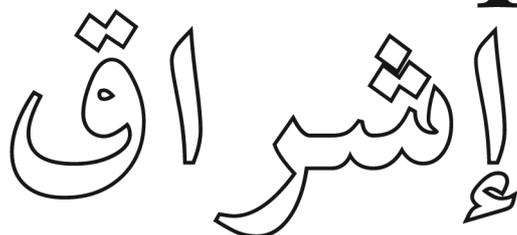


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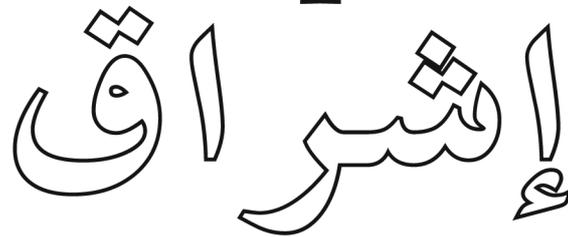
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L.W.C. (Eric) van Lit

(Utrecht University, the Netherlands)

**GHIYĀTH AL-DĪN DASHTAKĪ
ON THE WORLD OF IMAGE (‘ĀLAM AL-MITHĀL):
THE PLACE OF HIS *ISHRĀQ HAYĀKIL AL-NŪR*
IN THE COMMENTARY TRADITION ON SUHRAWARDĪ**

The commentary tradition on Suhrawardī’s (d. 1191) corpus has as one of its characteristic subjects the world of image, *‘ālam al-mithāl*, sometimes referred to in the literature as the imaginal world or *mundus imaginalis*.¹ This world, situated between the sensible world and the intelligible world, was first conceived as part of a solution to the issue of bodily resurrection. Until then, roughly two camps existed: theologians insisted on the return to the earthly, sensible world, whereas philosophers argued that the soul would go to the intelligible world for eternity. Suhrawardī, building on ideas present in Ibn Sīnā’s works, argued that we may use our imagination after death, by means of which we may imagine all the eschatological promises and threats as laid out by revelation. The soul would thus not return to an earthly body, but would still undergo sensory experiences as though it did have such a body. In Shahrāzūrī’s (d. ≥1288) commentary on Suhrawardī’s *Hikmat al-ishrāq*, this idea was further developed into that of a distinct world, the world of image, where we would go after death, assuming an imaginable body (*badan mithālī*) appropriate to our eschatological fate.² Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311) incorporated Shahrāzūrī’s commentary in his own *Sharḥ Hikmat al-ishrāq*, and also wrote an epistle on the

¹ In this paper, I report preliminary results of my doctoral research on eschatology and the world of image in the writings of Suhrawardī and his commentators. The research for this paper was supported by the ERC Starting Grant “The Here and the Hereafter in Islamic Traditions” (no. 263308), hosted at Utrecht University. A draft of this paper was presented at the symposium “Crossing boundaries: mystical and philosophical conceptualizations of the *dunyā/ākhirā* relationship” (Utrecht, July 5, 2013). I wish to thank the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Freie Universität, for facilitating my work during the writing of the final version of this paper.

² Shahrāzūrī, Shams al-Dīn, *Sharḥ Hikmat al-Ishrāq*, ed. by H. Ziai (Tehran: Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, 2001), pp. 514–557. An analysis of the reception and development of Suhrawardī’s ideas concerning the world of image will be given in my forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation.

world of image in response to some questions he was asked. Afterwards, there were no commentaries written on Suhrawardī's works for about two centuries. The next commentary we encounter is by Dawānī (d. 1502), who wrote *Shawākil al-hūr*, a commentary on Suhrawardī's *Hayākil al-nūr*. In that commentary, the notion of the world of image is only mentioned a few times, but is never properly discussed, perhaps due to the fact that Suhrawardī himself does not mention anything of the like in the *Hayākil al-nūr*.³ Dawānī's commentary itself was the subject of another commentary, called *Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr*, by Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī (d. 1542), who seems to have written this super-commentary primarily as a rebuke to Dawānī.⁴ Since neither Suhrawardī nor Dawānī discuss the world of image in the texts upon which Dashtakī is commenting, there is little reason to suspect that Dashtakī wrote about it himself in his super-commentary. Nevertheless, we find embedded in his text an independent twenty pages long epistle dedicated solely to this subject.

In this paper, we shall examine this epistle in some detail.⁵ I shall start by explaining where the epistle is located in the super-commentary, and how it is embedded. Then I shall point out its source and discuss exactly how Dashtakī's text depends on other texts. This is mainly achieved through a detailed analysis of one passage of the epistle. Afterwards, I shall discuss those parts of the text that are not to be found in the main source. Special attention will be given to those parts that seem to have flown from Dashtakī's own pen. Finally, we will put this epistle in the context of his corpus of writings, and establish to what extent he himself seems to be committed to the idea of a world of image.

The epistle within the super-commentary and its source

This epistle is located in the super-commentary in which Dashtakī comments on the fourth chapter of Suhrawardī's *Hayākil al-nūr*, in which Suhrawardī divides the cosmos into a number of worlds.⁶ Here Suhrawardī says: "know that the

³ Dawānī, Jalāl al-Dīn, *Shawākil al-hūr fi sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, in: *Thalāth rasā'il*, ed. by M. Tuysirkani (Mashhad: Majma' al-buḥūth al-islāmiyyah, 1990) pp. 143, 154, 189, and 217. This edition is better than the older one (ed. M. A. al-Haqq and M. Kukan, Madras, 1953 [Reprint: Baghdad: Bayt al-warrāq, 2010]).

⁴ As is the case with many of his writings. See Pourjavady, R., *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), p. 29. Pourjavady counts this super-commentary as an early work, written around the age of thirty (completed before 1490, p. 25).

⁵ I shall restrict myself to the core of the epistle, attested in all three manuscripts on which Awjabi based his edition. Two manuscripts have additional text at the end of the epistle, which discusses not the world of image proper but issues related to it, such as the nature of angels, jinn and demons, and the nature of sound. The oldest manuscript, dating from Dashtakī's own lifetime, does not have this additional text.

⁶ It is surprising that the epistle is not located in the part on eschatology, as that is the place where most texts of the commentary tradition discuss the world of image. Dashtakī does not even mention it in the chapter on eschatology in his *Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr*.

worlds are three.”⁷ The “three worlds” are the world of intellect, of soul, and of body. This is in stark contrast with another statement of Suhrawardī, from his *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, where he says: “I myself have had veritable experience which indicates that the worlds are four,”⁸ the fourth world being the world of suspended images, which would be developed by later commentators into the world of image. Dawānī, in his commentary, provides a straightforward explanation of what the three worlds are and does not mention the idea of a fourth world.⁹ Dashtakī, on the other hand, intervenes in a most interesting way. His text reads: “Know that the worlds are four according to the author [i.e., Suhrawardī] and those Ishraqīs and Šūfīs who follow him. [But it is] three according to most intellectuals.”¹⁰ By commenting on it in this way, he preserves the original sentence of Suhrawardī. If we were to delete “four according ... it is]” and “according to most intellectuals,” we would get Suhrawardī’s original sentence back. Even though the original sentence is kept in its entirety, the insertion of these words drastically changes its meaning. Instead of Suhrawardī saying that there are three worlds, Dashtakī would make him say there are four worlds. The number three is then mentioned in reference to what seems to be the opinion of everyone else other than Suhrawardī and his followers.¹¹ In addition, it is important to point out is that Dashtakī does not criticize Dawānī for following the tripartite division in his commentary. If he had, this insertion in Suhrawardī’s text could have been an instance of an intentional disagreement on Dashtakī’s part with Dawānī.¹² Rather, the insertion regarding the number of worlds seems to be based on Dashtakī’s own reflection on Suhrawardī’s text.

⁷ Suhrawardī, Shihāb al-Dīn, *Opera Metaphysica et Mystica* (= Oeuvres Philosophiques et Mystiques / Majmū‘ah fī al-ḥikmah al-ilāhiyyah), ed. by H. Corbin et al., 4 vols. (Tehran: Institut franco-iranien, 1945–1970 [Reprint 2009]), vol. 3, p. 96.

⁸ Suhrawardī, Shihāb al-Dīn, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq], transl. by J. Walbridge and H. Ziai (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1999), p. 149. However, for most of *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, the reader is left with the impression there are only three worlds—those of the dominating lights (*anwār qāhīrah*), managing lights (*anwār mudabbīrah*), and bodies (*barzakhān*). Cf. Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq], p. 102. In fact, in his introduction to *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* he explicitly states that “all [philosophers of all ages] speak of three worlds.” Ibid., p. 2. Another reference to three worlds instead of four in the context of eschatology is found in Suhrawardī, Shihāb al-Dīn, *al-La-mahāt*, ed. E. Maalouf (Beirut: Dār an-Nahār, 1969), pp. 145, l. 14.

⁹ Dawānī, *Shawākīl al-ḥūr fī sharḥ Hayākīl al-nūr*, p. 186.

¹⁰ Dashtakī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Maṣṣūr, *Ishrāq Hayākīl al-nūr li-kashf zulamāt Shawākīl al-ghurūr*, ed. by Ali Owjābi, (Tehran: Mīrās-i Maktūb, 2003), p. 241 [henceforth: Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī].

¹¹ Dashtakī does not always mention the Ishraqīs and the Šūfīs together, but when he does, it is in the context of a discussion of the world of image. Cf. Dashtakī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn, *Hujjat al-kalām li-ṭdāḥ muḥajjat al-islām*, in: *Muṣannaḥāt Ghīyath al-Dīn Maṣṣūr Husaynī Dashtakī Shīrāzī*, ed. by A. Nourani, 2 vols. (Tehran: Society for the Application of Cultural Works and Dignitaries, 2007), vol. 1, pp. 178, 186, 204.

¹² See above, footnote 4.

Initially, Dashtakī does not say what this fourth world is. He simply continues to comment on the remainder of Suhrawardī's chapter in *Hayākil al-nūr*. Only after he has finished commenting on the chapter, does Dashtakī return to the idea of four worlds, abandoning Suhrawardī's text and inserting a twenty-page epistle that deals exclusively with this fourth world, the world of image. The final words of this epistle are: "So this is what I know [lit. 'have'] and [these are] the people's words that reached me, as provided by the perception of illumination (*dhawq al-ishrāq*)."¹³ At first, this may sound like exciting evidence demonstrating the continuing development of the idea of a world of image after Suhrawardī. However, the seemingly innocent "this is what reached me" at the end points to the possibility that he drew material from earlier sources. Indeed, upon careful inspection, one sees that it is entirely derived from an epistle by Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī.¹⁴

This epistle by Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī was written, it seems, in response to questions someone sent to him. We do not know the identity of the person asking the questions. The answers that Shīrāzī provided are to a large extent based on his commentary on Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, itself depending in this case on Shahrazūrī's (d. ≥1288) commentary on the same work. The structure of the text, according to the edition by Walbridge, is as follows: it opens with a short introduction, after which he cites verbatim the person who wrote to him, he then announces the end of the citation and the beginning of the section containing his answers, followed by the answers themselves. The first answer is the biggest, covering twenty pages, after which follow several smaller answers, stretching over slightly more than six pages.

Dashtakī's appropriation of Shīrāzī's epistle

That Dashtakī's epistle is textually reliant on Shīrāzī's epistle will become clear from our comparative analysis of the first paragraph of Dashtakī's epistle. In general, we can say that Dashtakī's epistle agrees with the first answer in Shīrāzī's epistle,¹⁵ though not always following Shīrāzī's text to the letter. In about a hundred places, Dashtakī leaves words out, at one point running up to seventy-seven words.¹⁶ In forty places, of which there are three large passages,

¹³ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 265.

¹⁴ Edited and translated by J. Walbridge, cf. Walbridge, J., *The Science of Mystic Lights* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), pp. 233–270 [henceforth: Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī].

¹⁵ Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, edition p. 241, l. 6 to p. 261, l. 12.

¹⁶ In the following, when I say "word," it could also mean a word-group, that is, multiple words that are connected to each other. For example, *wa-ilayhi* means "and to it" and is made up of three words (*wa*, *ilā*, and *huwa*) but are written as one word-group in Arabic. For convenience, however, I will just use "word" even if "word-group" is meant. In ten places, the gap covers more than 10 words. They are given here according to page and line number of Dashtakī's text and Shīrāzī's text, with the size of the gap in brackets: 253.1 / 249.4–5 (13);

there is text in Dashtakī's super-commentary which is not to be found in Shīrāzī's epistle.¹⁷ They must be, as we will see, at least partially genuine to Dashtakī. In many other places, he slightly alters words, changes word order, or provides a synonym.

To prove the textual reliance of Dashtakī's text on Shīrāzī's text, and to show the nature of the slight variations found in Dashtakī's text compared to Shīrāzī's text, it will be enough to restrict ourselves to the first paragraph of the twenty-pages long digression in Dashtakī's super-commentary. This is, in Shīrāzī's text, the first paragraph of his first answer. The picture that emerges from our analysis of this passage, is representative of Dashtakī's epistle as a whole.

This first paragraph reads as follows:

There are four worlds: the world of the intellects, which have absolutely no connection with bodies; the world of the souls, which are attached to celestial and human bodies; the world of the bodies, comprising the spheres, the elements and what is in them; and the world of image and imagination, which the students of the Sacred Law call "the Barrier" and the practitioners of the rational sciences call "the world of immaterial apparitions." The Ancients alluded to this world: There is in existence a world with magnitude other than the sensible world but parallel to the sensible world in its spheres and elements, in all the planets and composites in them: mineral, vegetable, animal, and human.¹⁸

Two key ideas are presented in this particular paragraph. It first explains what the four worlds are and then it elaborates on the fourth world, the world of image. In Dashtakī's version of the text, this works particularly well. First, he moves the attention of the reader from a tripartite division of the world to a four-fold division. Then he continues to expand on the new, fourth world. This continuation signals the true introduction to the topic; from this point on, readers are committed to a discussion of the world of image. It is made clear that this world possesses magnitude, that is, the objects in that world occupy a volume in the three dimensions of length, width, and depth. While it is a characteristic of material bodies to have volume, this world is still said to be immaterial. Next, it is, apparently, not a potential world, but one that exists in actuality, containing everything one may find in the material world. Finally, this idea is attributed to

253.5 / 249.9–10 (16); 253.7 / 249.13–15 (25); 260.3 / 253.8–9 (18); 261.13 / 255.9–10 (15); 261.16 / 255.13–15 (30, same words); 262.2 / 256.4–6 (28); 264.1 / 259.8–260.1 (77); 264.5 / 260.7–9 (22); 264.14 / 261.3–6 (43).

¹⁷ The seven most significant contributions can be found at: 250.1–6 / 246.9 paragraph; 250.14–251.15 / 247.11 paragraph; 254.7–8 / 250.13 sentence; 255.11–259.9 / 252.8 paragraph; 261.13 / 255.10 sentence; 263.15–264.1 / 259.8 sentence; 265.5–6 / 261.12 sentence.

¹⁸ Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, edition p. 241; translation pp. 206–207, slightly adapted. Walbridge gives the last part of this passage in a smaller font and with indention, to suggest Shīrāzī is quoting another text. But he ends this quote at a random point and admits in a footnote he is "not clear how far this quotation goes" (p. 207, fn. 15). As there is no evidence yet that it is actually a quote from an older source, let alone that we know where it begins and where it ends, I did not adopt Walbridge's suggestion.

“the ancients,” presumably Greek philosophers. The reference is probably meant to provide an argument from authority.¹⁹ It is in this sense then that the reader should be thinking about the world of image, which is fleshed out in further detail in the rest of the text within the context provided by this passage.

The two versions of this paragraph are given on the next page. The target text is on the right and carries certain mark-up to understand the reception of the source text on the left. The conventions used in the comparison are as follows:

- Whatever is in **bold** is exactly the same, simply a verbatim copy of the other text.
- Whatever is underlined is also a verbatim copy, though with a minor variation in inflection. This can be anything as long as the same root letters are used. A verb can be turned into an active participle, a definite article may be added or taken away, or a variant spelling may be offered.
- A double underline indicates that the target text has a word formed of completely different root letters, yet this does not significantly change the idea.
- The symbol ☞ means that the target text does not show a word in a place where the source text does have a word; it has omitted it. If the target text skips more than one word (or word-group) from the source text, the number of words is indicated with a number in superscript.
- It can also happen that a word or several words are present in the source text in an entirely different place from where the target text has them. The words in the target text are marked by square brackets []. A plus sign, +, is placed in the target text where those words actually belong, in comparison to the source text.
- A simpler and more common case of this is that word order is switched. Both word groups are indicated by round brackets, (). In between is a double-headed arrow: () ↔ ().
- Two last phenomena that are marked correspond to the situation where something has seemingly happened to the orthography or only some manuscripts of the two texts are in agreement. Since both phenomena are relatively rare, they are both indicated in the target text in the same way, with **bold and italic** and surrounded by /slashes/.

¹⁹ I have not found this exact passage in a text by an author from antiquity, but in one passage in pseudo-Aristotle’s *Uthūlūjiyā* there is mention of another, higher world, of which this world is merely an image (*mithāl wa-ṣanam*). The use of *ṣanam* in that passage could be the source for Suhrawardī’s *arbāb al-aṣnām*. Of this world, it is said that “There exists there an earth which [...] is alive and flourishing, and on it are all the animals, like the natural earthly animals which are here, and on it is vegetation planted in life, and on it are seas and rivers flowing...,” Plotinus, *Plotini Opera. Enneades IV–V* [*Plotiniana arabica ad codicum fidem anglie vertit*], ed. by P. Henry and H. R. Schwyzer, transl. by G. Lewis (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer et Cie, 1959), p. 465; Badawī, A. (ed.), *Aflūṭīn ‘ind al-‘arab* (Cairo: Maktabat al-naḥḍah al-miṣrīyah, 1955), p. 93.

Q. D. Shīrāzī (d. 1311) - “ <i>al-Risālah fī ‘ālam al-mithāl</i> ”	Gh. D. Dashtakī (d. 1541) - <i>Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr</i>
<p>(241.6) أن العالم أربعة عالم العقول التي لا تتعلق لها بالأجسام البتة وعالم النفوس المتعلقة بالأجسام الفلكية والأبدان الإنسانية وعالم الأقسام التي هي الأفلاك والعناصر وما فيها وعالم المثال والخيال الذي سماه المشرعون البرزخ وأرباب علوم العقول عالم الأَشباح الخردة وهو الذي أشار إليه الأقدمون أن في الوجود عالما مقادريا غير العالم الحسي بخذو العالم الحسي في الأفلاك والعناصر بجميع ما فيها من المركبات والمعادن والنبات والحيوان والإنسان</p>	<p>(245.12) العوالم أربعة عالم العقول التي لا تتعلق لها بالأجسام (وعالم الأجسام التي هي الأفلاك والعناصر وما فيها) ↔ (وعالم النفوس المتعلقة بالأجسام الفلكية والأبدان المنصرفة) وعالم المثال والخيال الذي سماه بعضهم <u>برزخا</u> وأرباب (عالم) ↔ (العقول) الأَشباح الخردة ² أشار إليه الأقدمون وقالوا أن في الوجود عالما مقادريا غير العالم الحسي بخذو العالم الحسي من الأفلاك والعناصر بجميع ما فيها من الكواكب والمعادن والنبات والحيوان والإنسان</p>
Q. D. Shīrāzī (d. 1311) - “ <i>al-Risālah fī ‘ālam al-mithāl</i> ”	Gh. D. Dashtakī (d. 1541) - <i>Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr</i>
<p>(241.6) أن العالم أربعة عالم العقول التي لا تتعلق لها بالأجسام البتة وعالم النفوس المتعلقة بالأجسام الفلكية والأبدان الإنسانية وعالم الأقسام التي هي الأفلاك والعناصر وما فيها وعالم المثال والخيال الذي سماه المشرعون البرزخ وأرباب علوم العقول عالم الأَشباح الخردة وهو الذي أشار إليه الأقدمون أن في الوجود عالما مقادريا غير العالم الحسي بخذو العالم الحسي في الأفلاك والعناصر بجميع ما فيها من المركبات والمعادن والنبات والحيوان والإنسان</p>	<p>() ❖ (245.12) العوالم () ↔ () ❖ <u>بعضهم</u> <u>برزخا</u> () وقالوا ² () ↔ () من النبات الحيوان فيهما</p>

BOLD = SAME UNDERLINE = SAME ROOT LETTERS DOUBLE UNDERLINE = (NEAR) SYNONYM ❖ = WORD(S) MISSING

[] + = WORD(S) FROM A DIFFERENT PLACE () ↔ () = SWITCHED ORDER /ITALICS/ = ORTHOGRAPHY OR MANUSCRIPTS

- When it is about the orthography, this means that the target text shows a word or several words that graphically look very close to what the word(s) look like in the source text, but are not exactly the same. On the semantic level, this results of course in an entirely different word with an entirely different meaning, but the proximity in orthography still betrays influence and most probably may be considered a copyist error or an editing error.
- It is probably also a case of a copyist error or editing error when only some of the manuscripts of the two texts are in agreement, as we will explain in more detail later.
- In brackets are the page and line number of the edition where the passage may be found.

Comparing the two passages

When we consider the second table, where all exact correspondences have been whited out, it becomes immediately clear that Dashtakī is merely appropriating Shīrāzī's text. What remains visible in the second table is the true contribution of Dashtakī to the passage. The picture that emerges is one of a meager contribution. Textually, he only adds "they say" (*wa-qālū*). The subject is "the ancients" (see translation above), and it merely makes the text flow better from "the ancients" to what the ancients have to say. Apart from this addition, Dashtakī changes some words slightly, switches word order, gives a synonym here and there and drops a few words. The change from *al-barzakh* to *barzakh* ("the isthmus" to "isthmus") does not influence the meaning, and the change from *al-nabāt* to *al-nabātāt* has even less impact, as they are merely two ways of forming the plural "the plants." Why Dashtakī changed *al-mutasharri'ūn* ("students of the Sacred Law") to *ba'ḍuhum* ("one [or, some] of them") is not clear and seems more arbitrary than anything else. He also changes *al-abdān al-insāniyyah* ("human bodies") into *al-abdān al-'unṣuriyyah* ("elemental bodies"). This has to do with what souls connect to. Shīrāzī says souls connect to "celestial bodies and human bodies," Dashtakī says they connect to "celestial bodies and elemental bodies." Perhaps Dashtakī means not to exclude animal souls (or even vegetative souls?), but since he does not elaborate it is perhaps safer to assume that he still means what Shīrāzī said, but merely thought *al-falakiyyah* (celestial) contrasts better with *al-'unṣuriyyah* (elemental) than with *al-insāniyyah* (human).

Three other textual variations play out on the manuscript level. These are issues inherent in philological studies, brought about by the fact that we are looking at editions that are in turn based on a number of manuscripts from which the editor has tried to reconstruct the text as it was originally conceived by its author, for example Shīrāzī. On the other hand, someone like Dashtakī was proba-

bly using only one particular manuscript of the text, in this case Shīrāzī's epistle. Therefore, a person like Dashtakī may have copied verbatim from a manuscript that does not represent the correct reading of the source text. It may be the case that when the target text is copied, all manuscripts inherit this incorrect reading. The final result may be that the editions of the source text and the target text read differently. This invites us to conclude that the author of the target text has deliberately changed the source text, while the fact of the matter could be that he did not do so. Indications of such false positives can be found when we not only compare the text in the body of the editions, but also include the variant readings. Since such analyses are highly speculative—we usually do not know which manuscript a particular author may have had in front of him—I have chosen, in the case of the comparison above, to show the paragraph simply as it is in the body of the two editions.

To explain this in more detail, let us look at each of the three instances where the editions seem to give a distorted view of Dashtakī's reception of Shīrāzī's epistle. First of all, Walbridge edits *al-ʿālam* ("the world") at the beginning of this passage, while Awjābī, the editor of Dashtakī's text, only gives *al-ʿawālim* ("the worlds"). The manuscript marked *tā'* in Walbridge's edition also reads *al-ʿawālim*, and so does Shīrāzī's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, on which the epistle is based. It therefore seems likely that Dashtakī was using a manuscript that read *al-ʿawālim* and he simply copied it. It is also possible that the manuscript Dashtakī was reading did say *al-ʿālam* and he changed it to *al-ʿawālim* simply to let it resonate better with the beginning of the chapter, where he inserted the words "the worlds are four" into Suhrawardī's original text "the worlds are three." It would reinforce the connection of the epistle to its placement in this chapter of his super-commentary on the *Hayākil al-nūr*. However, the former explanation, that he simply copied from a manuscript that read *al-ʿawālim*, seems to be the simpler, and therefore the preferred one. Secondly, in Dashtakī's text, Awjābī opts for *fihā*, and gives as an alternative reading *fihimā* in the manuscript marked *jīm*. According to Walbridge's edition, the two manuscripts he consulted both read *fihimā*. In fact, throughout Dashtakī's text, manuscript *jīm* gives almost always an alternative reading that matches Shīrāzī's text. This speaks strongly in favor of the quality of manuscript *jīm*. In the third case, where Dashtakī's text reads *min* and Shīrāzī's text reads *fī*, it is the other way around. Here Awjābī's edition gives no alternatives while Walbridge notes that the manuscript marked *tā'* reads *min*. Throughout the text, this manuscript agrees with Dashtakī's text significantly more than the other one, which would lead us to the conclusion that Dashtakī was reading from a manuscript that is closely related to manuscript *tā'*. The copyist information Walbridge gives for this manuscript informs us that it was copied in Shiraz in 1022/1613, about seventy years after Dashtakī's death in the same city. This might well mean that Dashtakī's copy of Shīrāzī's text was a parent of manuscript *tā'*.

This brings us finally to the omissions and changes in word order. The omission-marker at the beginning indicates that Shīrāzī's text reads *anna* ("that"), while Dashtakī's text does not. I have kept the *anna* in Shīrāzī's text to remind us that, while Dashtakī continues directly from his sentence "As for someone who argues that the worlds are four, he says" with the words "the worlds are four," Shīrāzī has considerably longer text before he comes to the words "the worlds are four." The next omission is the word *al-battata* ("absolutely"). As this merely functions to emphasize something, in this case to emphasize that the abstract world has absolutely no connection with the material world, it can be safely left out without loss of meaning. The next omission, of the word *'ulūm* ("sciences"), is more complicated, as it is also connected with the change of word order that occurs next. Shīrāzī speaks of the *arbāb 'ulūm al-ma'qūl*. Walbridge translates it as "practitioners of the rational sciences," but a more literal rendering would be "the masters of the sciences of [what can be] rationally known." What about these masters? Walbridge is correct in his reading that they are the subject of the same verb as the "students of the Sacred Law" were, because Shīrāzī is making a reference to Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, where Suhrawardī says that "this world under consideration is what we call the world of abstract apparitions."²⁰ Just as the students of the Sacred Law call the world of image *barzakh* ("isthmus," traditionally a word used for the place and/or time between death and the Day of Resurrection), the masters of the rational sciences call it *'ālam al-ashbāh*, "the world of abstract apparitions," according to Walbridge's reading of Shīrāzī. Dashtakī drops the word *'ulūm* and changes the word order of *al-ma'qūl 'ālam* into *'ālam al-ma'qūl*. It can therefore no longer mean that "the world of abstract apparitions" is the name they give to the world of image. Primarily, because the word "world" is now part of the subject, being "masters of the world of the rational sciences." It now seems to mean that "the masters of the world of the rational sciences call it 'the abstract apparitions,'" which is quite close to the meaning of Shīrāzī's text, if not practically the same. The last omission, which appears immediately after this sentence and consists of *wa-huwa alladhī*, again does not affect the meaning of the text. Finally, closer to the beginning there is another change of word order. Shīrāzī enumerates the worlds in the traditional order of the world of intellect, soul, body, and adds to that the world of image. Dashtakī changes that traditional order and his text enumerates the worlds as the world of intellect, body, soul, and lastly the world of image. The descriptions that deal with the worlds of soul and the world of body have changed order. No reason for this rearrangement can be given based on the contents alone of the two texts, as the ideas expressed in this passage remain the same.

As we have seen, all the changes Dashtakī introduces into the text, did not entail a change in interpretation of the ideas expressed. Both passages, in Dashtakī's text and in Shīrāzī's text, express exactly the same ideas. This begs the

²⁰ Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], p. 150.

question why Dashtakī bothered to change the text at all. It would have been easier for him to simply copy Shīrāzī's text verbatim. But here, I would suggest, lies the key to the reason for which he did so; it simply would have been too easy. It requires no thought at all to copy something word for word—in fact, it does not even require one to be knowledgeable about the subject. Professional copyists are a prime example of this. The little changes Dashtakī makes to the text, show that he appropriated the text to make it his own. He is not critically engaging as such with the text, otherwise the changes he made to it would have been meaningful, steering the text away from its original meaning. They do show he actually studied the text and reflected on it.

With the dependency on Shīrāzī's epistle established, the history of this passage does not end. The passage in the epistle relies on Shīrāzī's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, which in this case relies on Shahrāzūrī's (d. ≥1288) *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*, which in turn elaborates on a passage from Suhrawardī's (d. 1191) *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and adds to the latter a passage from another work of Suhrawardī, his *al-Mashāri'*.²¹ Ultimately, then, the passage in Dashtakī's super-commentary on Suhrawardī's *Hayākil al-nūr*, relies on Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and *al-Mashāri'*, though Dashtakī himself was probably unaware of that himself. He knew the *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and he had read its chapter on eschatology (*ma'ād*),²² which means that he could have known about the provenance of the first part of the passage. Given the way he closely adheres to Shīrāzī's epistle, it is unlikely that he knew about the passage in *al-Mashāri'*, which is the origin of the second part.

The extra passages in Dashtakī's text

Most additions Dashtakī makes are a word or two here and there. In four cases, he has a whole sentence that is not present in Shīrāzī's text. In three cases, Dashtakī includes a big portion of text that is not present in Shīrāzī's text. Of the

²¹ The passage we have been studying also appears in a variety of other texts, such as (1) Shahrāzūrī's (d. ≥1288), *Rasā'il al-shajarah al-ilāhiyyah*, (2) an anonymous epistle on Platonic forms dated to 1329–1339 (see R. Arnzen, *Platonische Ideen in der arabischen Philosophie* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), pp. 301–331 for a translation; p. 214 where he gives a part of this anonymous treatise to be roughly corresponding with parts of Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's epistle), (3) in Taftāzānī's (d. 1391) own commentary on his *al-Maqāṣid*, (4) Ibn Abī Jumhūr's (d. ≥1501) magnum opus *Mujlī mir'āt al-Munjī*, (5) in Harawī's commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* called *Anwāriyyah* (d. ≥1600), (6) in 'Abd al-Razzāq Lāhijī's (d. 1662) *Gawhar-i murād*, (7) and in 'Allāmah Majlisī's (d. 1698) *Bihār al-anwār* and his *Mir'āt al-'uqūl*. An in-depth discussion of the history of this passage will be given in my forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation.

²² See footnote 38 below, where I point out that Dashtakī was using the chapter on eschatology from Shīrāzī's *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*. The *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* and Shīrāzī's commentary were well-known by scholars of Shiraz from that time, according to Pourjavady, cf. Pourjavady, R., *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), e.g., p. 14, where he remarks that Dawānī was teaching “Suhrawardī's *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq* together with Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's commentary on the text.”

extra sentences, two do not add anything to the text. Dashtakī leaves out text from Shīrāzī's epistle and supplies a sentence of his own conveying the same meaning.²³ One of the other two sentences is the very last sentence of Dashtakī's digression from his commentary, which was already discussed above. The only sentence in which Dashtakī really adds a new idea is when Shīrāzī speaks of imaginable things not being present in the mind ("because the large cannot be imprinted in the small"), nor can they be in concrete things ("since in that case everyone with sound vision would be able to see them"), nor can they not exist ("since in that case they could not be conceived nor distinguished one from another nor be defined by differing determinants").²⁴ Shīrāzī concludes that therefore such imaginable objects must be in a different realm, in between the intelligible and sensible realm.²⁵ Dashtakī intervenes and says, "We hold many detailed (*daqīqah*) objections against this proof, which we have [already] mentioned in its proper place (*fī mawḍi'ihī*) and it is not necessary to mention them here."²⁶ I have not found the other place where he critically discusses this, but in the three passages that he adds to the text, he does show some of his concerns, as we shall now discuss.

Of the three passages, the first is about half a page, the second is one page, and the third stretches over four pages. The first one to appear in the text is in a passage where Shīrāzī discusses the view of Ibn 'Arabī (d. 1240). Here, Dashtakī's text includes another citation from Ibn 'Arabī, concerning the Last Trump and the Clarion.²⁷ This passage describes the identification of the *barzakh* ("isthmus") with the Trumpet and the Clarion. Immediately after the point at which the passage appears in Dashtakī's text, Shīrāzī's text reads (and Dashtakī's text cites) "After mentioning the Last Trump and the Clarion and describing the forms in the Luminous Horn, Ibn 'Arabī continues: ..."²⁸ The connection between this sentence and the passage in Dashtakī's text is clear, which could mean that the passage should be seen as part of Shīrāzī's text for otherwise Shīrāzī is referring to something that does not exist in his own text. On the other hand, the reference Shīrāzī makes is so elaborate, especially since it could only refer to the paragraph directly preceding it, that it may be possible that he is in fact referring to something outside of his own text and merely wishes to let the reader know where he is in Ibn 'Arabī's *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyyah*. It is pos-

²³ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 261, l. 13 / Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, p. 255, l. 10; Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī p. 263, l. 15–264.1 / Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, p. 259, l. 8.

²⁴ Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, edition p. 250; translation p. 214.

²⁵ This passage in Shīrāzī's epistle seems to be textually dependent on Shahrazūrī, Shams al-Dīn, *Rasā'il al-shajarah al-ilāhīyah fī 'ulūm al-ḥaqā'iq al-rabbāniyyah*, ed. by N. Ḥabībī, 3 vols., Tehran: Iranian Institute of Philosophy, 2005, vol. 3, p. 457.

²⁶ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 254, l. 7.

²⁷ I adopt Walbridge's translation of *nāqūr* and *ṣūr*, cf. Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, translation p. 211. Both are Quranic notions, cf. Q 74:8; Q 39:68.

²⁸ Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, translation p. 211.

sible that Dashtakī took the trouble to find the passage to which Shīrāzī was referring and included it in his own text right before the reference. Manuscript *jīm* of Dashtakī's text, which is in agreement with Shīrāzī's more often than not, omits this whole passage. This would cast into doubt whether the passage was really added by Dashtakī. Without a thorough comparison of all the manuscript evidence available, it is difficult to come to a conclusion on this issue.

The second passage present in Dashtakī's text but absent in Shīrāzī's, follows soon after the first passage. It consists of a citation, including a proper attribution, from Qayṣarī's (d. 1350) *Sharḥ al-Fuṣūṣ*.²⁹ It seems implausible that Shīrāzī was still alive when Qayṣarī finished his commentary on Ibn 'Arabī's *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, thus, a citation from Qayṣarī's work simply cannot be part of Shīrāzī's epistle. The citation is a few sentences long summary of Qayṣarī's knowledge of the world of image (*al-‘ālam al-mithālī*) which he calls a spiritual world (*‘ālam rūḥānī*) made up of luminous substances which nonetheless resemble the sensible world in being sensible and having magnitude (*maḥsūs^{am} miqdāriyy^{am}*).³⁰ He further argues that it cannot be part of either the intelligible world or the sensible, since “everything that is an isthmus (*barzakh*) to two things cannot but be something different from both of them.”³¹ According to him, “substantial realities” (*al-ḥaqā’iq al-jawhariyyah*, equivalent to Platonic forms) exist in all worlds at the same time, both the “spiritual” (*al-rūḥāniyyah*), intelligible (*al-‘aqliyyah*) and imaginable (*al-khayālīyyah*). In each world, they assume a shape appropriate to that world. What exactly he means by spiritual world is not explained, however, as the material, sensible world is not mentioned, it could be that Qayṣarī is using “spiritual” to refer to the sensible world. He then explains the place of the realm of imagination. The faculty of imagination, belonging to the universal soul, is the locus of that realm, and its place of manifestation. He elaborates on two common names for this realm, the world of image (*al-‘ālam al-mithālī*) and that of the independent imagination (*al-khayāl al-munfaṣil*).³² He gives straightforward interpretations of the terms; firstly, it is called the world of image because it consists of forms of what is in the sensible world, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, because it is seen from the

²⁹ It corresponds with the first two pages of Qayṣarī's discussion of the world of image in his introduction (*muqaddimah*) to his commentary on *Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*; Qayṣarī, Dāwud, *Sharḥ Fuṣūṣ al-ḥikam*, ed. H. Z. al-Amuli (Qom: Bustān kitāb Qum, 2004), pp. 117–118. The editor of Dashtakī's text, Awjabi, lets the readers believe that only the first part of this extra passage is a citation, which would make the second part properly Dashtakī's (see Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 251, especially endnote 116). This is simply not correct as a cursory comparison with Qayṣarī's text reveals.

³⁰ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 250 / Qayṣarī, p. 117.

³¹ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 251 / Qayṣarī, p. 117.

³² The former comes from Suhrawardī, the latter from Ibn 'Arabī. Suhrawardī never used the term *‘ālam al-mithāl*, but mentioned *al-‘ālam al-mithālī* one time. Cf. Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], p. 154. For Ibn 'Arabī, see, e.g., Ibn 'Arabī, *al-Futūḥāt al-makkiyyah*, (Cairo: Dār al-kutub al-‘arabiyyah al-kubrā, 1911), vol. 2, p. 311.

higher intelligible world, the first realm where things assume a certain form. Secondly, it is called independent imagination because it is not material, “unlike the dependent imagination (*al-khayāl al-muttaṣil*),” he adds. With this, he means that it is something different from our faculty of imagination, which was seen by many as a material faculty located in the brain.³³ Qayṣarī concludes with a description of what the imaginable form could be. It is a form that encapsulates the thing’s perfections (*kamālāt*), which, he says, is possible because every inner perfection can be expressed by something visible (*al-ism al-zāhir*). This is not a new view, but simply an obscure way of describing the process whereby people may encounter delights promised by revelation, such as the houris and wine, according to the level of perfection they have attained in this life.³⁴ Their inner state of affairs finds expression in an outward way. Since Qayṣarī’s way of phrasing only speaks of “perfections,” it obscures the fact that this principle may also be applied to people with imperfections. Shīrāzī’s epistle, for example (drawing on the commentaries on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*), emphasizes that people with imperfections may turn into an animal in the world of image, according to their vile state. A peacock stands for vanity, a pig for greed, and so forth.³⁵ By including Qayṣarī’s opinion, Dashtakī strengthens the idea that Suhrawardī and Ibn ‘Arabī are fundamentally talking about the same thing.

The third passage, new to Dashtakī’s text, is four pages long.³⁶ It is likely to be entirely from Dashtakī himself. He begins with: “So this is a summary in explaining what the world of image is.”³⁷ Already in this short sentence, there are three words ending in *-āl*, which is then repeated several times more to give the introduction a rhyming cadence. Immediately after the first sentence, he says “in it is carelessness” (*fīhi ihmāl*), thereby announcing that the discussion that preceded this new passage lacks critical reflection on some aspects of the idea of a world of image. He properly concludes his introduction with the words: “so we say” (*fa-naqūlu*).

What follows next in his text is a summary of the idea of a world of image, paraphrasing Shīrāzī’s *Sharḥ Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*.³⁸ In this summary, Dashtakī’s

³³ Cf. Ibn Sīnā, *al-Najāt*, in: *Avicenna’s Psychology*, transl. by F. Rahman, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 31.

³⁴ Expressed as early as Ibn Sīnā, *al-Risālah al-Aḥwāyiyah*, in: *Epistola sulla Vita Futura*, ed. and transl. F. Lucchetta (Padua: Editrice Antenore, 1969), p. 223–225.

³⁵ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 262; Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, edition p. 257–258; translation p. 220.

³⁶ This passage is missing in this place in one of the manuscripts, but resurfaces in slightly altered form at the end of the epistle in that manuscript.

³⁷ Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 255, l. 11.

³⁸ That he is not just using Shīrāzī’s epistle is already clear from the paraphrase of the passage of which we earlier studied the intertextuality. It includes elements that are not present in Shīrāzī’s epistle, but which exist in his commentary on *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*. Compare Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, p. 256; Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī, edition p. 241; Shīrāzī, Quṭb al-Dīn, *Sharḥ-i Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq of Suhrawardī: Commentary on Illuminating Wisdom*, ed. by A. Nourani and M. Mohaghegh (Tehran: Institute of Islamic Studies, 2001), p. 493.

concise exposition of three arguments in favor of the existence of a world of image is especially interesting.

The first of these arguments he conveys with the utmost simplicity, using only one word, namely, “experience” (*al-awwal: al-mukāshafah*). By this, he is referring to the argumentation present in Suhrawardī’s writings and in commentaries on them, to the effect that visionary experiences count just as much as apodeictic proof to argue for or against the existence of something. One concise phrasing of this idea present in the commentary tradition, in the context of defending the existence of the world of image, reads: “If you disprove them by proof, they disprove you by experience.” This stems from Suhrawardī’s *al-Mashāri’* and finds its way into Ibn Kammūna’s *Sharḥ al-Talwīḥāt* and Shahrāzūrī’s *Rasā’il al-shajarah al-ilāhiyyah*, and possibly other works.³⁹ Ultimately, it can be traced back to Suhrawardī’s *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*. “If the observations of one or two individuals are to be given weight in astronomy,” says Suhrawardī, “how then may we ignore the testimony of the pillars of philosophy and prophecy as to that which they beheld in their spiritual observations?”⁴⁰ To this Suhrawardī adds his own story, how he “once was zealous in defense of the peripatetic path [...] until he saw his Lord’s demonstration.”⁴¹ It seems that from then on, experience was an important mode of acquiring knowledge for him, and became a pillar in upholding a fourth world.⁴²

The second is the observation that images in a mirror do not exist in the mirror, nor in the air, nor in a faculty, hence they must exist in another realm. This is essentially a rephrasing of Shīrāzī’s epistle, which in turn may be textually reliant on Shahrāzūrī’s *Rasā’il al-shajarah al-ilāhiyyah*, as discussed above, and ultimately goes back to Suhrawardī’s *Ḥikmat al-ishrāq*.

The third considers dreams and what “those who have gone mad, have pleurisy (*al-barsām*), or a cerebral issue (*al-sarsām*) see,” for example what has happened in the past. Again, what they see does not exist in the air or in a faculty, so it must be in another realm.⁴³ The inclusion of people with serious mental or physical illness in this last argument is perhaps surprising but can be explained. What Dashtakī is referring to is that in dreams all people have sensation-like experience of things that may not exist in this world. People with serious mental health problems, such as schizophrenia, may have experiences that are similar, if not the same. This can even occur in people with general physical health issues. For example, even a bad fever can cause one to hallucinate. But

³⁹ A detailed discussion of this will be given in my forthcoming Ph.D. dissertation.

⁴⁰ Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], p. 108.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, cf. Quran 12:24.

⁴² This is clear from the way Suhrawardī opens his discussion of the fourth world, the “world of suspended images,” when he says: “I myself have had veridical experience which indicates...” (*walī fī nafsī tajārub ṣahīḥah*), Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], p. 149.

⁴³ See Shīrāzī’s epistle, p. 213 (translation), p. 249 (edition).

the word “hallucination” would imply it is not real, it is only mentally existing and does not exist on its own. This in itself is therefore no argument for a world of imagination. But Dashtakī points to something he considers to be a fact, namely that sometimes a person can experience things that have actually happened in the past. What he probably means is that it is possible to compare such experiences with historical accounts, to verify how veridical the experience has been. His argumentation then apparently implies that if the experience matches reality, whatever has been experienced must be real on its own, and not just in the faculty of imagination of that person. If it cannot be in the air, it must be in another realm.⁴⁴ The argument reminds one of similar arguments proposed by Suhrawardī and his commentators, who point to veridical experience of prophets and saints, not only of the past, but also of the future.⁴⁵ Considering the three arguments listed by Dashtakī, the case of prophets and saints should be filed under the first argument. Therefore, Dashtakī is quite right in only using dreams and health issue-induced experience in the third argument. Afterwards, he concludes this summary by saying “So this is what I know [lit., ‘have’] and the gist of the people’s words that have reached me, as provided by the perception of illumination (*madhāq al-ishrāq*).” A comparison with Dashtakī’s final sentence of the whole epistle, given above, shows that these two sentences are almost exactly the same.

Dashtakī’s text continues with five objections that may be raised to the idea of a world of image. The first points to the notion that “everything having magnitude is in a locus” (*kull miqdār fī maḥall*). If this is accepted then we must conclude that this invalidates most of the proofs proposed in favor of the world of image. The second objection simply states that if there were an infinite number of such forms, then it would follow that there exists dimensional (*ab‘ād*) infinity. It is left to the reader to understand that the actual infinite is impossible.⁴⁶ The third targets images in mirrors. The central question is how an image can appear in a mirror. As is proposed in Shīrāzī’s epistle, images cannot be inherent in the mirror so they have to exist somewhere else; that somewhere else is called the world of image. Dashtakī points out that since we see images in mirrors, and mirrors are part of our world, it must mean that such an image is a part of (*mutaqaddir*) this world too, not some other world. In other words, if the image were truly in another world, it would not be possible to see it in this world. His argumentation pertains to what is the simplest yet consistent explana-

⁴⁴ Cf. Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], pp. 72–73, where Suhrawardī gives this argumentation but refrains from drawing the conclusion that these images must be in another realm. He picks this up and draws the conclusion on p. 138.

⁴⁵ Cf. Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], pp. 152, 153, 155.

⁴⁶ Cf. Davidson, H. *Proofs for Eternity, Creation and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 407–409, for an excellent treatment of this principle which he traces back to Aristotle.

tion of the visibility of images in mirrors in this world.⁴⁷ Those who do insist that such images exist in another world, are forced to speak of the coming and going (*ḥudūthuhā wa-zawāluhā*) of such images, while a much easier explanation is that images become apparent and obscured. To add force to his position, he shows other difficulties in maintaining that images in mirrors are part of another world. For even should we suppose that images are in the world of image and only come and go in the mirror, if this coming (*ḥudūth*) means that the image comes to be in this world, then the same observation stands; the image is now part of this world, not of another world. If, on the other hand, it is said that such coming to be is not referring to a coming to be in this world, the same problem remains; the image is not part of this world so it is impossible for us to see it in this world.

Between the third and the fourth objections, he puts in another comment that provides the set-up for a string of objections and responses, stretching from this comment until the end of the fifth objection. The issues he raises concern the difference between the way images from the world of image should be and how we perceive actual images. “Also,” he says, “were the thing seen in a mirror or a dream of this type of form, then it would be visible in its subtlety, not by the coarseness of bodies.” He leaves it to the reader to infer that since we see such images in the guise of bodies, not in their subtlety, then images in mirrors and dreams cannot be part of the world of image. The fourth objection seems to be in essence the same, this time phrased by saying that images from the world of image do not carry the qualities of bodies (*kayfiyyāt al-ajsām*), because that is simply not how they are made. This time he includes a response; it could be said that the way images from the world of image relate to images we see is through a two-step process. First they become visible through a representative image, this being a locus of manifestation (*mazhar*) for it in the world of image. Then this locus, or representative image, becomes itself visible in a locus of manifestation which is of this world. The fifth objection takes issue with this, by considering what it means to become apparent in a locus of manifestation. Dashtakī argues from his opponents’ point of view, to show that the latter arrive at a wrong conclusion. From the assertion that things become apparent in loci of manifestation, it follows that whatever uses the imagination (*al-khayāl*) as its locus is also only visible in the imagination.⁴⁸ With this reasoning, he is essentially returning to his third argument, arriving again at the result that whatever is in the imagination is only in the imagination. The conclusion that this argument invites us to make is again left to the reader to draw. If imaginable forms are

⁴⁷ This is clear from the belittling way he speaks of his opponents. He includes a possible response which merely states “but another improbability disappears with it,” which confirms our interpretation that Dashtakī is looking for the simplest yet consistent solution. He does not expand on what this other improbability is, nor does he counter it.

⁴⁸ The word “imagination” here is used to refer to the world of image, in Ibn ‘Arabī’s terms, the independent imagination, not the human faculty of imagination.

only in the world of image, and if we see forms in mirrors and dreams, then clearly these latter forms cannot be imaginable forms. He offers a possible response which states that a thing only becomes manifest in a locus provided that locus itself is manifest. He does not elaborate on what that exactly means—his reasoning appears to be circular—and he also does not go into it any further. Instead he concludes with what he sees as one of the fundamental, underlying issues, namely that bodies, when considered intelligibly or imaginably, do not have volume. He does not expand on this point and instead refers to his *al-Ḥikmah al-manṣūriyyah* (which is most likely lost to us).

After these astute reflections on the argumentation for the reality of the world of image, he leads the readers into calmer waters by once more summarizing what the theory means, this time using the terms “dependent” and “independent imagination,” as supplied by Ibn ‘Arabī.⁴⁹ Dashtakī asserts that whatever is merely imagined and not witnessed (*lā yushāhadu*) is a restricted imaginable form (*al-mithāl al-muqayyad*). Things that are witnessed are absolute imaginable forms (*mithāl mutlaq*). He gives an example of this difference, which concludes the four-page passage. A mountain made of ruby can be merely imagined but can also be witnessed. The different modes of perception imply a different ontological status for that mountain.

The context of his other writings

Considering the third passage that Dashtakī added to Shīrāzī’s epistle, the only passage properly his, he seems to be positive about the idea of a world of image. However, had he been a true adherent of Suhrawardī’s system of thought, and in particular on this issue, we would expect him to involve the concept more often in his writings. Besides this epistle, he remains completely silent about it in his *Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr*.⁵⁰ As far as I know, only a limited number of his other writings mention the world of image, and none of them does so in the extensive way as does the epistle embedded in this super-commentary. Besides this epistle, the writing that mentions this subject most extensively is his *Mir’āt al-ḥaqā’iq wa-mujlī al-daqā’iq*. This is probably due to the fact that he wrote this text during the same period as *Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr*.⁵¹ In the *Mir’āt*, he

⁴⁹ See above, footnote 32.

⁵⁰ Except for one sentence in an early part of the super-commentary, where he lists a number of objections against Dawānī’s definition of sensible determination (*al-ishārah al-ḥissiyyah*). As the seventh objection, he considers imaginable forms. Since they can be pointed to (*mushār ilayhi*), they must be occupying space (*mutaḥayyiz*). He says that this goes against what Suhrawardī thinks and that he will later explain more. Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī, pp. 51–52.

⁵¹ He finished the first version in 1490, following an extraordinary inner experience. He later revised it, finishing the second version in 1497, see Pourjavady, *Philosophy in Early Safavid Iran*, pp. 25–26.

offers thirty propositions that go against the common opinion. The fourth states that “the world of image exists, contrary to [what] the Peripatetics [think], and is determined (*mutaqaddar*), contrary to [what] the Illuminationists [think]. Its place of manifestation is the subtle bodies. We have already indicated its proof in our commentary on *Hayākil al-nūr*.”⁵² This reference is undoubtedly to the very epistle we have been studying, so we may infer that he wrote these few words after he had completed the epistle. His proposition goes against Suhrawardī’s opinion, since the latter speaks of “suspended images” (*muthul mu‘allaqah*), whereas Dashtakī speaks of “determined images.” This becomes clearer in another sentence of the same text, where he gives the function of the world of image, namely to resurrect the bodies and realize all prophetic promises, and to enable magic and divination. Speaking of himself in the third person, he says “and Manṣūr’s position is that they are not suspended in a place,”⁵³ which must be a negative way of saying they are determined, as he did in the earlier sentence. The term *‘alam al-mithāl* occurs in another sentence in which he claims that it is possible that the world of image exists, being just like this world, but again he simply refers the reader to *Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr*.⁵⁴ The *Mir‘āt* therefore does not give us much more than confirmation that Dashtakī believed in the reality of the world of image in his late twenties. He even includes in his *Mir‘āt* an account of a vision he had that, according to his account, took place in Hūrqalyā, the name of a place associated with the world of image.⁵⁵

After authoring these two texts, he remains almost completely silent regarding the world of image in his later works. In his *Īmān al-īmān*, he makes one neutral reference to it.⁵⁶ Besides that, it also appears in *Hujjat al-kalām li-īdāh muhajjat al-islām*, a text primarily dealing with bodily resurrection. After a vague introduction to the idea that bodily resurrection may mean that we attain an imaginable body,⁵⁷ he admits the possibility that this may happen in the *barzakh*, the time between death and the Day of Resurrection.⁵⁸ The term *‘alam al-mithāl* is not used until the very last paragraph of the text. There he gives another version of the argument from experience, saying, referring specifically to

⁵² Dashtakī, Ghiyāth al-Dīn, *Mir‘āt al-ḥaqā’iq wa-mujlī al-daqa’iq*, in: Dashtakī, *Muṣannaḥāt*, vol. 1, p. 98.

⁵³ *al-madhhab al-Manṣūr annahu ghayr mu‘allaq fī makān*, *ibid.*, p. 119.

⁵⁴ Again referred to as *Sharḥ Hayākil al-nūr*, *ibid.*, p. 121.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 126. See Suhrawardī, *The Philosophy of Illumination* [= *Ḥikmat al-Ishrāq*], p. 160. The relationship between Hūrqalyā and the world of image is one of the focal points in Corbin, H., *Terre céleste et corps de résurrection: de l’Iran mazdéen à l’Iran shī’ite*, Paris: Buchet/Chastel, 1960 [transl. by N. Pearson, *Spiritual Body and Celestial Earth* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1977)].

⁵⁶ Dashtakī, *Muṣannaḥāt*, vol. 1, p. 52.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 178. He associates this view not only with “the Ishrāqīs and Šūfīs” but also with Ghazālī (d. 1111).

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

the Ishrāqīs and the Ṣūfīs, that once we believe in their trustworthiness and have admitted their knowledge of many different subjects, we ought not to deny their assertions concerning the world of image.⁵⁹ At the same time, he seems to do exactly that, when he repeatedly denies that bodily resurrection could mean anything else than the return of the body exactly as it is here on earth.⁶⁰ In fact, he sees this as a necessary part of faith and is not afraid to draw the conclusion that anyone who thinks otherwise is an apostate and unbeliever.⁶¹ In *Hujjat al-kalām* and *Shifā' al-qulūb*, he explicitly rejects the solution offered by the Ishrāqīs,⁶² though he adds in *Hujjat al-kalām* that this does not prove the Ishrāqīs have committed unbelief.⁶³ A thorough, comparative study of his corpus may reveal more details about his views on the world of image and its function for the after-life, but for now we have to conclude that he was not committed to the idea in its full extent.

Conclusion

What we may learn from the preceding discussion is that, in the middle of his super-commentary *Ishrāq Hayākil al-nūr*, Ghiyāth al-Dīn Dashtakī inserted an epistle that is roughly equal to a significant part of an epistle by Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī. That he decided to only include a part of Shīrāzī's epistle, changing it here and there and adding his own passages, shows he was a critical reader of Shīrāzī's text. This is corroborated by our detailed analysis of one passage, in which we saw that on the sentence and word level, Dashtakī is constantly making slight changes to the source text. It would have been easier to copy the source text verbatim. The fact that he does not do that reveals a practice of studying and reflection on the source text.

This reflection is manifested in the one passage where Dashtakī adds arguments for and against the world of image that cannot be traced back to earlier sources and may therefore be regarded as fruits of his own deliberations. How-

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 204.

⁶⁰ *Īmān al-īmān*: Dashtakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 1, p. 58 / *Mir'āt al-ḥaqā'iq wa-mujlī al-dāqā'iq*: Dashtakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 1, p. 126 / *Hujjat al-kalām li-īdāh muḥajjat al-islām*: Dashtakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 1, pp. 155, 161, 162, 163, 185, 186 / *Shifā' al-qulūb*: Dashtakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 2, p. 458 / *Ta'liqāt 'alā al-Sharḥ al-jadīd li-al-Tajrīd*, Dashtakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 2, p. 688; p. 692 / *Kashf al-ḥaqā'iq al-muḥammadiyyah*: Dashtakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 2, p. 977.

⁶¹ *Hujjat al-kalām li-īdāh muḥajjat al-islām*: "Whoever denies this has committed unbelief," Dastakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 1, p. 155; *Shifā' al-qulūb*: "Its denial is unbelief and aberration," Dastakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 2, p. 458; *Ta'liqāt 'alā al-Sharḥ al-jadīd li-al-Tajrīd*: "In short, speculation on resurrection is nothing but unbelief and apostasy," Dastakī, *Muṣannafāt*, vol. 2, p. 692.

⁶² Ibid., vol. 1, pp. 162–163; vol. 2, p. 458.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 189.

ever, Dashtakī's inclusion of Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī's epistle in his super-commentary, and his small additions to it, should not be taken as a sign that he adhered to Suhrawardī's ideas about the afterlife and the world of image. Perhaps he believed that people assume an imaginable body between death and resurrection, as he argued for the possibility of this in his *Hujjat al-kalām*, and perhaps he believed people may undergo visionary experiences in the world of image, as his account of his own experience in his *Mir'āt al-ḥaqā'iq* would imply, but further than this he does not go. Even in his super-commentary, after the epistle, he simply returns to comment on the *Hayākil al-nūr* and Dawānī's commentary and does not return to the notion of the world of image, not even in his chapter on eschatology.

If he did not fully support the idea of a world of image, it may have been the case that he came across Shīrāzī's epistle, recognized its connection with *Hikmat al-ishrāq* and its commentaries, and included it in his super-commentary as an exercise to understand the reasoning behind it better. Perhaps he included it also to ensure the transmission of a piece of knowledge in which he saw value, even though he did not commit himself to it.⁶⁴ That he included it in his super-commentary and refrained from discussing the topic in-depth in other of his writings is not without reason, I would suggest. For, since the world of image is one of the characteristic subjects of the commentary tradition on Suhrawardī, the super-commentary was the proper context to discuss it without having to commit to it personally.

⁶⁴ This is, in a manuscript culture, a necessary practice to keep knowledge from falling into obscurity, see, e.g., Rosenthal, F., *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, 1947), p. 37.