *Transcendent Philosophy,* no. 13, (2012b) [in English]; "Conceptualization of Aesthetics according to Farabi," *Kheradnameh Sadra*, no. 68, (2012c) [in Persian]; "The Nature of Art in Farabi's Thought," *Wisdom and Philosophy*, no. 32, (2013) [in English]; "Suhrawardi as a Scientartist in Psychology," *Transcendent Philosophy*, no. 17, (2016) [in English]; "Suhrawardi as an Avicennian Sciartist," *Javidan Kherad*, no. 30, (2017) [in English]; "Conceptualization of: Interaction between the Worlds of Science and Art," *Socrates* 5, no. 3, (2018a): 12–18 [in English]; "Art as a Language for Muslim Thinkers: Metaphorical vs. Literal Approach," *The Philosophy Journal* 11, no. 2, (2018b): 156–66 [in English]; "A Comparative Study on Farabi and Avicenna's Viewpoints about the Ultimate Goal of Art and The Role of Entertainment, Wonder and Pleasure," *Biannual Journal of Avicinian Philosophy* 22, no. 59, (2018c): 27–40. [in Persian]; "A Global Language for Happiness: Rational vs. Religious Approach," *Transcendent Philosophy* 19, no. 30, (2018d): 163–74. [in English]; "What's Art Got to Do with Happiness in Farabian Utopia?" *Socrates* 6, no. 2, (2018e): 24–33 [in English]; "Images of Imagination for Iranian Philosophers," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 23, no. 1, (2018): 17–28 [in English].

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1 National Organization for Development of Exceptional Talents (NODET; Persian: سازمان ملی پرورش استعدادهای درخشان Sāzmān-e Melli-ye Parvareŝ-e Este'dādhā-ye Deraxŝān, or سمپاد SAMPAD).

2 Today I enjoy having two grandsons also!

3 The play *Rattlesnake* won the Best Script Award in the National Festival of Shahrivar 17th (1985). It was published many times by different publishers. See: Nadia Maftouni, *Maar-e Zangui (Rattlesnake)* (Tehran: Madreseh Pub, 1996).

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4 Sciart/Scientart might be defined as an interaction between the worlds of art and science. Three types of these interactions might be considered: artistically inclined scientific activities, science-minded artistic activities, and intertwined artistic and scientific activities. In this conceptualization, different disciplines such as physics, metaphysics, economics, and medicine could be counted as science and literature counted as art. In artistically inclined science, scientists would lead an art program, such as what happened in the artists' program to document NASA missions. Science-minded art would be artworks that dwell on scientific themes. These artworks might be inspired by science or inspire scientists. An instant of intertwined artistic and scientific activities would be occult treatises that describe philosophical subjects and rational issues in fiction (see: Nadia Maftouni, "Conceptualization of Scientart: Interaction between the Worlds of Science and Art," *Socrates* 5, no. 3, (2018): 12–8, [in English]).

5 A philartist is a utopian artist who produces intelligible happiness through creating sensory and imaginary forms. He/she performs an activity similar to that of the prophet. According to Fārābī's theory of the imagination, there is a relation between the imagination and the intellectual faculty. The imaginary faculties are able to access the intelligible through imaginary and sensory forms. The ultimate goal of the utopian rulers is to provide the public with intelligible happiness. The prophet, through revelation, perceives all the truths, both rationally and in his imagination. He has the ability to perceive the essence of truths; in addition, he realizes the allegories through which he can describe these truths. But since intellectual perception of true happiness is not possible for the public, allegories are provided that will appeal to the peoples' imaginary faculties.

6 Loving all creatures or the belief in the inflow of love in all creation and stations of existence, which can be seen in both the ideas of Ibn Sina and Suhrawardī. Shaykh al-Rais offers two definitions of love that in one, only the perfection is taken into account. According to the first definition, no creature is outside the scope of loving—kindness, although most creatures are not aware of their love. This love consists of two kinds: natural and volitional love. Loving—kindness according to the second definition is allocated to sentient beings. This love has different levels of perception. It includes the sensual, imaginative, illusionary, and rational dimension of perception. Ibn Sina has called the noblest level of volitional love, which is based on rational perception, voluntary or intellectual love. For him, the lowest level of love is animal love. Shaykh regards love without the intervention of rational faculty a sin and disease. Shaykh Ishraq is faithful to Ibn Sina's definitions and believes in an all-embracing natural and voluntary love, and with a symbolic language to depict rational love . He has spoken of love as darkness and regards such a love as equal to wretchedness. See: (Nadia Maftouni, "Panamatorism According to Avicenna and Suhrawardi," *Biannual Journal of Avicinian Philosophy*, no. 48, (2012).

7 See my: Maqalat wa Barrasiha, no. 83, (2007).

8 See my: *Transcendent Philosophy*, no. 13, (2012).

9 See my: *Socrates* 6, no. 2, (2018): 24–33.

10 See my: *Biannual Journal of Avicinian Philosophy* 22, no. 59, (2018): 27–40.

11 *Transcendent Philosophy*, no. 20, (2019).

12 *Falsafe va Kalame Eslami*, no. 5, (2013).

13 Most of my poems are in Persian.

14 The poem doesn't necessarily reflect my opinion!

15 A fourteenth-century Persian lyric poet from Shiraz, Iran.

16 An eleventh-century Persian dervish poet from Hamadan, Iran. Interestingly, my parents are from Hamedan!

17 Maura Hearden, *Mary, for the Love and Glory of God: Essays on Mary and Ecumenism* (Bloomington: Author's House, 2014).

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[18] Organization of National Security and Information (1957–79). The Iranian secret police and intelligence service protected the regime of the Shah by arresting, torturing, and executing many dissidents (Britannica.)

[19] Linda Sartor, *Turning Fear into Power: One Woman's Journey Confronting the War on Terror* (Psychosynthesis Press, 2014).

[20] *Pensamiento* 75, no. 283, (2019): 543–51.

[21] https://international.ut.ac.ir/en/news/18265/ut-s-colloquium-slavoj-zizek-on-iranian-tradition-mulla-sadra-god-and-love (last accessed on November 15, 2022).

[22] By macroscopic point, I mean that Zizek saw my work as a whole and evaluated it generally in the course of history of philosophy. And by microscopic point, I mean that Gutas noticed and evaluated details of my work.

[23] https://international.ut.ac.ir/en/news/17027/a-talk-between-dimitri-gutas-and-nadia-maftouni-about-avicenna-and-suhrawardi (last accessed on January 13, 2023)..

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