The Virtuous City

AL-FĀRĀBĪ

c. 872–950

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آراء أهل المدينة الفاضلة

Translated from the Arabic with AI (Claude) and edited



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INTRODUCTION

Abu Nasr al-Farabi (c. 870–950), born in Central Asia and active in Baghdad and finally in Aleppo and Damascus, was so respected as an interpreter of Aristotle that later writers called him "the Second Teacher," second only to Aristotle himself. Avicenna said he understood Aristotle's *Metaphysics* only after reading a short treatise by al-Farabi. *The Principles of the Opinions of the People of the Virtuous City*, completed in Damascus near the end of his life, is his most complete statement of what the inhabitants of the best city ought to believe.

The book climbs down the ladder of being and back up again. It begins with the First Cause—one, perfect, an intellect thinking itself—and describes how the ten intellects and the heavenly spheres proceed from it, how the motions of the heavens produce the elements, minerals, plants and animals, and how the human soul, from nutrition to imagination and reason, can reach happiness through the Active Intellect. Only then does it turn to politics: human beings need one another, and the virtuous city is like a healthy body whose ruler, the heart, is a philosopher whose imagination also receives revelation—a prophet as well as a sage.

The last chapters describe the cities that fall short—the ignorant, the wicked, the changed and the errant—what becomes of their citizens' souls, and the false opinions on which they rest: that nature is a war of all against all, that justice is the advantage of the stronger, that religion is a trick of the weak. Drawing on Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's philosophy of nature, al-Farabi's portrait of the philosopher-prophet shaped Avicenna, Averroes and Maimonides.

Synopsis

The author's own summary of the book, chapter by chapter: God, the angels, the heavens, matter, the soul, revelation, the virtuous city and its opposites.

اختصار الأبواب التي في كتاب المدينة الفاضلة تأليف أبي نصر محمد بن محمد بن طرخان بن أوزلغ الفارابي التركي

0.1 On the being that should be believed to be God Most High: what He is and how He is; how He should be described; in what way He is the cause of all other beings; how they come to be from Him, and how He brings them about; how they are bound to Him; how He is known and thought; by which names He should be called; and what those names should signify of Him.

0.2 On the beings that should be believed to be the angels: what each of them is and how it is; how it comes to be, and what its rank is relative to Him; what ranks they hold relative to one another; what comes to be from each of them; how each is the cause of each thing that comes to be from it; over what it exercises governance, and how it governs; and that each of them is the cause of one of the heavenly bodies, and the governance of that body belongs to it.

0.3 On the heavenly bodies as a whole: that each one of them is bound to one of the Secondaries, and that the governance of the heavenly body bound to each of the Secondaries belongs to it.[1]

0.4 On the bodies beneath the heavens, that is, the material bodies: how they exist, how many there are in all, by what each

of them has its substance, and in what it differs from the beings mentioned before.

0.5 On matter and form: what each of them is, these being the two things by which bodies are constituted; what the rank of each is relative to the other; what these bodies are that are constituted by them; and what kind of existence each body gains through matter, and what kind through form.

0.6 On how the beings that should be said to be the angels are to be described.

0.7 How the heavenly bodies as a whole should be described.

0.8 How the material bodies as a whole come to be: which come to be first, which second, which third, until the order reaches the last thing to come to be; that the last thing to come to be is man; and an account, in outline, of how each kind of them comes to be.

0.9 How governance proceeds in preserving each species of them and the individuals of each species; what form justice takes in their governance; that everything that happens among them happens with the utmost justice, soundness and perfection, with no injustice, disorder or deficiency in any of it; that this is how it must be; and that nothing else is possible in the nature of beings.

0.10 On man: on the faculties of the human soul and how they come to be; which comes to be first, which second, which third; what ranks they hold relative to one another; which only rules, which serves something else, which rules one thing and serves another, and which rules which.

0.11 On how his organs come to be, on their ranks and their ranks relative to one another; which is the ruler and which the servant; how those that rule rule, and how those that serve serve.

0.12 On male and female: what the faculty of each is and what the activity of each is; how the child comes to be from them; in

1 *Al-thawānī*, "the Secondaries": al-Farabi's term for the separate intellects that come after the First, each tied to one heavenly sphere. Hereafter they are called "the secondary beings."

what they differ and in what they share; what causes maleness and femaleness; and how it happens that a child sometimes resembles both parents, sometimes only one of them, sometimes some of his more distant ancestors, and sometimes none of his forefathers or foremothers.

0.13 How the intelligibles are imprinted on the rational part of the soul, and from where they come to it; how many kinds of intelligibles there are; what intellect in potentiality is, what intellect in actuality is, what the material intellect is, what the passive intellect is, and what the Active Intellect is, what its rank is, why it is called the Active Intellect, and what its activity is; how the intelligibles are imprinted on the intellect in potentiality so that it becomes intellect in actuality; what will is and what choice is, and to which part of the soul they belong; what ultimate happiness is; what the virtues are and what the vices; which actions are good and which evil; and which are fine and which base.[2]

0.14 On the imaginative part of the soul: how many kinds of activity it has; how dreams come about, how many kinds there are, and to which part of the soul they belong; what causes those that come true to come true; how revelation comes about, what kind of person is apt to receive revelation, and with which part of the soul the person who receives revelation meets it; and why many melancholics foretell future things and are right.[3]

0.15 On man's need for association and cooperation; how many kinds of human association there are; which associations are virtuous; what the virtuous city is, what holds it together, and how its parts are ordered; what kinds of virtuous rulership there are in virtuous cities; what position the virtuous first ruler should hold; what conditions and signs we should look for in a boy or youth, such that, if they are found in him, they prepare him to acquire what he needs to exercise virtuous rulership;

2 The Active Intellect: the last of the separate intellects, through which, for al-Farabi, the human intellect in potentiality comes to think in actuality.

3 Literally "those overcome by bile": in Greek and Arabic medicine, people whose temperament is disturbed by an excess of black or yellow bile.

what conditions must be present in him once he has reached his full development, so that through them he becomes a virtuous first ruler; how many kinds of cities are opposed to the virtuous city; what the ignorant city is and what the errant city is; and how many kinds of ignorant cities and rulerships there are.

0.16 Then an account of the ultimate forms of happiness that the souls of the people of virtuous cities attain in the afterlife, and of the kinds of misery that the souls of the people of cities opposed to the virtuous cities come to after death.

0.17 How the established practices in those virtuous cities should be; then an account of the things that give rise, in the souls of many people, to the corrupt and false principles from which the opinions of ignorance were derived.[4]

0.18 Then an account of the kinds of ignorant opinions from which the actions and associations in the ignorant cities arose.

0.19 Then an account of the corrupt principles that give rise to the opinions from which the errant religions spread.

4 Al-Farabi's word is *jāhiliyya*, "ignorance," which also names Arabia's pre-Islamic past; here it refers to the views of the ignorant cities.

The First Being

The First Cause: one, without partner, opposite or definition; intellect, knower, wise, true and living; its greatness, beauty and joy in itself; how all things emanate from it, and the names by which it may be called.

في الموجود الأول

1.1 This is a book composed by Abu Nasr al-Farabi on the principles of the opinions of the people of the virtuous city.[1]

1.2 The First Being is the First Cause of the existence of all other beings whatsoever. He is free of every kind of deficiency, whereas everything else cannot be free of some kind of deficiency, whether one or more than one. The First, however, is free of every kind. So His existence is the most excellent existence and the most prior existence; there can be no existence more excellent or more prior than His. He stands at the highest degree of excellence of existence and at the loftiest rank of perfection of existence. That is why His existence and substance cannot be mixed with any privation at all. Privation and contraries exist only below the sphere of the moon; and privation is the non-existence of what is by nature such as to exist.[2] Nor can He have existence in potentiality in any manner whatever, nor any possibility of not existing in any way at all. That is why He is eternal, everlasting in existence by His substance and essence,

1 This is the full title of the work, *Mabādiʾ ārāʾ ahl al-madīna al-fāḍila*, usually shortened to *The Virtuous City*. Abu Nasr al-Farabi (d. AD 950) was the leading philosopher of the Arabic Aristotelian tradition before Avicenna.

2 In Aristotelian cosmology the sphere of the moon divides the unchanging heavens from the world of coming-to-be and passing-away below.

with no need, in order to be eternal, of anything else to sustain His continuance; rather, His substance suffices for His continuance and the permanence of His existence. There can be no existence at all like His existence, nor any existence at the same rank as His that anything could possess or attain.

1.3 He is the being that cannot have a cause through which, from which, or for which His existence came about. For He is not matter, nor does He subsist in matter or in any substrate at all; His existence is free of all matter and every substrate. Nor does He have a form, since form can exist only in matter. If He had a form, His essence would be composed of matter and form; and if that were so, He would subsist through the two parts of which He was composed, and His existence would have a cause, since each of its parts is a cause of the existence of the whole. But we have posited that He is a First Cause. Nor, again, does His existence have a purpose and end, such that He would exist only to fulfill that end and that purpose; otherwise that would be in some way a cause of His existence, and He would not be a First Cause.[3] Nor, again, did He acquire His existence from anything else prior to Him; and He is still further from having acquired it from something below Him.

THE FIRST HAS NO PARTNER

Nothing else can share the First's existence, for whatever shared it would be composite and caused.

2.1 He is distinct in His substance from everything else, and the existence He has cannot belong to anything else besides Him. For whatever has this existence cannot be distinct in any way, or other in any way, from something else that also has this existence; there would then be not two, but only a single essence. For if there were a distinction between them, that by which they were distinguished would be other than that which they shared. So that by which each was distinguished from the other would

3 "Through which, from which, for which" echo Aristotle's causes: what a thing consists of, what produces it, and what it exists for.

be one part of what constitutes their existence, and what they shared would be the other part. Each of them would then be divisible in definition, and each of its two parts would be a cause of the constitution of its essence. It would not be first; rather, there would be another being prior to it that was the cause of its existence—and that is impossible.

2.2 Suppose instead that it is the other one that contains that by which it is distinguished from this one, while this one contains nothing by which it is distinguished from the other except the absence of that by which the other is distinguished from it. It then follows that that by which the other is distinguished from this one is the existence proper to the other, while the existence of this one is common to both. The existence of the other is therefore composed of two things: something proper to it, and something it shares with this one. So the existence of that one is not the existence of this one; rather, the essence of this one is simple and undivided, while the essence of that one is divided. That one, then, has two parts through which it subsists, and so its existence has a cause. Its existence is therefore lower than the existence of this one and more deficient, and so it is not in the first rank of existence.

2.3 Moreover, if something else outside Him had an existence like His in kind, He would not be perfect in existence. For the perfect is that outside of which no existence of the same kind as its existence can be found, and this holds for anything whatever. The perfect in magnitude is that outside of which no magnitude is found; the perfect in beauty is that outside of which no beauty of the same kind as its beauty is found; and likewise the perfect in substance is that outside of which nothing of the same kind as its substance is found. So too, any body that is perfect cannot have anything else of its kind besides it, like the sun, the moon and each of the other stars. Since the First is perfect in existence, that existence cannot belong to anything else besides Him. He is therefore alone in having that existence, and so He is one in this respect.

THE FIRST HAS NO CONTRARY

A contrary could destroy what it opposes, so the eternal First Cause cannot have one.

3.1 Moreover, He cannot have a contrary. This becomes clear once one knows what "contrary" means. A contrary is distinct from the thing, so the contrary of a thing can never be the thing itself. But not everything distinct is a contrary, nor is everything that cannot be the thing a contrary. Rather, a contrary is whatever, in addition, is in conflict with it: such that, when the two come together, each by its nature cancels and destroys the other; and such that, if either comes to exist where the other is, the other ceases to exist, and it ceases to exist where it was once the other comes to exist in the thing in which the first had been. This holds generally for everything that can have a contrary. If one thing is contrary to another in its action but not in its other states, then only their actions are of this description; if they are contrary in their qualities, their qualities are of this description; and if they are contrary in their substances, their substances are of this description. Now if the First had a contrary, He would stand to His contrary in this way. It would follow that each of them is by nature liable to perish, and that the First could be abolished by His contrary, and this in His very substance. But what can perish does not have its subsistence and continuance in its substance; its substance is not sufficient for it to remain in existence, nor, again, is its substance sufficient for it to come into existence; that comes about through something other than it. Now what can fail to exist cannot be eternal; and whatever has a substance insufficient for its continuance or its existence has, for its existence or continuance, another cause besides itself, and so is not first. Moreover, His existence would then be due only to the non-existence of His contrary. The non-existence of His contrary would thus be the cause of His existence, and so He would not be the First Cause in the absolute sense.

3.2 It would also follow that the two have some common place able to receive them both, so that by meeting in it each could cancel the other—whether a substrate, a genus or something else besides them. That thing would remain constant while these two succeeded each other upon it, and so it would be prior in existence to each of them. And if someone posits as the contrary of a thing something not of this description, what he posits is not a contrary but something distinct in another way than a contrary is distinct. We do not deny that the First may be distinct from things in other ways besides the distinctness of a contrary and besides that of a being with the same existence as His. So no being can be at the rank of His existence, since two contraries stand at one and the same rank of existence. The First is therefore alone in His existence; nothing else that exists shares the kind of His existence with Him at all, and so He is one. He is, moreover, alone in His rank as well, and so He is one in this respect too.

THE FIRST CANNOT BE DEFINED

The First is not divisible in definition or in quantity, and so is not a body.

4.1 Moreover, He is not divisible in definition into things through which He is constituted. That is, the account that explains what He is cannot signify one of His parts, or two parts, through which He is constituted. For if that were so, the parts through which He is constituted would be causes of His existence, in the way that the meanings signified by the parts of a thing's definition are causes of the existence of what is defined, and in the way that matter and form are causes of the existence of what is composed of them. That is impossible in His case, since He is first and there is no cause of His existence at all. And if He is not divisible in these ways, He is all the further from being divisible into parts of quantity or in other kinds of division. From this it necessarily follows, too, that He has no magnitude and is not a body at all. So He is one in this respect as well. For one of the

senses in which "one" is said is the indivisible. Anything indivisible in some respect is one in the respect in which it is indivisible: if it is indivisible in its action, it is one in that respect; if in its quality, it is one in respect of quality; and what is indivisible in its substance is one in its substance. The First, then, is indivisible in His substance.

INTELLECT, THINKER AND THOUGHT

Free of matter, the First is intellect, thinker and thought at once, and also knowing, wise, true and living.

5.1 For the existence by which He is set apart from the other beings cannot be other than that by which He exists in Himself; so His being set apart from everything else is through His oneness in Himself. One of the senses of unity is the particular existence by which each being is set apart from everything else; it is in this sense that each being is called one, insofar as it exists with the existence proper to it. This sense of "one" coincides with the First Being. So in this way too the First is one, and has more right than any other one to the name "one" and its meaning.

5.2 Because He is not matter and has no matter in any way at all, He is, by His substance, intellect in actuality. For what prevents a form from being intellect and from thinking in actuality is the matter in which the thing exists. Whenever a thing does not need matter in order to exist, that thing is, by its substance, intellect in actuality; and that is the state of the First. So He is intellect in actuality. He is also intelligible by His substance, for what prevents a thing from being intelligible in actuality is, again, matter. And He is intelligible insofar as He is intellect: for that whose identity is intellect does not need, in order to be intelligible, another essence outside it to think it, but thinks its own essence by itself. So by what He thinks of His essence He becomes one who thinks and intellect in actuality; and by His essence thinking Him, He becomes intelligible in actuality. Likewise, in order to be intellect in actuality and one who thinks in

actuality, He does not need an essence that He would think and acquire from outside; rather, He is intellect and one who thinks by thinking His own essence. For the essence that thinks is the very essence that is thought, and so He is intellect insofar as He is thought. That He is intellect, that He is thought and that He thinks are all one essence and one indivisible substance. A human being, for example, is intelligible; but what is intelligible of him was not intelligible in actuality: it was intelligible in potentiality, and then became intelligible in actuality after the intellect had thought it. So what is intelligible of the human being is not what thinks, nor is the intellect in him ever what is thought; nor is our own intellect, insofar as it is intellect, something thought. We are ones who think, but not because our substance is intellect; for what we think is not that by which we have our substance. The First is not like this. In Him, intellect, the one who thinks and what is thought are a single meaning, a single essence and a single indivisible substance.

5.3 The same holds for His being knowing. In order to know, He does not need another essence, outside His own, by knowing which He would acquire excellence; nor, in order to be known, does He need another essence to know Him. Rather, His substance suffices for Him both to know and to be known. His knowledge of His essence is nothing other than His substance: that He knows, that He is known and that He is knowledge are one essence and one substance.

5.4 So too with His being wise. Wisdom is thinking the most excellent things by the most excellent knowledge; and by what He thinks and knows of His own essence He knows the most excellent things. The most excellent knowledge is the everlasting knowledge that cannot cease, and that is His knowledge of His essence.

5.5 So too with His being true. "The true" goes together with existence, and "truth" may also go together with existence: the truth of a thing is the existence proper to it, the most perfect existence that forms its share of existence. Again, "true" is said of the intelligible through which the intellect hits upon the

existing thing so as to correspond to it. That existing thing, insofar as it is intelligible, is said to be true; and with respect to its essence, without relation to what thinks it, it is said to exist. The First is called true in both senses at once: in that the existence He has is the most perfect existence, and in that He is intelligible in such a way that whoever thinks Him hits upon the existing thing as it exists. He does not need, in order to be true by being intelligible, another essence outside Him to think Him. Moreover, He has the greatest claim to be called true in both senses; and His truth is nothing other than His being true.

5.6 So too with His being living and His being life. These two terms do not signify two essences but a single essence. For the meaning of "living" is thinking the most excellent intelligible by the most excellent intellect, or knowing the most excellent object of knowledge by the most excellent knowledge. In the same way, we are first called living when we perceive the finest objects of perception by the finest perception: we are called living when we perceive sensible things, which are the finest objects of knowledge, by sensation, which is the finest kind of perception, and by the finest perceptive faculties, which are the senses. So what is the most excellent intellect, when it thinks and knows the most excellent intelligibles by the most excellent knowledge, has all the more claim to be living. For He thinks insofar as He is intellect; that He is one who thinks and that He is intellect, that He is knowing and that He is knowledge, are in Him one meaning; and likewise that He is living and that He is life are one meaning. Further, the name "living" is sometimes applied metaphorically to what is not an animal. It is then said of every being that has reached its final perfection, and of everything that has attained such existence and perfection that what it is by nature meant to produce issues from it, in the way it is meant to. In this sense too, since the existence of the First is the most perfect existence, He has a greater claim to the name "living" than what is so called by metaphor. The more complete a thing's existence, the more complete what is thought and known of it, when it is known and thought, since what is

thought of it in our souls corresponds to what exists of it. So what is thought of it in our souls corresponds to its existence outside our souls, in proportion to that existence; and if it is deficient in existence, what is thought of it in our souls is a more deficient intelligible.

5.7 Motion, time, the infinite, privation and similar beings: what is thought of each of them in our souls is a deficient intelligible, since they are in themselves beings deficient in existence. Number, the triangle, the square and the like: their intelligibles in our souls are more perfect, because they themselves are more perfect in existence. Accordingly, since the First is at the summit of perfection of existence, what is thought of Him in our souls ought also to be supremely perfect. Yet we find that it is otherwise. So we should understand that He is not, on His side, hard to apprehend, since He is supremely perfect. Rather, because of the weakness of the powers of our intellects and their entanglement with matter and privation, He is hard to apprehend and difficult for us to conceive, and we are too weak to think Him as His existence truly is.

LIGHT THAT DAZZLES THE EYE

We grasp the First poorly not because He is obscure but because His perfection dazzles our weak intellects.

For the excess of His perfection dazzles us, so that we cannot conceive Him completely. It is like light, the first, most perfect and most manifest of visible things: through it all other visible things become visible, and it is the cause of colors becoming visible. One would expect that the more complete and the greater it is, the more complete the eye's apprehension of it would be. Yet we see that it is otherwise: the greater it is, the weaker our sight of it. This is not because it is hidden or deficient—in itself it is as manifest and luminous as can be—but because its perfection, as light, dazzles the eyes, and the eyes are bewildered by it. So it is between the First Cause, the first intellect and the first truth, and our own intellects. What we think of Him is deficient not

because He is deficient in Himself, and our apprehension of Him is difficult not because He is difficult in His existence; rather, it is because of the weakness of the powers of our intellects that He is hard to conceive. So the intelligibles in our souls are deficient, and our conception of them is weak. There are two kinds of this. One kind, on its own side, resists being conceived and thought completely, because of the weakness of its existence and the deficiency of its essence and substance. The other kind is, on its own side, freely open to being understood and conceived completely and in the most perfect way; but our minds and the powers of our intellects, because of their weakness and their distance from the substance of that thing, are barred from conceiving it completely and as it is in its perfection of existence. Each of these two kinds stands, relative to the other, at the farthest extreme of existence: one at the utmost perfection, the other at the utmost deficiency. Since we are entangled with matter, and matter is the reason our substances have become substances far removed from the First Substance, it follows that the closer our substances come to Him, the more complete, certain and true our conception of Him will be. That is, the closer we are to separating from matter, the more complete our conception of Him. We come closer to Him only by becoming intellect in actuality; and when we separate from matter completely, what is thought of Him in our minds becomes as perfect as it can be.

GREATNESS, BEAUTY AND JOY

The First's greatness, beauty and pleasure in Himself exceed ours beyond comparison; He is lover and beloved at once.

6.1 So it is, too, with His greatness, majesty and glory. Greatness, majesty and glory in a thing exist only in proportion to its perfection, whether in its substance or in some accident among its properties. When these are said of us, it is mostly because of the perfection we have in one of our accidents, such as wealth or knowledge, or in some accident of the body. Since the perfection

of the First is distinct from every perfection, His greatness, majesty and glory are distinct from those of everything that has greatness and glory. His greatness and glory reach their utmost in what belongs to Him by His substance, not in something else outside His substance and essence. He has greatness in His essence and glory in His essence, whether or not others hold Him in majesty, whether or not others magnify Him, whether or not others glorify Him. Beauty, splendor and adornment in every being consist in its existing with its best existence and attaining its final perfection. Since the existence of the First is the best existence, His beauty surpasses the beauty of everything that has beauty, and so too do His adornment and splendor. Moreover, all of these belong to Him in His substance and essence, that is, in Himself and through what He thinks of His essence. Our beauty, adornment and splendor, by contrast, belong to us through our accidents, not through our essence, and through things outside us, not in our substance. In Him, beauty and perfection are nothing but a single essence, and so it is with the rest. Pleasure, joy and delight arise and are attained most fully when what is most beautiful, most splendid and most adorned is apprehended with the most exact and complete apprehension. Since He is, in the utmost degree, the most beautiful, the most splendid and the most adorned, His apprehension of His essence is the most exact apprehension possible, and His knowledge of His substance is the best knowledge without qualification. The pleasure the First takes is a pleasure whose essence we do not understand and whose magnitude we cannot know, except by comparison and relation to the pleasure we feel when we have apprehended what is, for us, most perfect and most splendid, with the most exact and complete apprehension, whether by sensation, by imagination or by intellectual knowledge. For in that state we attain a pleasure that we think surpasses every pleasure in greatness, and we count ourselves supremely fortunate in what we have attained, even though that state of ours lasts only a short while and quickly fades. So His knowledge and apprehension of what is best, most beautiful and

most splendid in His essence stand to our knowledge and apprehension of what is most beautiful and most splendid for us as His joy, pleasure and delight in Himself stand to the pleasure, joy and delight in ourselves that come to us. Now there is no proportion between our apprehension and His, nor between what we know and what He knows, nor between what is most beautiful for us and what is most beautiful in His essence; or if there is some proportion, it is a slight one. It follows that there is no proportion between our pleasure, joy and delight in ourselves and what the First has of these; or if there is, it is a very slight one. For how could there be a proportion between what is a small part and what is unlimited in time, between what is far less perfect and what is perfect in the utmost degree? Now if whatever takes more pleasure in its essence, rejoices in it more and delights in it more greatly also loves its essence, is passionately in love with it and admires it more, then clearly the First loves His essence, is passionately in love with it and admires it in proportion; and that admiration stands to our passionate love for the excellence of our essence, in which we take pleasure, as the excellence and perfection of His essence stand to our own excellence and perfection, which we admire in ourselves. In Him, the one who loves is the very one loved, the one who admires is the one admired, and the lover is the beloved. This is unlike what we find in ourselves. For in us, what is passionately loved is excellence and beauty, but the lover in us is not beauty and excellence; the lover has another faculty, which does not belong to the beloved, so in us the lover is not the very same as the beloved. In Him, by contrast, the lover is the very beloved, and the one who loves is the one loved. So He is the first object of love and the first beloved, whether or not others love Him, whether or not others are passionately in love with Him.

HOW ALL THINGS COME FROM THE FIRST

Everything else emanates from the First's existence without adding to His perfection or needing any instrument.

7.1 The First is that from which all else has come to exist. As soon as the First has the existence that is His, it follows necessarily that from Him come to exist all the other beings whose existence does not depend on human will and choice, with the kind of existence they have, part of which is observed by the senses and part known by demonstration (*burhān*).[4] What exists from Him exists by way of emanation: His existence overflows into the existence of something else, and the existence of another emanates from His own existence. In this way, the existence of what exists from Him is in no respect a cause of His existence. Nor is it an end for the existence of the First, as the existence of a son, insofar as he is a son, is an end for the existence of the parents insofar as they are parents—an end in the sense that the existence coming from Him would bring Him some perfection, as happens to us with most of the things that come from us. For example, by giving money to others we gain from them honor, pleasure or some other good, so that these produce some perfection in the giver. So the First does not exist for the sake of something else. Nor do other things exist through Him in such a way that the purpose of His existence is that all other things should exist; for then His existence would have a cause outside Him, and He would not be first. Nor, again, does He gain, by giving existence to what is other than Him, a perfection He did not have before, beyond the perfection He already has—as someone gains who is generous with his wealth or with something else, and acquires through what he gives pleasure, honor, rule or some other good. All these things are impossible in the First, for they would do away with His firstness and His priority, and would make something else prior to Him and a cause of His existence. Rather, His existence is for the sake of His own

4 *Burhān*: demonstration, proof from certain premises (Aristotle's *apodeixis*).

essence, and it accompanies His substance and existence, and follows from them, that something else should exist from Him. Hence His existence, through which existence emanated to others, lies in His substance; and the existence through which He is constituted in His essence is the very same existence through which the existence of something else comes about from Him. Nor is He divided into two things, by one of which His essence is constituted and by the other of which something else comes about from Him—as we have two things, by one of which we are constituted, namely rationality, and by the other of which we write, namely the art of writing. Rather, He is a single essence and a single substance, by which He is constituted and by which, the very same, something else comes about from Him. Nor, again, does He need anything other than His essence in order that the existence of something else should emanate from His existence: no thing in Him, no accident in Him, no motion through which He would acquire a state He did not have, no instrument outside His essence. Fire, by contrast, needs heat, by which water turns to steam, in order that steam should come from it and from the water. The sun, in order to warm what is around us, needs to move, so that through motion it acquires a state it did not have; then, from it and through the state it acquired by motion, heat arises in what is around us. Or again, the carpenter needs the axe and the saw so that separating, cutting and splitting come about from him in the wood. Nor is His existence, through which the existence of others emanates from Him, more perfect than His existence by His substance, nor is His existence by His substance more perfect than that through which the existence of others emanates from Him; rather, the two together are a single essence. Nor can there be any obstacle to the existence of something else emanating from Him, either from Himself or from outside, in any way at all.

THE RANKS OF BEINGS

Beings emanate in descending order of perfection, so the First is generous and just in His substance.

8.1 Beings are many, and for all their multiplicity they differ in rank and excellence. His substance is a substance from which every existence emanates, whatever that existence may be, perfect or deficient. His substance is also such that, when all beings emanate from Him in the order of their ranks, each being receives from Him its allotted share of existence and its rank in it. It begins with the most perfect in existence, which is followed by what is a little less perfect; thereafter the less and less perfect keep following, until it ends at the being beyond which, if one passed on to what lies below it, one would pass to what cannot exist at all; and there beings cease to exist. Because His substance is a substance from which all beings emanate, without His reserving one existence over another, He is generous, and His generosity lies in His substance. Since beings are ordered from Him and each being obtains its share of existence according to its rank from Him, He is just, and His justice lies in His substance; it does not come from anything outside His substance.

8.2 His substance is also such that, once beings have come about arranged in their ranks, they are combined, connected and ordered with one another, in a combination, connection and order through which the many things become a single whole and come about as one thing. That by which they are connected and combined lies, for some things, in their very substances, so that the substances through which they exist are the very things through which they are combined and connected. For other things, it lies in states in them that follow from their substances, like the love by which human beings are bound together: it is a state in them, not the substances through which they exist. These states too are received from the First; for it belongs to the substance of the First that from Him should

come, for many beings, together with their substances, the states by which they are connected, combined and ordered with one another.

THE NAMES OF THE FIRST

Names drawn from perfections we know apply to the First, but signify one undivided substance.

9.1 The names by which the First should be called are the names that signify, in the beings around us—and then in the best of them—perfection and excellence of existence. Yet none of those names, when applied to Him, should signify the perfection and excellence that they customarily signify in the beings around us and in the best of them; rather, they signify the perfection proper to Him in His substance. Further, the kinds of perfection that those many names customarily signify are many; but one should not think that the kinds of His perfections signified by His many names are many kinds into which the First is divided and by all of which together He is constituted. Rather, those many names should signify a single substance and a single existence, not divided at all.

9.2 Of the names that signify perfection and excellence in the things around us, some signify what belongs to the thing in itself, not insofar as it is related to something else outside it, such as "existent," "one" and "living." Others signify what belongs to the thing in relation to something else outside it, such as "just" and "generous." In the things around us, these latter names signify an excellence and perfection whose relation to something else outside it is part of that perfection, so that the relation is part of the whole that these names signify, in the sense that the name—or rather the excellence and perfection—subsists through its relation to something else. When names of this kind are transferred and applied to the First, we intend them to signify the relation He has to others through the existence that has emanated from Him. So we should not make the relation part of His perfection, nor make the perfection signified

by that name subsist through that relation. Rather, we should use the name to signify a substance and a perfection from which that relation necessarily follows; to signify that the relation subsists through that substance; and to signify that the relation follows from what has as its substance the substance the name signifies.

The Heavens and the World Below

The ten intellects and the spheres that proceed from them; matter and form; the ranks of beings; the motion of the heavens and how it gives rise to the elements, minerals, plants, animals and man, and to the justice of their coming to be and passing away.

في الموجودات الثواني وكيفية صدور الكثير

10.1 From the First emanates the existence of the second. This second, too, is a substance not embodied at all, nor is it in matter. It thinks its own essence and it thinks the First, and what it thinks of its essence is nothing other than its essence. Through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a third follows from it; and through its being constituted by its own proper essence, the existence of the first heaven follows from it. The third, too, exists not in matter; by its substance it is an intellect, and it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its own proper essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of the fixed stars follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a fourth follows from it. This one, too, is not in matter: it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its own proper essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of Saturn follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a fifth follows from it.[1] This fifth, too, exists not in matter: it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its essence, by which it is constituted, the

1 The "first heaven" is the outermost, starless sphere; the "second" is the first of the secondary beings.

existence of the sphere of Jupiter follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a sixth follows from it. This one, too, exists not in matter, and it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of Mars follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a seventh follows from it. This one, too, exists not in matter, and it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of the Sun follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of an eighth follows from it. This one, too, exists not in matter, and it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its own proper essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of Venus follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a ninth follows from it. This one, too, exists not in matter: it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of Mercury follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of a tenth follows from it. This one, too, exists not in matter, and it thinks its essence and thinks the First. Through its essence, by which it is constituted, the existence of the sphere of the Moon follows from it; and through what it thinks of the First, the existence of an eleventh follows from it. This eleventh, too, exists not in matter, and it thinks its essence and thinks the First. But with it ends the kind of existence whose possessors need no matter or substrate at all: these are the separate things, which in their substances are intellects and intelligibles. And with the sphere of the Moon ends the existence of the heavenly bodies, which by their nature move in a circle.

THE BEINGS OF OUR WORLD

Below the Moon, things start in their least perfect state and rise toward their perfection.

11.1 The beings we have enumerated are those that possessed their best perfections in their substances from the very begin-

ning, and with these two classes the existence of such beings ends. Those that come after them are those whose nature is not to exist in the best perfections of their substances from the beginning. Rather, it is their way first to have the most deficient of their existences, to start from that, and to rise little by little until each species among them reaches its utmost perfection in its substance, and then in its other accidents. This condition belongs to the nature of this genus; it is not introduced into it from something else foreign to it. Of these, some are natural, some voluntary, and some composed of the natural and the voluntary. The natural ones prepare the way for the voluntary: their existence precedes that of the voluntary in time, and the voluntary cannot exist unless the natural have existed before them. The natural bodies among these are the elements—fire, air, water and earth—and what is akin to them, such as vapor, flame and the like; the minerals, such as stones and their kinds; plants; non-rational animals; and rational animals.

MATTER AND FORM

Every body consists of matter, like a bed's wood, and form, like its shape.

12.1 Each of these subsists through two things. One of them stands as the wood of a bed stands; the other, as the shape of the bed. What stands as the wood is matter (*mādda* or *hayūlā*); what stands as the shape is the form and configuration, and whatever is akin to these. Matter is laid down so that form may subsist through it, and form cannot have subsistence and existence without matter. So matter exists for the sake of form: if no form existed, there would be no matter. Form, on the other hand, does not exist so that matter may exist through it, but so that the embodied substance may come to be a substance in actuality. For every species comes to exist in actuality, and with the more perfect of its two existences, only once its form is attained; as long as its matter exists without its form, it is that species only in potentiality. The wood of a bed, as long as it lacks the form of

the bed, is a bed in potentiality; it becomes a bed in actuality only when its form is attained in its matter. The more deficient of a thing's two existences is through its matter; the more perfect, through its form.

12.2 The forms of these bodies are contraries. Each of them can exist and can fail to exist. The matter of each is receptive of its form and of its contrary: it is possible that the form of the thing should exist in it and that it should not; indeed, the matter can exist under a form other than that one. The elements are four, and their forms are contraries. The matter of each is receptive of the form of that element and of its contrary, and the matter of each is common to all of them. It is the matter both of them and of all the other bodies below the heavenly bodies, since everything below the heavenly bodies comes to be from the elements; and the matters of the elements have no matters of their own. So they are the first matters, common to everything below the heavenly bodies. None of these is given its form from the beginning. Rather, each of these bodies is first given only its matter, through which its existence is merely in remote potentiality, not in actuality, since only its prime matter has been given to it. That is why it is always striving toward the form by which it is constituted, and it keeps rising step by step until it attains the form through which its existence is in actuality.

TWO ORDERS OF RANK

Material things rise from prime matter to man; the separate beings descend from the First.

13.1 The order of these beings is that the basest comes first, then the better and better, until it ends at the best of them, than which there is nothing better. The basest is the common prime matter; better than it are the elements; then the minerals; then plants; then non-rational animals; then rational animals; and after rational animals there is nothing better.

13.2 The beings mentioned earlier, by contrast, are ordered with the best first, then the less and less perfect, until it ends at

the least perfect of them. The best and most perfect of them is the First. Among the things that come to be from the First, the best overall are those that are neither bodies nor in bodies, and after them come the heavenly bodies. The best of the separate ones among these is the second, then the rest in order until it ends at the eleventh. The best of the heavenly ones is the first heaven, then the second, then the rest in order until it ends at the eleventh, which is the sphere of the Moon. The separate things after the First are ten; with the heavenly bodies, all of them together number nineteen.[2] Each of the ten is unique in its existence and its rank; its existence cannot belong to anything else. For if something else shared its existence, then that other, if it is distinct from this one, must necessarily have something by which it differs from this one; and that by which it differs from this one would be its proper existence. So the existence proper to that other would not be the existence through which this one exists; hence their existence would not be a single existence, but each would have something proper to it. Nor can any of them have a contrary, for whatever has a contrary has a matter shared between it and its contrary, and none of these can have matter. Again, what falls under a species has many individuals only because there are many substrates for the form of that species; so what has no matter cannot have anything else besides itself in its species.

13.3 Again, contraries arise either from things whose substances are contrary, or from a single thing whose states and relations in its substrate are contrary—like cold and heat, which both come from the sun: the sun is in two different states, of nearness and of distance, and through these two states it produces contrary states and relations. Now the First cannot have a contrary, nor can His states with respect to the second be contrary, nor His relation to the second a contrary relation. In the second there can be no contrariety either, nor in the third, and so on until the tenth. Each of the ten thinks its essence and

2 So the text, which counts the heavens by the intellects that produce them; taken on their own, the heavens number nine, and the sphere of the Moon is the ninth.

thinks the First. Thinking its own essence alone does not suffice for any of them to be excellent in existence; rather, it acquires complete excellence by thinking, along with its own essence, the essence of the First Cause. In proportion as the excellence of the First exceeds the excellence of its own essence, its delight in itself through thinking the First exceeds its delight in itself when it thinks its own essence. Likewise, its pleasure in its essence through thinking the First exceeds its pleasure through what it thinks of its own essence in proportion as the perfection of the First exceeds the perfection of its own essence; and its admiration and passionate love for its essence through what it thinks of the First exceed its admiration and love for it through what it thinks of its own essence in proportion as the splendor and beauty of the First exceed the splendor and beauty of its own essence. So what it loves first and admires first in itself is through what it thinks of the First, and only secondly through what it thinks of its own essence. Thus the First, in relation to these ten as well, is the first object of love and the first beloved.

WHAT THE HEAVENLY BODIES SHARE

The heavens form nine spheres, each body unique in its species, with form, substrate and intellect.

14.1 The heavenly bodies form nine groups in nine ranks, each group contained by a single spherical body. The first of them contains a single body only, and so moves with a single circular motion, which is very fast. The second is a single body containing bodies whose motion is shared: they have only two motions, and all of them share in both. The third and those after it, seven in all, each contain many bodies that differ in the motions proper to each of them and share in other motions. These bodies are all of one genus but differ in species, and in each species there can be only one in number, with nothing else sharing that species. Nothing else of its species shares the sun's existence; it is unique in its existence; and so too with the moon and each of the other stars.

14.2 These are akin to material beings, in that they have substrates resembling the matters that serve as substrates for forms in general, and they have things akin to form and substance, which subsist in those substrates. Their forms, however, cannot have contraries; the substrate of each cannot receive any form other than its own, nor can it be devoid of it. Because the substrates of their forms contain no privation in any way, and their forms have no privations opposed to them, their substrates do not prevent their forms from thinking and from being intellects in themselves. So each of these is, by its form, an intellect in actuality. By it, it thinks the essence of the separate being from which that body's existence derives, and it thinks the First. Yet not all of what it thinks of its own essence is intellect, because it thinks its substrate, and its substrate does not think. Since it does not think by its substrate but only by its form, there is in it something that is thought but does not think. It thinks all that by which it is constituted and given form—that is, it is constituted by a form and a substrate—and in this it differs from the First and from the ten, which are free of matter and of every substrate. The human being shares matter with it. It too delights in its essence, not only through what it thinks of its essence but through what it thinks of the First, and then through what it thinks of the essence of the separate being from which its existence derives. It shares with the separate being in its passionate love for the First, and in its admiration for itself through the splendor and beauty it has received from the First; but in all this it falls far short of the ten. Of everything they share with material beings, the heavenly bodies have the noblest and best. They have the best of shapes, the spherical; and of the visible qualities, the best, which is light. For some of their parts produce light —these are the stars—and some of their parts are transparent in actuality, since they are filled with light, both from themselves and from what they receive from the stars. They have the best of motions, circular motion. And they share with the ten in having been given, from the very beginning, the best of that by which

they are constituted; and so too with their magnitudes, their shapes and the visible qualities proper to them.

WHY THE HEAVENS MOVE

Heavenly bodies cannot occupy all their positions at once, so they move in circles forever.

15.1 Yet the heavenly bodies differ from the ten in one respect: they could not be given, from the very outset, that toward which they move. And what they move toward is the slightest and lowest accident a body can have. For every body is in some "where," and the kind of "where" that belongs to this body is to be around some other body. Whatever has this kind of "where" cannot move as a whole out of the whole of it. But this kind of "where" has parts, and so does the body that is in it. No part of this body has a better claim to one part of the "around" than to another. Rather, every part of the body must have every part of the "around." Nor does it have a better claim to any part at one time rather than another: its claim holds at every time, always.[3] Whenever a part of this body comes to be in some part of the "around," it needs to have the part in front of it as well, yet it cannot have both parts together at one time. So it has to leave the part it is in and pass to the one ahead, until it has occupied every part of the "around" in turn. And since it has no better claim to the part it was in at one time than at another, that part must be its always. But that part cannot be its always as one in number, so it becomes one in species. It has the part for a while and then does not. Then it returns to one like it in species, leaves that too for a period, then returns to a third like it, leaves that too for a period, then returns to a fourth like it, and so forever. It is clear, then, that what it moves away from, passes through and returns to lies in its relations to the body around which the heaven exists. "Relation" means that we say "this is to that," "this is from that," and the like. For "where" means the relation of a

3 "Where" (Arabic *ayn*) is Aristotle's category of place: a body's position relative to what surrounds it.

body to the surface of the body that fits around it. Every heavenly body is in a sphere, that is, a solid circle. The relations of its parts to the parts of the surface of the bodies beneath it are always changing, and each part returns at some future time to relations like those that went before. Now the relation of one thing to another is the lowest thing that belongs to it, the accident furthest removed from its substance. Each of the spheres and solid circles has a motion of its own, either faster or slower than the motion of the others. Take the sphere of Saturn and the sphere of the Moon: the sphere of the Moon moves faster than the sphere of Saturn.

THE VARYING MOTIONS OF THE HEAVENS

The spheres move at different speeds, come near and far, rise and set, in contrary relations.

16.1 This difference of rank in their motions does not depend on how they stand to anything else. It belongs to them in themselves and essentially: the slow among them is always slow, and the fast always fast. Further, many of the heavenly bodies differ in their positions relative to the center and to what lies beneath them. Because of these differences of position, each of them has an accidental property: it moves around the earth faster at some times and slower at others. This is distinct from the fact that some are always faster and others always slower, as Saturn's motion compares with the Moon's. By their relations to one another, too, they come together at times and separate at times, and stand in contrary relations to one another. Again, at times they draw near to some of what lies beneath them and at times move away from it, and at times they appear and at times are hidden. So these contraries attach to them not in their substances, nor in the accidents close to their substances, but in their relations. Rising and setting are examples: they are two contrary relations of these bodies to what lies beneath them. The heavenly body is the first of the beings to which contrary things attach, and the first things in which there is contrariety

are the relations of this body to what lies beneath it and of these bodies to one another. These contraries are the lowest of contraries, and contrariety is a deficiency in existence. So the heavenly body is touched by deficiency only in the lowest of the things that can exist.

16.2 All the heavenly bodies also have a common nature, by which they all move with the motion of the first of them, a circular motion completed in a day and a night. This motion does not belong by compulsion to what lies beneath the first heaven, since nothing in the heavens can take place by compulsion. They also differ from one another in their substances, though without contrariety: Saturn differs from Jupiter in this way, and every star from every star, and every sphere from every sphere. Then, as we have said, contrariety attaches to them in their relations. These relations and their contraries change and succeed one another upon them: they leave one relation and pass to its contrary, then return to the one they left, in species, not in number. So they have relations that repeat and return, some over a longer period and some over a shorter, and states and relations that never repeat at all. It also happens that a group of them stand in contrary relations to one and the same thing: some, for instance, are near a thing while others are far from that very same thing.

FROM THE HEAVENS TO PRIME MATTER

The heavens' shared nature, differences and changing relations produce prime matter and the contrary forms.

17.1 From the common nature they share follows the existence of prime matter, common to everything beneath them. From the differences in their substances follows the existence of many bodies differing in substance. From the contrariety of their relations and correlations follows the existence of contrary forms. From the change and succession of contrary relations upon them follows the change and succession of contrary forms upon prime matter. A group of bodies may stand, at one time, in con-

trary relations and conflicting correlations to a single essence; from this follows the mixing and blending of things that have contrary forms, and from the various kinds of these blendings arise many species of bodies. From those of their correlations that repeat and return arise the things whose existence repeats, some returning over a shorter period and some over a longer. Some of their correlations and states do not repeat: they occur at some time, without having occurred in the past and without occurring again later. From these arise the things that occur and never repeat at all.

MIXTURES AND THE ORDER OF GENERATION

Elements mix in ever more compound blends, producing minerals, plants, animals and finally man.

18.1 First the elements come to be. Then come the bodies akin to them and associated with them, such as vapors and their kinds, like clouds, winds and everything else that occurs in the air, and also the bodies akin to them around the earth and beneath it, and in water and fire. In the elements, and in each of those other bodies, three sorts of power arise. There are powers by which they move of themselves, without any external mover, toward things that naturally belong to them or come about through them; powers by which they act on one another; and powers by which they receive one another's action. Then the heavenly bodies act on them, and they act on one another. From the combination of actions from these directions arise many kinds of mixing and blending, and many proportions that vary, some without contrariety and some by contrariety. From these follows the existence of all the other bodies. First the elements mix with one another, and from this many contrary bodies arise. Then these contraries mix, some only with one another, others with one another and with the elements. This is a second mixture after the first, and from it, too, many bodies with contrary forms arise. In each of these, too, three sorts of power arise: powers by which they act on one another, powers by which each receives

another's action on it, and powers by which each moves of itself without an external mover. Then the heavenly bodies act on them, they act on one another, the elements act on them, and they in turn act on the elements. From the combination of these actions in different directions arise many further mixtures, which carry them far from the elements and from prime matter. They go on mixing, each mixture following an earlier one, so that each later mixture is always more compound than the one before. This continues until bodies arise that cannot mix in such a way that their mixture produces another body further removed from the elements than they are. There the mixing stops.

18.2 So some bodies arise from the first mixture, some from the second, some from the third, and some from the last. Minerals arise from a mixture closer to the elements and less compound, and are removed from the elements by fewer degrees. Plants arise from a mixture more compound than theirs and are removed from the elements by more degrees. Non-rational animals arise from a mixture more compound than that of plants. And the human being alone arises from the last mixture. In each of these species arise powers by which it moves of itself, powers by which it acts on another, and powers by which it receives another's action on it. Whatever acts on another has, in general, three kinds of object for its action: those on which it acts for the most part, those on which it acts seldom, and those on which it acts as often as not. Likewise, what receives another's action may be the object of three kinds of agent: those that act on it for the most part, those that act on it seldom, and those that act on it as often as not. And the action of each on each is either to support it or to oppose it. Then the heavenly bodies, alongside the action of these bodies on one another, act on each of them, supporting some and opposing others. What they support, they support at one time and oppose at another, and what they oppose, they oppose at one time and support again at another. So the various kinds of heavenly action on them combine with their actions on one another. From this

combination arise a great many further blendings and mixtures, and so in each species there arise many individuals that differ widely. These, then, are the causes of the existence of the natural things beneath the heavenly bodies.

JUSTICE IN COMING TO BE AND PASSING AWAY

Each body has a right through its form and a right through its matter, so things perish in turn.

19.1 This is how they first come into existence. Once they exist, they are meant to remain and endure. Anything among beings that is in this condition is constituted of matter and form; the forms are contrary; and every matter is apt to receive both this form and its contrary. So each of these bodies has a right and an entitlement by virtue of its form, and a right and an entitlement by virtue of its matter. Its form entitles it to remain in the existence it has; its matter entitles it to exist with another existence, contrary to the one it has. Since both cannot be granted at one and the same time, it necessarily follows that one is granted at one time. The thing exists and remains for a while with its existence preserved; then it perishes and its contrary comes to exist; then that one remains; and so on forever. For the existence of neither has a better claim than the existence of the other, nor the survival of either than the survival of the other, since each has its share of existence and survival. Again, one and the same matter is shared by two contraries, and each of the two is constituted by it. The matter has no better claim to one of them than to the other, and it cannot be given to both at once. So it necessarily follows that the matter is given at times to this contrary and at times to that, alternating between them. Each of them, then, is as if it had a right lodged with the other: each holds something that belongs to the other, and the other holds something that belongs to it. With each of them there is a right that ought to pass from each to each. Justice here is that whatever is found of this one's matter be given to that one, or whatever is found of that one's matter be given to this one, alternating

between them. Because justice must be done among these beings, no single thing could remain forever as one in number. So it was made to survive through all time as one in species. For a thing to remain one in species, the individuals of that species must exist for a while, then perish and be replaced by other individuals of the same species, and so forever after this pattern. Some of these things are elements and some come to be from their mixture. Of those that come from their mixture, some come from a more compound mixture and some from a less compound one. As for the elements, the contrary that destroys each of them comes only from outside, since there is no contrary within the whole of its body. As for what comes to be from a mixture of little compoundness, the contraries in it are few, and their powers are broken and weak. So the destroying contrary within it is weak in power and cannot destroy it except with help from outside, and its destroying contrary, too, comes from outside. What comes to be from a less compound mixture has its destroying contraries from outside only. As for what comes from a more compound mixture, the contraries in it and their combinations are many, so the contrariety within these mixed things is more evident. The powers of the contraries in them are strong, and they also act on one another together. Since such things are made of dissimilar parts, nothing prevents there being contrariety within them. So the contrary that destroys such a thing comes both from outside its body and from inside it. Bodies that are destroyed by a contrary from outside do not dissolve of themselves continually. Stones and sand are examples: these and things akin to them dissolve only through external things. The others, plants and animals, dissolve also through things within them that are contrary to them. So if any of these lasts long, it keeps its form for a while by continually replacing what dissolves from its body: something takes the place of what dissolves. But nothing can replace what dissolves from a body and join itself to that body unless that incoming body is stripped of the form it had and clothed in the form of this very body. That is what nourishment is. So a nutritive fac-

ulty was placed in these bodies, together with everything that assists this faculty. Each of these bodies thus draws to itself something contrary to it, strips it of that contrariety, receives it into itself and clothes it in the form it is itself wrapped in. This continues until, over a long span of time, this faculty is spent, and more dissolves from the body than the restoring faculty can replace, so that the body perishes. In this way the body is protected against what dissolves it from within. Against what destroys it from outside, it is protected by the instruments given to it, some within it and some outside its body. So for what endures as one in species to endure, other individuals must take the place of those of it that perish. This happens in one of two ways. Either individuals are brought into existence from the first individuals while these still exist, so that when the first perish these take their place; in this way the species is at no time without some existing individual, whether in that place or in another. Or what replaces the first individual arises some time after it has perished, so that for some time there is no individual of that species at all. So in some of them powers were placed by which a thing like them in species comes to be, and in others they were not. Where such powers were not placed, the causes for what perishes of them lie in the heavenly bodies alone, which generate it, or in the heavenly bodies together with the elements, which assist them in this. Where a power was placed by which a thing like it in species comes to be, this happens through the power it has. Joined to this is the action of the heavenly bodies and of all the other bodies. Either they help, or they oppose it, though not with an opposition that cancels the power's action. Rather, they produce a blend that either brings the action of that power into balance or moves it away from balance, a little or a lot, but not so far as to cancel its action. At that point there arises what takes the place of what has perished of that species. All these things happen either for the most part, or seldom, or as often as not. In this way this genus of beings survives and endures.

HOW EXISTENCE IS PRESERVED

Bodies are preserved by their own powers, by instruments, by ruling bodies, or by all together.

19.2 Each of these bodies has a right and an entitlement by virtue of its form, and a right and an entitlement by virtue of its matter. By right of its form, it is entitled to remain in the existence it has and not pass away. By right of its matter, it is entitled to exist with another existence, opposed and contrary to the one it has. Justice is that each be given its entitlement. Since both cannot be given at one and the same time, it necessarily follows that this one is given at one time and that one at another. The thing exists and remains for a while with its existence preserved, then perishes and its contrary comes to exist, and so forever. What preserves its existence may be a power in the body in which its form resides. It may be a power in another body, an instrument joined to it that serves it in preserving its existence. What takes charge of its preservation may be some other body that rules over the thing preserved, namely the heavenly body or some other. Or it may be all of these together. Again, since these beings are contraries, every two contraries among them share a matter. The matter of this body is also the very matter of that one, and the matter of that one is also the very matter of this one. So each holds something that belongs to the other, and the other holds something that belongs to it. In this respect each has, as it were, a right with each, which ought to pass from each to each. The matter of a thing that is held by another is of one of two kinds. It may be matter destined to take on that thing's own very form, as with a body that is nourished by another body. Or it may be matter destined to take on the form of its species but not its own very form, as with people who succeed people who have passed away. Justice in this is that whatever this one holds of that one's matter be found and given to that one, and whatever that one holds of this one's matter be given by that one to this one. A thing recovers its matter from its contrary and

takes it back in one of several ways. It may do so by a power in it, joined to its form in a single body, so that this body is an inseparable instrument for it in this. The power may be in another body, which is then a separate instrument that serves it only in taking matter back from its contrary, while another power, in that body or in another, clothes the matter either in the thing's own very form or in the form of its species. A single power may do both. What secures its right for it may be another body that rules over it, heavenly or not. Or it may be all of these together. A body becomes matter for another body in one of two ways: either the other body grants it its own form completely, or it clothes it in something of its form and diminishes its strength. A body that is an instrument serving another body is also an instrument in one of these two ways. Either it serves through its form, complete; or the other clothes it with only a little of the strength of its form, in a measure that does not take it out of its essence. It is as when one lends a slave something of the strength of one's own arm, yet holds slaves down until they are humbled and serve.

The Human Soul

The faculties of the soul and the organs of the body, with the heart as ruler; male and female; intellect and the Active Intellect; will, choice and happiness; dreams, prophecy and the vision of angels.

في أجزاء النفس الإنسانية وقواها

20.1 When a human being comes into existence, the first thing to arise in him is the faculty by which he takes nourishment, the nutritive faculty. After that come the faculty by which he senses what is touched, such as heat and cold and the rest; the one by which he senses tastes; the one by which he senses smells; the one by which he senses sounds; and the one by which he senses colors and all visible things, such as rays of light. Along with the senses there arises an appetite toward what he senses, so that he desires it or dislikes it. After that another faculty arises in him, by which he retains what has been imprinted in his soul from sensibles after they have passed out of the senses' view. This is the imaginative faculty. It combines sensibles with one another and separates them from one another in various combinations and separations, some false and some true, and an appetite toward what it imagines is joined to it. After that the rational faculty arises in him. By it he is able to think the intelligibles, to tell the fine from the foul, and to acquire the arts and sciences; and an appetite toward what he thinks is joined to it too. The nutritive faculty includes one ruling faculty and other faculties that are its auxiliaries and servants. Among the organs of the body, the ruling nutritive faculty is in the heart, while its auxiliaries and servants are spread through the other organs. Each of

the servant and auxiliary faculties resides in one of the other organs of the body. The ruling faculty by nature governs the other faculties, and the other faculties imitate it and model their actions on it, aiming at what is by nature the goal of their ruler, which is in the heart. Such are the stomach, the liver and the spleen, the organs that serve these, the organs that serve these servants, and those that serve these in turn. For the liver is an organ that both rules and is ruled: it is ruled by the heart and rules the gall bladder, the kidney and similar organs. The bladder serves the kidney, the kidney serves the liver, and the liver serves the heart, and the rest of the organs are arranged in the same way. The sensitive faculty has a ruler and auxiliaries. Its auxiliaries are the five senses known to everyone, spread through the eyes, the ears and the rest, each of the five perceiving the sensible proper to it. The ruling one is that in which everything the five perceive is gathered together. The five are like its heralds, as though they were intelligence agents, each charged with one kind of report and with the reports from one region of the kingdom. The ruling faculty is like the king, with whom the reports from all the regions of his kingdom are gathered by his agents. The ruling one of these, too, is in the heart.

20.2 The imaginative faculty has no auxiliaries spread through other organs. It is single, and it too is in the heart. It retains sensibles after they have passed out of sense, and by nature it rules over them and has command of them. It separates them from one another and combines them with one another in various combinations, some of which happen to agree with what was sensed and some to differ from it. The rational faculty has no auxiliaries or servants of its own kind in the other organs. Its rulership is over the other faculties: over the imaginative, and over the ruling faculty of every genus that has a ruler and ruled. So it rules the imaginative faculty, the ruling part of the sensitive faculty, and the ruling part of the nutritive faculty. The appetitive faculty, which desires a thing or dislikes it, is a ruler and has servants. It is the faculty through which will comes

about. For will is an appetite toward, or away from, something perceived by sense, by imagination or by the rational faculty and judged to be something to be taken or left. Appetite may be toward knowing something, or toward doing something, either with the whole body or with some organ of it. Appetite comes about through the ruling appetitive faculty, while actions done with the body come about through faculties that serve the appetitive faculty. These faculties are spread through organs prepared for those actions to be done by them. Some are nerves and some are muscles, running through the organs by which animals and human beings perform the actions they have an appetite for: the hands, the feet and the other organs that can be moved at will. So the faculties in organs like these are all bodily instruments, servants of the ruling appetitive faculties in the heart.

20.3 Knowledge of a thing may come through the rational faculty, through the imaginative faculty, or through sensation. When the appetite is for knowledge of something whose nature is to be apprehended by the rational faculty, the act by which what is longed for is attained belongs to a further power within the rational faculty: the faculty of thought, through which thinking, deliberation, contemplation and discovery take place. When the appetite is for knowledge of something apprehended by sensation, it is attained by an act compounded of a bodily act and an act of the soul. Take something we long to see. Seeing it comes about by raising the eyelids and turning our eyes toward the thing we long to see. If the thing is far away, we walk toward it, and if there is a barrier in front of it, we remove that barrier with our hands. All of these are bodily acts, while the sensing itself is an act of the soul. The same holds for the other senses. When one longs to imagine something, this is attained in several ways. The first is an act of the imaginative faculty itself: imagining something hoped for and expected, or imagining something past, or wishing for something that the imaginative faculty composes. The second is what reaches the imaginative faculty from the sensing of something, so that something in it

presents itself as fearful or as hoped for, or what reaches it from the activity of the rational faculty. These, then, are the faculties of the soul.

ONE SOUL FROM MANY FACULTIES

Each faculty serves as matter for the next; the heart rules the body and the brain serves it.

21.1 The ruling nutritive faculty is like matter for the ruling sensitive faculty, and the sensitive faculty is a form in the nutritive. The ruling sensitive faculty is like matter for the imaginative, and the imaginative is a form in the ruling sensitive faculty. The ruling imaginative faculty is matter for the ruling rational faculty, and the rational faculty is a form in the imaginative. It is not matter for any further faculty, so it is the form of every form that preceded it. The appetitive faculty follows upon the ruling sensitive, the imaginative and the rational faculties, in the way that heat in fire follows upon that by which fire is constituted. The heart is the ruling organ, the one that no other organ of the body rules. Next to it comes the brain, for it too is a ruling organ of a kind. Its rulership, however, is not primary but secondary, because it is ruled by the heart and rules the other organs. It serves the heart directly, and the other organs serve the brain according to what the heart by nature intends. It is like the steward of a man's household: he serves the man himself, and the rest of the household serve the steward according to what the man intends in both respects. He is, as it were, the man's deputy: he stands in his place, acts on his behalf, and takes his place in whatever the master cannot do in person. So the brain has charge of serving the heart in the noblest of its functions. For example, the heart is the source of the innate heat. From it the heat spreads into the other organs, and from it they draw their supply. This happens through the innate animal spirit that spreads from the heart into them through the pulsating vessels, and it is by the heat that the heart supplies to them that the innate heat of the organs is preserved. The brain is what tem-

pers the heat that by its nature passes to it from the heart, so that the heat reaching each organ is moderate and suited to it. This is the first of the brain's functions, the first service it renders, and the one that extends most widely to the organs. Again, the nerves are of two kinds. One kind are instruments for the auxiliaries of the ruling sensitive faculty in the heart, by which each of them senses the sensation proper to it. The other are instruments of the organs that serve the appetitive faculty in the heart: through them these organs are able to move with voluntary motion.[1] The brain serves the heart by supplying the nerves of sensation with what keeps their powers preserved, the powers by which the auxiliaries are able to sense. The brain also serves the heart by supplying the nerves of voluntary motion with what keeps their powers preserved, the powers by which the instrumental organs are able to perform the voluntary motion through which they serve the appetitive faculty in the heart. For many of these nerves have their roots, from which they draw what preserves their powers, in the brain itself, and many have their roots in the spinal cord that runs down from it. The spinal cord is joined at its top to the brain, so the brain supplies these nerves, with the spinal cord sharing in the supply. Again, the imaginative faculty imagines only when the heat of the heart is at a definite level. Likewise, the rational faculty thinks only when the heart's heat is in a certain measure, that is, the measure proper to that act, and the same holds for its retaining and recalling a thing. So the brain also serves the heart by bringing its heat to the balance at which its imagining is good, the balance at which its thinking and deliberation are good, and the balance at which its retention and recall are good. With one part of itself it tempers the heat so that imagining is sound; with another part, so that thinking is sound; and with a third, so that it suits retention and memory. The reason is this. Since the heart is the source of the innate heat, its heat could only be made strong and excessive, so that there would be a surplus to flow

1 "Spirit" (*rūḥ*) is the term of Galenic medicine (Greek *pneuma*) for a fine vapor carried in the arteries and nerves that conveys heat and the powers of the soul.

out to the other organs, and so that it would not fall short or fail. It is thus in itself only for the sake of an end. Since this is so, the heat that passes from it to the organs had to be tempered, for its heat in itself is not at the balance at which its own proper acts are performed well. For this reason the brain was made by nature cold and moist, even to the touch, compared with the other organs, and a faculty of the soul was placed in it by which the heat of the heart is brought to a definite, determinate balance. As for the nerves of sensation and of motion, since they are earthy by nature and quick to dry out, they needed to be kept moist, supple enough to stretch and contract. The nerves of sensation needed, besides this, the innate spirit with no smokiness in it at all, and such is the condition of the innate spirit that runs through the parts of the brain. Since the heart is excessively hot and fiery, the roots of the nerves, from which they draw what preserves their powers, were not placed in the heart, lest they dry out quickly, dissolve, and lose their powers and functions. Their roots were placed in the brain and the spinal cord, because these two are very moist, so that moisture might pass from each of them into the nerves, keeping them supple and preserving their powers of soul. Some nerves need the moisture passing into them to be watery and fine, with no viscosity at all; others need some viscosity. Those that need a fine wateriness without viscosity had their roots placed in the brain. Those that need, besides this, their moisture to be viscous had their roots placed in the spinal cord. And those that need their moisture to be slight had their roots placed at the bottom of the vertebrae and in the coccyx.

21.2 After the brain comes the liver, after it the spleen, and after that the organs of generation. Take any faculty in an organ whose nature is to perform a bodily act by which some body separates from that organ and passes to another. It necessarily follows either that the other organ is joined to the first, as many nerves are joined to the brain and many to the spinal cord, or that there is a passage and a continuous channel to that organ along which that body flows, whether the faculty serves the

organ or rules it: so with the mouth, the lungs, the kidney, the liver, the spleen and the rest. And whenever a faculty needs, or is by nature such as, to perform an act of the soul in another organ, it necessarily follows that there is a bodily channel between them, as with the action of the brain on the heart.

MALE AND FEMALE

Organs form in order from the heart; the female faculty supplies matter and the male gives form.

The first of the organs to be formed is the heart, then the brain, then the liver, then the spleen, and the other organs follow them. The organs of generation are the latest of all to function, and their rulership in the body is slight. This is evident from the action of the testicles and from their preserving the male heat and the male spirit that pass to them from the heart, in male animals that have testicles.

21.3 The faculty by which generation takes place is partly ruling and partly serving: the ruling part is in the heart, the serving part in the organs of generation. The faculty of generation is twofold. One prepares the matter from which the animal possessing that faculty is formed. The other gives the form of that species of animal and moves the matter until it acquires the form belonging to that species. The faculty that prepares the matter is the faculty of the female, and the one that gives the form is the faculty of the male. For the female is female by the faculty by which she prepares the matter, and the male is male by the faculty that gives that matter the form of the species to which that faculty belongs. The organ that serves the heart in providing the animal's matter is the womb; the one that serves it in giving the form, whether in humans or in other animals, is the organ that produces semen. When the semen reaches the female's womb and meets there blood that the womb has prepared to receive the human form, the semen gives that blood a power by which it moves until there come about from that blood the human organs and the form of each organ, in short,

the human form. So the blood prepared in the womb is the matter of the human being, and the semen is what moves that matter until the form comes about in it. The semen stands to the blood prepared in the womb as rennet stands to the milk it curdles. Just as rennet brings about the curdling in the milk but is neither a part nor the matter of what curdles, so the semen is neither a part nor the matter of what curdles in the womb. The embryo comes from the semen as curds come from rennet, and from the blood of the womb as curds come from fresh milk, or a jug from copper. What produces semen in a human being are the vessels in which it is found, namely the veins beneath the skin of the pubic region, with some help from the testicles. These veins open into the channel in the penis, so that the semen flows from them into that channel and runs along it until it pours into the womb. There it gives the blood a principle of power by which the blood is changed until the organs, the form of each organ and the form of the whole body come about. Semen is the male's instrument. Some instruments are connected and some are separate. Take the physician as an example. The hand is an instrument with which he treats, the scalpel is an instrument with which he treats, and the medicine is an instrument with which he treats. The medicine is a separate instrument: the physician is in contact with it only while he prepares and makes it and gives it a power by which it moves the patient's body toward health. Once that power is in it, he puts it, say, inside the patient's body, and it moves the body toward health while the physician who administered it is absent, or even dead. So it is with semen. The scalpel performs its act only in contact with the physician who uses it, and the hand is more closely connected with him than the scalpel. The medicine, by contrast, acts by the power in it without the physician being in contact with it. Likewise semen is an instrument of the male generative faculty and acts while separate, whereas the seminal vessels and the testicles are instruments of generation connected to the body. So the veins that serve as the instruments of semen stand to the ruling faculty in the heart as the physician's

hand stands to him: with it he works the medicine, gives it a moving power, and through it moves the patient's body to health. For these veins, which the heart uses by nature, are instruments for giving the semen the power by which it moves the blood prepared in the womb toward the form of that species of animal. Once the blood has received from the semen the power by which it moves toward the form, the first thing formed is the heart, and the formation of the other organs waits upon whatever faculties happen to arise in the heart. If, along with the nutritive faculty, the faculty that prepares matter arises in it, the other organs are formed as female organs; if the faculty that gives form arises in it, they are formed as male organs. From the former come the generative organs of the female, and from the latter the generative organs of the male. The remaining faculties of the soul then arise in the female just as they do in the male. In human beings these two faculties, the male and the female, are divided between two individuals. In many plants, however, they are joined completely in a single individual, as in many plants that grow from seed. The plant provides the matter, which is the seed, and with it provides at the same time a power by which the seed moves toward the form. For in the seed there is a readiness to receive the form and a power by which it moves toward the form. What gave it the readiness to receive the form is the female faculty; what gave it a principle by which it moves toward the form is the male faculty. Some animals are like this too. There are also animals in which the female faculty is complete, joined with a deficient male faculty that does its work up to a certain point and then ceases, so that it needs a helper from outside. Such are the animals that lay wind-eggs, and many kinds of fish that lay their eggs and then leave them. Their males follow and shed a fluid over them: any egg touched by some of that fluid produces an animal, and any it does not reach goes bad.[2]

21.4 Human beings are not like this. In them the two faculties are distinguished in two individuals, each with organs proper to

2 Wind-eggs: unfertilized eggs, discussed by Aristotle in his works on animals.

it, the familiar ones, while the other organs are common to both. They likewise share all the faculties of the soul except these two. In the organs they share, the male is warmer, and in those whose function is moving and setting in motion, the male is stronger in moving and setting in motion. As for the affections of the soul, those that tend toward strength, such as anger and harshness, are weaker in the female and stronger in the male, while those that tend toward weakness, such as tenderness and compassion, are stronger in the female. Yet nothing prevents there being among human males some in whom these affections are like those found in females, and among females some in whom they are like those found in males. These are the ways in which females and males differ in human beings. In the sensitive, imaginative and rational faculties, however, they do not differ. External things produce impressions of sensibles in the sensitive faculties that serve as auxiliaries. The sensibles of different kinds, apprehended by the five kinds of senses, are then gathered in the ruling sensitive faculty. The sensibles present in this faculty produce impressions of images in the imaginative faculty, and there they remain preserved after the senses are no longer in contact with them. The imaginative faculty has control over them: at times it separates some from others, and at times it combines them with one another in many kinds of combinations, without limit, some false and some true.

HOW THE RATIONAL FACULTY THINKS

The Active Intellect makes the material intellect actual, as sunlight makes sight see.

22.1 It remains, after this, for impressions of the various kinds of intelligibles to be inscribed in the rational faculty. The intelligibles that can be inscribed in the rational faculty are of two kinds. Some are intelligibles that are, in their substance, intellects in actuality and intelligibles in actuality: these are the things free of matter. Others are intelligibles that are not, by their substance, intelligible in actuality, such as stones and

plants, in short, everything that is a body or is in a body possessing matter, and matter itself, and everything whose subsistence depends on matter. These are neither intellects in actuality nor intelligibles in actuality. As for the human intellect that a person has by nature at the outset, it is a certain disposition in a matter prepared to receive impressions of the intelligibles. So it is intellect in potentiality, a material intellect, and it is also intelligible in potentiality.[3] The other things that are in matter, or are matter, or possess matter, are not intellects, either in actuality or in potentiality. They are, however, intelligibles in potentiality and can become intelligibles in actuality. Yet their substances do not suffice for them to become intelligibles in actuality of their own accord. Nor do the rational faculty and what it has been given by nature suffice for it to become intellect in actuality of its own accord. To become intellect in actuality it needs something else that brings it from potentiality to actuality, and it becomes intellect in actuality only when the intelligibles come to be in it. The potential intelligibles, in turn, become actual intelligibles when they come to be thought by the intellect in actuality, and they too need something else to bring them out of potentiality and make them actual. The agent that brings it from potentiality to actuality is an essence whose substance is a certain intellect in actuality, separate from matter. That intellect gives the material intellect, which is intellect in potentiality, something comparable to the light that the sun gives to sight, for it stands to the material intellect as the sun stands to sight. Sight is a faculty and a disposition in matter. Before it sees, it is sight in potentiality, and before colors are seen, they are visible and seen in potentiality. The substance of the visual faculty in the eye does not suffice for it to become sight in actuality, nor do the substances of colors suffice for them to become visible and seen in actuality. So the sun gives sight a light by which it is illuminated, and gives colors a light by which they are illuminated. Through the light it has acquired from the sun, sight comes to

3 The material intellect: the human capacity to think, called "material" because it receives intelligibles as matter receives forms.

see in actuality and to be sight in actuality; and through that light colors become seen and visible in actuality, after having been seen and visible in potentiality. In the same way, this intellect in actuality provides the material intellect with something that it inscribes in it, and that thing stands to the material intellect as light stands to sight. By that very light, sight sees the light that is the cause of its seeing; by the same light it sees the sun that is the cause of the light; and it sees the things that are visible in potentiality, so that they become visible in actuality. In the same way, by that thing which stands to it as light stands to sight, the material intellect thinks that thing itself. By it, the material intellect thinks the intellect in actuality that is the cause of that thing's being inscribed in the material intellect. Through it, the things that were intelligible in potentiality become intelligible in actuality, and the material intellect too becomes intellect in actuality after having been intellect in potentiality. The action of this separate intellect on the material intellect resembles the action of the sun on sight; that is why it is called the Active Intellect. Among the separate things mentioned earlier, below the First Cause, it holds the tenth rank. The material intellect is called the passive intellect. When that thing which stands to the rational faculty as light stands to sight has come to be in it from the Active Intellect, then the sensibles preserved in the imaginative faculty give rise to intelligibles in the rational faculty. These are the first intelligibles, which are common to all people: for example, that the whole is greater than the part, and that magnitudes equal to one and the same thing are equal to one another.

22.2 The common first intelligibles are of three kinds. One kind are the principles of geometry as a science. Another are principles by which one comes to know what is fine and what is base among the things a human being can do. The third are principles used to know the states of the beings that are not of the kind a human being does, together with their principles and ranks, such as the heavens, the First Cause and the other prin-

ciples, and of what by nature comes about from those principles.

WILL, CHOICE AND HAPPINESS

Happiness is the soul's freedom from matter, reached through virtues that make actions fine.

23.1 When these intelligibles come to a human being, there arise in him by nature contemplation, deliberation, recollection and a longing to discover, together with an appetite and longing for some of what he has thought and some of what he discovers, or an aversion to it. Appetite for what one has apprehended is, in general, will. If it arises from sensation or imagination, it is called by the general name, will; if it arises from deliberation, or from reason generally, it is called choice. Choice is found in human beings alone, whereas appetite arising from sensation or imagination is found in the other animals as well. The acquisition of the first intelligibles is a human being's first perfection, and these intelligibles were given to him only so that he might use them to reach his final perfection.

23.2 That final perfection is happiness. It consists in the human soul's reaching such perfection in existence that it no longer needs matter for its subsistence: it comes to be among the things free of bodies and among the substances separate from matter, and remains in that state always and forever, though its rank is below that of the Active Intellect. It reaches this only through certain voluntary actions, some of them acts of thought and some bodily acts. Nor will just any actions do: only certain defined and measured actions, arising from certain measured and defined dispositions and habits. For some voluntary actions hinder happiness. Happiness is the good sought for its own sake. It is never sought, at any time, in order to attain something else through it, and there is nothing beyond it, greater than it, that a human being could attain. The voluntary actions that help in reaching happiness are the fine actions, and the dispositions and habits from which these actions issue are the virtues. These

are goods not for their own sake but only for the sake of happiness. The actions that hinder happiness are the evils, that is, the base actions, and the dispositions and habits from which these actions come are the deficiencies, the vices and the vile traits. The nutritive faculty in a human being was made only to serve the body. The sensitive and imaginative faculties were made to serve the body and to serve the rational faculty, and the service these three give the body comes back to serving the rational faculty, since the rational faculty subsists in the first place through the body. The rational faculty is partly practical and partly theoretical. The practical was made to serve the theoretical, while the theoretical was made to serve nothing else, but so that happiness might be reached through it. All of these are coupled with the appetitive faculty, and the appetitive faculty serves the sensitive, the imaginative and the rational faculties. The serving and apprehending faculties cannot fully perform their service and work except through the appetitive faculty. Sensation, imagination and deliberation are not enough for action unless they are joined by a longing for what has been sensed, imagined, or deliberated on and known; for will is to strive, by the appetitive faculty, toward what one has apprehended. So when one knows happiness by the theoretical faculty and sets it up as a goal, longs for it through the appetitive faculty, discovers by the deliberative faculty what should be done to attain it, with the help of the imaginative faculty and the senses, and then performs those actions with the instruments of the appetitive faculty, all of that person's actions are good and fine. But when one does not know happiness, or knows it but does not set it up as a goal to be longed for, and instead sets up something else as the goal, longs for that through the appetitive faculty, discovers by the deliberative faculty what should be done to attain it, with the help of the senses and the imaginative faculty, and then performs those actions with the instruments of the appetitive faculty, none of that person's actions are fine.

DREAMS AND IMITATION

In sleep the imaginative faculty works on stored images and imitates the body and the intellect.

24.1 The imaginative faculty is intermediate between the sensitive faculty and the rational. When the auxiliaries of the sensitive faculty are all sensing in actuality and performing their functions, the imaginative faculty is acted upon by them, occupied with the sensibles that the senses bring to it and impress upon it; it is also occupied with serving the rational faculty and supplying the appetitive faculty. But when the sensitive, appetitive and rational faculties are in their first perfections, that is, not performing their acts, as happens in sleep, the imaginative faculty is left on its own. It is free of the impressions of sensibles that the senses constantly renew in it, and released from serving the rational and appetitive faculties. It then turns to the impressions of sensibles that it finds preserved and lasting within it, and works on them, combining some with others and separating some from others. Besides preserving the impressions of sensibles and combining them with one another, it has a third activity: imitation. Of all the faculties of the soul, it alone has the power to imitate the sensible things that remain preserved in it. Sometimes it imitates the sensibles of the five senses by combining the sensibles preserved in it that imitate them. Sometimes it imitates the intelligibles, sometimes the nutritive faculty, sometimes the appetitive faculty. It also imitates the temperament in which it finds the body. When it finds the body's temperament moist, it imitates the moisture by combining sensibles that imitate moisture, such as waters and swimming in them. When the body's temperament is dry, it imitates the body's dryness with the sensibles suited to imitate dryness. In the same way it imitates the body's heat and coldness, whenever its temperament happens at some time to be hot or cold. Since this faculty is a disposition and a form in the body, it might be possible that the body, when it is in a certain temperament, produces that tem-

perament in it. But since the faculty belongs to the soul, it receives the temperament that the body produces in it according to what its own nature can receive, not according to the way bodies by nature receive temperaments. For when a moist body produces moisture in another body, the body acted upon receives the moisture and becomes moist like the first.

24.2 When moisture is produced in this faculty, or brought close to it, the faculty does not become moist. Instead it receives that moisture through the sensibles that imitate it. When the rational faculty receives moisture, it receives only the quiddity of moisture, by thinking it, and not moisture itself. In the same way, when something acts on this faculty, it receives it from the agent according to what its substance and its preparedness allow it to receive. So whatever acts on it, if its substance is such that it can receive that thing, and can also receive it as it was conveyed to it, it receives it in two ways. The first is to receive it as it is and as it was conveyed to it. The second is to imitate that thing through the sensibles whose nature is to imitate it. If its substance is not such that it can receive the thing as it is, it receives it by imitating it through whatever sensibles it finds within itself that are of a nature to imitate that thing. For it cannot receive intelligibles as intelligibles. When the rational faculty gives it the intelligibles it has acquired, the imaginative faculty does not receive them as they are in the rational faculty but imitates them through the sensibles that imitate them. When the body gives it the temperament it happens to have at a given time, it receives that temperament through whatever sensibles it happens to have that are of a nature to imitate that temperament. And when it is given something of a kind to be sensed, it sometimes receives it as it was given, and sometimes imitates that sensible thing through other sensibles that imitate it. When it finds the appetitive faculty closely prepared for some quality, such as anger or desire, or for certain actions in general, it imitates the appetitive faculty. It does so by composing the actions that would naturally proceed from the disposition present in the appetitive faculty, which at that moment is prepared to receive

them. In such a case the subordinate faculties sometimes rouse the serving organs actually to perform the actions that those organs would perform if those actions were in the appetitive faculty. By this activity the imaginative faculty sometimes resembles someone who is joking, and sometimes someone acting with premeditation. Nor is that all. When the body's temperament is of a kind that some affection of the appetitive faculty naturally follows, the imaginative faculty imitates that temperament through the actions of the appetitive faculty that arise from that affection. It does so before the affection itself has occurred, and the organs in which the faculty serving the appetitive faculty resides are actually roused toward those actions. For example, when the temperament of the body becomes one that sexual desire in the appetitive faculty naturally follows, the imaginative faculty imitates that temperament through sexual acts. The organs of this act are then roused in readiness for intercourse. This happens not from any desire present at that moment but because the imaginative faculty imitates the desire through the acts belonging to that desire. The same holds for the other affections. In the same way a man sometimes gets up from his sleep and strikes someone, or gets up and flees, though nothing has reached him from outside. What the imaginative faculty imitates of that thing takes the place the thing would occupy if it had actually happened. The imaginative faculty also imitates the rational faculty, by imitating the intelligibles that have come to be in it through the things of a nature to imitate intelligibles. It imitates the intelligibles of utmost perfection, such as the First Cause, the things separate from matter and the heavens, by the best and most perfect sensibles, such as things beautiful to look at. It imitates the deficient intelligibles by the meanest and most deficient sensibles, such as things ugly to look at. In the same way it imitates them by the other sensibles that are pleasing to the eye.

TRUE DREAMS AND DIVINATION

The Active Intellect gives the imagination particulars and intelligibles, producing true dreams and divinations.

24.3 The Active Intellect is the cause by which the intelligibles that are intelligibles in potentiality become intelligibles in actuality, and by which what is intellect in potentiality becomes intellect in actuality. What is of a nature to become intellect in actuality is the rational faculty. The rational faculty is of two kinds, one theoretical and one practical. The practical is the one whose nature is to bring about particulars, present and future. The theoretical is the one whose nature is to think the intelligibles whose nature is to be known. The imaginative faculty is connected with both kinds of the rational faculty. Therefore what the rational faculty receives from the Active Intellect, which plays the part that light plays for sight, sometimes emanates from it onto the imaginative faculty. So the Active Intellect has a certain action on the imaginative faculty. Sometimes it gives it the intelligibles whose nature is to come to be in the theoretical rational faculty, and sometimes the sensible particulars whose nature is to come to be in the practical rational faculty. The imaginative faculty receives the intelligibles through the sensibles that imitate them, which it composes itself. It receives the particulars sometimes by imagining them as they are, and sometimes by imitating them through other sensibles. These particulars are what the practical rational faculty naturally works out by deliberation. Some are present and some will come about in the future. But whatever the imaginative faculty receives of all these comes to it without the mediation of deliberation. So in these matters it obtains what is otherwise obtained only after being worked out by deliberation. From the particulars that the Active Intellect gives the imaginative faculty come dreams and true visions. From the intelligibles it gives it, which the faculty receives by letting their imitations stand in their place, come divinations about divine things. All of these

may occur in sleep or in waking. Those that occur in waking are rare and found in very few people. Of those that occur in sleep, most are particulars, and intelligibles are few.

PROPHECY AND THE VISION OF THE ANGEL

A perfect imagination can receive from the Active Intellect while awake and see what it is given.

25.1 This happens when the imaginative faculty in a person is very strong and perfect. The sensibles reaching it from outside do not overpower it so far as to absorb it entirely, and its service to the rational faculty does not exhaust it. Even while it is occupied with these two, it keeps a large surplus with which it can also perform its own proper activities. Its state when occupied with them in waking is then like its state when freed from them in sleep. Many of the things the Active Intellect gives it are imagined by the imaginative faculty through the visible sensibles that imitate them. These imagined things then return and are imprinted in the sensitive faculty. When their impressions come to be in the common sense, the faculty of sight is affected by those impressions, and they are imprinted in it. From what is in the faculty of sight, impressions of them come to be in the luminous air that is in contact with the eye and bounded by the eye's ray. When those impressions are in the air, what is in the air returns and is imprinted afresh in the faculty of sight in the eye, and this is reflected back to the common sense and to the imaginative faculty. Because all of these are continuous with one another, what the Active Intellect has given becomes visible to this person. When the sensibles through which the imaginative faculty imitated those things happen to be of utmost beauty and perfection, the one who sees them says that God has a grandeur that is majestic and wondrous. He sees wondrous things, none of which could exist anywhere among other beings. Nor is it impossible that a man whose imaginative faculty has reached utmost perfection should receive from the Active Intellect, while awake, present and future particulars or

their sensible imitations. He may also receive imitations of the separate intelligibles and the other noble beings, and see them. Through the intelligibles he receives, he then has prophecy concerning divine things. This is the most perfect rank the imaginative faculty can reach, and the most perfect rank a human being can attain through his imaginative faculty. Below this is the one who sees all these, some while awake and some in his sleep, and the one who imagines all these things within himself but does not see them with his eyes. Below this is the one who sees all these in his sleep only. The statements in which such people express themselves are imitative statements: symbols and riddles, substitutions and similes. These people differ greatly from one another. Some receive particulars and see them in waking only, but do not receive intelligibles. Some receive intelligibles and see them in waking, but do not receive particulars. Some receive and see some of these and not others. Some see something while awake but do not receive some of these in their sleep. Some receive nothing while awake and receive whatever they receive in their sleep only: in sleep they receive particulars but not intelligibles. Some receive something of the one kind and something of the other. Some receive something of the particulars only, and most people are found to be like this. People also surpass one another in this. All of these assist the rational faculty. Sometimes things befall a person that change his temperament, and this prepares him to receive some of these from the Active Intellect, at times while awake and at times in sleep. In some people this lasts for a period, in others until a certain time, after which it disappears. Things may also befall a person that corrupt his temperament and corrupt his imaginings. He then sees things composed by the imaginative faculty in these ways that have no existence and are not imitations of anything existent. Such are the melancholics, the mad and people like them.

The Virtuous City and its Ruler

Why human beings need society; the virtuous city as a healthy body; the first ruler, philosopher and prophet, and the twelve qualities he must have; his successors.

في احتياج الإنسان إلى الاجتماع والتعاون

26.1 Every human being is so constituted by nature that, to sustain himself and to attain his highest perfections, he needs many things that he cannot provide all by himself. He needs a group of people, each of whom provides him with some part of what he needs, and every one of them stands in the same relation to every other. A human being therefore cannot attain the perfection for whose sake his natural disposition was given him except through the association of many people who cooperate. Each provides each with part of what he needs to sustain himself, and from what the whole community provides, each obtains everything he needs to sustain himself and to attain perfection. This is why human individuals multiplied and settled in the inhabited part of the earth, and human associations arose among them. Some of these are complete and some incomplete. The complete are of three kinds: large, middle and small.

26.2 The large is the association of the whole community throughout the inhabited world. The middle is the association of a nation in one part of the inhabited world. The small is the association of the people of a city within part of a nation's territory. The incomplete are the people of a village, the association of a quarter, then the association within a street, then the association within a household, the household being the smallest. The quarter and the village both belong to the people of the city. The

village belongs to the city as its servant, the quarter as its part. The street is part of the quarter, the household part of the street, the city part of a nation's territory, and the nation part of the whole population of the inhabited world. So the highest good and the ultimate perfection are attained first through the city, not through an association less complete than it. Good in the true sense is by nature attained through choice and will, and evils likewise come about only through will and choice. So a city can be set up for cooperation in attaining ends that are evils. Therefore not every city is one through which happiness can be attained.[1] The city in which association aims at cooperation in the things by which happiness is truly attained is the virtuous city. The association through which people cooperate to attain happiness is the virtuous association. The nation all of whose cities cooperate in what leads to happiness is the virtuous nation. Likewise, the inhabited world is virtuous only when the nations in it cooperate to attain happiness.

26.3 The virtuous city resembles the complete and healthy body, all of whose organs cooperate to perfect the life of the animal and to preserve it. In the body the organs differ and are unequal in their natural constitution and their faculties. Among them is one ruling organ, the heart. There are organs whose ranks are close to that ruler, and nature has placed in each of them a faculty by which it performs its action in pursuit of what is by nature the aim of the ruling organ. There are other organs whose faculties perform their actions according to the aims of those that have no intermediary between themselves and the ruler; these are in the second rank. There are yet other organs that perform their actions according to the aim of those in the second rank. And so it goes until one reaches organs that serve and do not rule at all. So too with the city. Its parts differ in natural constitution and are unequal in their dispositions. In it there is one person who is ruler, and others whose ranks are close to the ruler. Each of these has a disposition and habit by which he performs an action that accomplishes what the ruler

1 The printed text lacks "not" in the last sentence, but the argument requires it.

intends; these hold the first ranks. Below them are people who perform their actions according to the aims of these, and they are in the second rank. Below them again are those who perform their actions according to the aims of the second rank. In this way the parts of the city are ordered until one reaches the last, who perform their actions according to the aims of those above them. These are the ones who serve and are not served. They are in the lowest ranks, the lowest of all. There is a difference, however. The organs of the body are natural, and their dispositions are natural faculties. The parts of the city, though natural, perform their actions for the city through dispositions and habits that are not natural but voluntary. It is true that the parts of the city are endowed by nature with unequal natural constitutions, which fit one person for one thing and another for another. But they are not parts of the city by their natural constitutions alone. They are parts of it by the voluntary habits they acquire, which are the arts and the like. The faculties that are by nature the organs of the body have their counterparts in the parts of the city in voluntary habits and dispositions.

THE RULING ORGAN AND THE RULER

The city's ruler, like the heart and like the First Cause, comes first and orders everything else.

27.1 The ruling organ in the body is by nature the most perfect and complete of its organs, both in itself and in what is proper to it, and it has the best share of everything it has in common with another organ. Below it are other organs that rule those below them. Their rule is beneath the rule of the first, and under the rule of the first they both rule and are ruled. In the same way the ruler of the city is the most perfect of the city's parts in what is proper to him, and he has the best share of everything he has in common with others. Below him are people who are ruled by him and who rule others. The heart comes into being first. It is then the cause of the existence of the body's other organs, the cause of their acquiring their faculties, and the cause of their

being ordered in their ranks. When one of them falls into disorder, it is the heart that supplies what removes the disorder. In the same way the ruler of this city must come first. He is then the cause of the city and its parts coming into being, the cause of its parts acquiring their voluntary habits, and the cause of their being ordered in their ranks. If one of its parts falls into disorder, it is he who supplies it with what removes its disorder. The organs close to the ruling organ perform the nobler of the natural actions that serve the aim of the one that rules first by nature. The organs below them perform actions of lesser nobility, until one reaches the organs that perform the meanest actions. In the same way, the parts closest in rank to the ruler of the city perform the nobler of the voluntary actions, those below them perform actions of lesser nobility, until one reaches the parts that perform the meanest actions. The meanness of an action sometimes comes from the meanness of its substrate, even when the action is of great use, like the action of the bladder and of the lower intestines in the body. Sometimes it comes from the action being of little use, and sometimes from its being very easy. So it is in the city too. So too every whole whose parts are by nature harmonious, ordered and linked together has a ruler that stands in this same relation to its other parts.

27.2 This is also how it is with beings as a whole. The First Cause stands to all other beings as the king of the virtuous city stands to its other parts. The beings free of matter are close to the First. Below them are the heavenly bodies, and below the heavenly bodies are the material bodies. All of these follow the example of the First Cause, take Him as their leader and follow in His track, each being according to its capacity. But they follow its aim by ranks. The meanest follows the aim of what is a little above it, that one follows the aim of what is above it, and the third likewise has as its aim what is above it. And so on until one reaches those that have no intermediary at all between themselves and the First. In this order all beings follow the aim of the First Cause. Those that were given everything by which they exist from the very beginning were made from the start to

follow the example and purpose of the First, and so they came to be in the high ranks. Those that were not given everything by which they exist from the beginning were given a power by which they move toward what they are expected to attain, and in this they follow the aim of the First. The virtuous city should be the same. All its parts should, in their actions, follow in due order the example of their first ruler's purpose.

THE PHILOSOPHER-PROPHET

The first ruler is one in whom the Active Intellect dwells: philosopher by intellect, prophet by imagination.

27.3 The ruler of the virtuous city cannot be just any person, for rulership requires two things. The first is that he be prepared for it by natural disposition and by nature. The second is that he have the voluntary disposition and habit for it. As for the rulership that falls to one prepared for it by nature, not every art is one by which a person can rule. Most arts are arts by which people serve in the city, and most natural dispositions are dispositions for service. Some arts are such that by them one rules certain arts and serves others, and some are such that by them one only serves and never rules. So the art of ruling the virtuous city cannot be just any art, nor any habit whatever. The first ruler in a genus is one whom nothing of that genus can rule. The ruler of the organs, for example, is the one over which no other organ can rule, and the same is true of every ruler in general. In the same way the first ruler of the virtuous city must have an art by which one cannot serve at all, and which no other art can rule at all. His art must be the one toward whose aim all the other arts tend, and at which all the actions of the virtuous city are directed. That person must be one whom no other person rules at all. He must be a person who has been perfected and has become intellect and intelligible in actuality. His imaginative faculty must have been perfected by nature to the utmost degree, in the way we have described, so that this faculty in him is prepared by nature to receive from the Active Intellect, either

in waking or in sleep, particulars, either as they are or through what imitates them, and then intelligibles through what imitates them. And his passive intellect must have been perfected with all the intelligibles, so that none of them is hidden from him, and must have become intellect in actuality. Consider any person whose passive intellect has been perfected with all the intelligibles and has become intellect in actuality and intelligible in actuality, so that what is thought in him has become the very thing that thinks. There then comes to be in him a certain intellect in actuality whose rank is above the passive intellect. It is more complete, more separate from matter and closer to the Active Intellect. It is called the acquired intellect. It becomes intermediate between the passive intellect and the Active Intellect, with nothing else between it and the Active Intellect. So the passive intellect is like matter and substrate for the acquired intellect, and the acquired intellect is like matter and substrate for the Active Intellect. The rational faculty, which is a natural disposition, is matter serving as substrate for the passive intellect that is intellect in actuality. The first rank by which a human being is human is the presence of the natural disposition that is receptive and prepared to become intellect in actuality. This is common to all. Between it and the Active Intellect there are two ranks: the coming to be of the passive intellect in actuality, and the coming to be of the acquired intellect. So between this person, once he has reached this stage, and the Active Intellect there are two ranks, counting from the first rank of humanity. Suppose the perfected passive intellect and the natural disposition are treated as one thing, in the way that what is composed of matter and form is one thing, and this person is taken to have as his human form the passive intellect that has come to be in actuality. Then there is only one rank between him and the Active Intellect. And suppose the natural disposition is made the matter of the passive intellect that has become intellect in actuality, the passive intellect the matter of the acquired, and the acquired the matter of the Active Intellect, and the whole of this is taken as one thing. Then this person is the person in whom

the Active Intellect has come to dwell. When this has happened in both parts of his rational faculty, the theoretical and the practical, and then in his imaginative faculty, this person is the one who receives revelation. God, mighty and majestic is He, reveals to him through the mediation of the Active Intellect. What emanates from God, blessed and exalted is He, to the Active Intellect, the Active Intellect causes to emanate to his passive intellect through the mediation of the acquired intellect, and then to his imaginative faculty. Through what emanates from it to his passive intellect he is a sage and philosopher, and wholly prudent. Through what emanates from it to his imaginative faculty he is a prophet who warns of what will be and tells of particulars that are now, through a mode of being in which he thinks the divine. This person is at the most perfect rank of humanity and at the highest degree of happiness. His soul is perfect and united with the Active Intellect in the way we have described. This person is the one who knows every action by which happiness can be attained. This is the first condition of the ruler. He must also have the ability, with his tongue, to convey everything he knows in words that create vivid images, and the ability to guide people well to happiness and to the actions by which happiness is attained. And he must also have physical endurance for carrying out particular tasks.

TWELVE QUALITIES OF THE RULER

The first ruler must have twelve natural qualities, from sound limbs to love of justice and courage.

28.1 This is the ruler whom no other person rules at all. He is the imam. He is the first ruler of the virtuous city, the ruler of the virtuous nation, and the ruler of the whole inhabited earth. This condition can be reached only by someone in whom twelve qualities, innate in him, are united by nature. First, he must be complete in his limbs, their faculties well suited to the actions they are meant for, so that whenever he sets about a task with any of his organs, he accomplishes it with ease. Next, he must

by nature be good at understanding and conceiving everything said to him, so that he grasps it as the speaker intends and as the matter is in itself. Next, he must have a good memory for what he understands, sees, hears and perceives, so that he hardly ever forgets it.[2] Next, he must be perceptive and quick-witted, so that when he sees the slightest indication of something, he grasps it in the direction the indication points. Next, he must express himself well, his tongue serving him to state fully everything he has in mind. Next, he must love learning and acquiring knowledge, devote himself to it and take it in readily, without being pained by the toil of study or troubled by the effort it costs him. Next, he must not be greedy for food, drink and sex. He must by nature avoid amusement and hate the pleasures that come from these things. Next, he must love truth and those who are truthful, and hate falsehood and those who lie. Next, he must be great of soul and love honor, his soul by nature rising above everything disgraceful and aspiring by nature to what is loftiest. Next, the dirham, the dinar and the other goods of this world must be of little account to him. Next, he must by nature love justice and the just, and hate injustice and oppression and those who practice them. He must deal fairly, whether with his own people or with others, and urge others to do the same. He must come to the aid of whoever has suffered injustice, and readily lend himself to whatever he sees to be good and fine. Next, he must be just and easy to lead, neither obstinate nor stubborn when called to justice, but hard to lead when called to injustice and to what is base. Next, he must be firm in his resolve to do what he thinks ought to be done, bold and daring in doing it, without fear or weakness of soul.

28.2 It is difficult for all these qualities to come together in a single human being. That is why people born with this disposition are found only one at a time, and they are the rarest of people. If such a person is found in the virtuous city, and if, once

2 Imam: leader, in particular the leader of the Muslim community; here the title of the supreme ruler.

he has grown up, the six conditions mentioned earlier come to be present in him, or five of them, lacking only the "equals" that come through the imaginative faculty, then he is the ruler.[3]

SUCCESSORS TO THE FIRST RULER

Later rulers keep and extend the founders' laws; without wisdom in rulership the city perishes.

If it happens that no such person is to be found at some time, then the laws and practices laid down by this ruler, and by others like him if a succession of them has ruled in the city, are taken up and established. The second ruler, who succeeds the first, will be someone in whom those conditions were combined from birth and childhood, and in whom six conditions are present once he has grown up. The first is that he be a sage. The second is that he be learned, preserving the laws, practices and ways of life that the first rulers instituted for the city, and following them completely in all his actions. The third is that he excel at deriving rulings where no law has been handed down from his predecessors, and that in what he derives he follow the example of the first imams. The fourth is that he have excellent deliberation and the power to derive what must be known at any present time about matters and events that arise of a kind the first rulers were in no position to deal with, and that in what he derives he aim at the welfare of the city. The fifth is that he excel at guiding people by speech to the laws of the first rulers and to those derived after them on their model. The sixth is that he have bodily firmness in conducting the business of war, that is, that he possess both the subordinate and the ruling arts of war.

28.3 If no single human being is found in whom these conditions are combined, but two are found, one a sage and the other possessing the remaining conditions, then the two of them will be the rulers of this city. If these conditions are scattered among a group, with wisdom in one, the second condition in another,

3 So Dieterici's text (*al-andād*, "the equals"). A variant reading, *al-indhār*, "the warnings," would refer to the prophetic gift that comes through the imagination.

the third in another, the fourth in another, the fifth in another and the sixth in another, and if they are in harmony, then they will be the virtuous rulers. But whenever it happens at some time that wisdom forms no part of the rulership, even though all the other conditions are present in it, the virtuous city is left without a king. The ruler who manages the affairs of this city is then not a king, and the city is exposed to destruction. If it does not happen that a sage is found to be joined to him, it will not be long before the city perishes.

Cities and their Souls

The ignorant, wicked, changed and errant cities; the afterlife of the souls of their citizens and of the virtuous; degrees of happiness; what all citizens of the virtuous city must know, by demonstration or by images.

في مضادات المدينة الفاضلة

29.1 The virtuous city has as its opposites the ignorant city, the wicked city, the changed city and the errant city. Among individuals it is also opposed by the "weeds" of cities. The ignorant city is one whose people have not known happiness, nor has it even occurred to them. If they were guided to it, they would neither take it up nor believe in it. Of goods they know only some of those that on the surface are thought to be goods, among the things thought to be the aims of life: bodily health, wealth, the enjoyment of pleasures, being free to follow one's desires, and being honored and esteemed. For the people of ignorance each of these is happiness, and the greatest and most complete happiness is the combination of them all. Their contraries are misery: bodily afflictions, poverty, not enjoying pleasures, not being free to follow one's desires, and not being honored.[1] The ignorant city divides into a number of cities. One is the city of necessity, whose people aim to confine themselves to the necessities that sustain the body (food, drink, clothing, housing and sex) and to cooperate in obtaining them. The city of wealth (the "exchange" city) is one whose people aim to cooper-

1 The "weeds" (*al-nawābit*) are individuals who grow up in the virtuous city at odds with it.

ate in attaining affluence and riches. They do not use affluence for anything else, but hold that affluence is the aim of life. Then there is the city of baseness and misery, whose people aim at enjoying the pleasure of food, drink and sex, in short the pleasure of what is sensed and imagined, and at preferring jest and play in every way and every form. Then there is the timocratic city, or city of honor, whose people aim to cooperate in becoming honored, praised, renowned and famous among the nations, glorified and esteemed in word and deed, and possessed of grandeur and splendor, either in the eyes of others or among themselves. Each of them strives according to how much he loves this, or how much of it he has been able to attain. Then there is the city of domination, whose people aim to be the conquerors of others and to resist being conquered by others. Their one concern is the pleasure that victory alone brings them. The democratic city is one whose people aim to be free, each of them doing as he pleases, with his desire never held back in anything at all. The kings of ignorance are as many as its cities, and each of them governs the city over which he has power only to obtain his own desire and inclination. The aims of ignorance that can be set up as ends are those we have just enumerated.[2]

29.2 The wicked city is one whose opinions are the virtuous opinions. It knows happiness, God (mighty and majestic is He), the secondary beings, the Active Intellect, and everything that the people of the virtuous city should know and believe. Yet the actions of its people are the actions of the people of the ignorant cities. The changed city is one whose opinions and actions were once the opinions and actions of the virtuous city. But it has changed: other opinions have entered it, and its actions have turned into something else. The errant city is one that supposes there is happiness after this life, but has altered it. It holds corrupt opinions about God (mighty and majestic is He), the secondary beings and the Active Intellect, opinions that cannot be sound even if they are taken as symbols and images of these

2 *Al-madīna al-jamāʿiyya*, literally "the collective city": the city of freedom, where each does as he pleases.

things. Its first ruler is someone who made people believe that he was receiving revelation when he was not, and who used deceptions, tricks and delusions to do so.

29.3 The kings of these cities are the opposite of the kings of the virtuous cities, and their rulership is the opposite of virtuous rulership. The same holds for everyone else in them. The kings of the virtuous cities who succeed one another in different ages, one after another, are all like a single soul, as though they were one king who endures for all time. Likewise, if a number of them happen to exist at one time, whether in one city or in many, their group is like a single king and their souls are like a single soul. So too with the people of each rank in the virtuous city. When they succeed one another in different ages, they are all like a single soul that endures for all time. Likewise, if at one time there is a group of people of one rank, whether in one city or in many, their souls are like a single soul, whether that rank is one of rulership or one of service.

29.4 The people of the virtuous city have some things in common that they know and do, and other things, both of knowledge and of action, that belong to each rank. Each of them reaches the bounds of happiness through these two together, that is, through what is common to him and the others, and through what is particular to the people of the rank to which he belongs. When each of them does this, those actions earn him a good and virtuous disposition of the soul. The more he persists in them, the stronger and more excellent that disposition becomes, its strength and excellence ever increasing. In the same way, persisting in good acts of writing earns a person excellence in the art of writing. The more he persists in those acts, the stronger and more excellent the art that produces them becomes, its strength and excellence increasing as its acts are repeated. The pleasure that accompanies that disposition of the soul grows greater, the person's delight in himself for having it grows greater, and his love for it increases. Such is the case with the actions by which happiness is attained. The more of them a person does, the more he repeats them and keeps at them, the

stronger, more excellent and more perfect they make the soul that is apt to be happy. In the end it reaches such a degree of perfection that it no longer needs matter and comes to be free of it. Then it does not perish when matter perishes, nor does it need matter in order to endure. Once it has come to be separate from matter and incorporeal, the accidents that befall bodies insofar as they are bodies are removed from it. So it cannot be said of it that it moves or that it is at rest. One must then say of it the things that befit what is not a body. Whatever occurs to a person's mind of what is predicated of body as body must be denied of the separate souls. To understand and conceive this state of theirs is difficult and unaccustomed. Likewise, by their separation from bodies, everything that used to attach to them and befall them is removed. Among these souls that have separated there are souls that were in different material bodies. It is clear that the dispositions of the soul follow the temperaments of bodies, some more closely and some less, and that each disposition of the soul is as the temperament of the body it was in requires. So their dispositions must necessarily differ, because of the difference that was in those bodies. And since the differences among bodies go on without any fixed limit, the differences among souls also go on without any fixed limit.

THE MEETING OF SEPARATED SOULS

Happy souls join their like as intelligible joins intelligible, and their pleasure grows without end.

30.1 When one group passes away, its bodies perish and its souls are released and made happy. Then other people succeed them in their rank, taking their place and doing what they did. When these too pass away and are released, they in turn reach, in happiness, the ranks of those who went before, and each joins what is like it in species, quantity and quality. Because they are not bodies, their coming together, however great their number, does not crowd one another for room, since they are not in places at all. Their meeting and their joining with one another do not

happen in the way bodies exist. The more numerous the similar separate souls become, and the more they join one another (and this joining is as intelligible joins intelligible), the more intense the pleasure of each one grows. Whenever those who come after join them, the pleasure of the newcomer increases through meeting those who went before, and the pleasures of those who went before increase as the newcomers join them. For each soul thinks its own essence and thinks its like many times over, and so the quality of what it thinks increases. The increase of what they encounter there resembles the way the power of the art of writing increases as the scribe persists in acts of writing. The joining of one soul to another, as each increases, takes the place of the succession of the scribe's acts through which his writing grows in strength and excellence. And because those who join one another go on without end, the powers and pleasures of each and every one increase without end through all time to come. Such is the state of every group that has passed away.

DEGREES OF HAPPINESS

Happiness differs in species, quantity and quality, as the arts do; vicious souls become sick.

31.1 Happinesses differ in excellence in three ways: in species, in quantity and in quality. This resembles the way the arts here below differ in excellence. Arts differ in excellence by species when they are arts of different species and one is better than another: weaving and the cloth trade, for example, or perfumery and street-sweeping, dancing and jurisprudence, or philosophy and rhetoric. These are the ways in which arts of different species differ in excellence. Practitioners of arts of a single species differ by quantity when, say, there are two scribes, one of whom has learned more of the parts of the art of writing, while the other has mastered fewer. For this art is made up of some knowledge of language, some rhetoric, some fine penmanship and some arithmetic. So one scribe may have mastered fine penmanship, say, and some rhetoric; another, language, some rhet-

oric and fine penmanship; and another, all four. Difference in quality is when two people have mastered the very same parts of writing, but one of them is stronger in what he has mastered and more practiced. That is difference in quality. Happinesses too differ in excellence in these ways.

31.2 As for the people of the other cities, since their actions are bad, those actions earn them bad dispositions of the soul. When acts of writing are bad, and not as writing should be, they earn a person worse writing, bad and deficient, and the more he engages in such acts, the more deficient his art becomes. In the same way, the bad actions of the people of the other cities earn their souls bad and deficient dispositions. The more any one of them persists in those actions, the more deficient the disposition of his soul becomes, until their souls become sick. That is why they sometimes take pleasure in the dispositions they acquire through those actions. People who are sick in body, many of the feverish for instance, find pleasant, because of their disordered temperament, flavors that are not of a kind to be enjoyed. They are pained by things that are of a kind to be pleasant, and they cannot taste sweet things that are naturally pleasant. In the same way, those who are sick in soul, through the corruption of their imagination, which they have acquired by will and habit, take pleasure in bad dispositions and bad actions, and are pained by beautiful and virtuous things, or do not imagine them at all. Among the sick there are some who are not aware of their illness, and some who even think they are healthy and are so convinced of it that they will not listen to a physician at all. In the same way, whoever among those sick in soul is unaware of his sickness, and even thinks he is virtuous and sound of soul, will not listen at all to a guide, a teacher or a corrector.

THE FATE OF OTHER SOULS

Ignorant souls perish with their bodies; the wicked suffer endless pain; the misled perish.

32.1 The souls of the people of the ignorant cities remain unperfected and necessarily need matter in order to subsist, since no true impression of any of the first intelligibles has ever been imprinted on them. So when the matter by which they subsisted perishes, the faculties whose role was to sustain what has perished perish with it, and the faculties whose role was to sustain what remains remain. If this too perishes and dissolves into something else, what remains becomes a form of the thing into which the remaining matter has dissolved. Whenever that in turn happens to dissolve into something, what remains becomes a form of the thing into which it dissolved, until it dissolves into the elements and the last remainder becomes the form of the elements. After that, its fate depends on whatever happens to be generated from the parts of the elements into which it dissolved. If those parts happen to mix in a way from which a human being comes to be, it returns and becomes a disposition in a human being. If they happen to mix in a way from which another species of animal, or something that is not an animal, comes to be, it returns as a form of that thing. These are the ones who perish and pass into non-existence, as beasts, wild animals and vipers do.

32.2 As for the people of the virtuous city, the dispositions of the soul that they acquired from the opinions of their predecessors release their souls from matter. But the bad dispositions of the soul that they acquired from vicious actions become joined to those first dispositions, muddying them and opposing them. The soul suffers great pain from the opposition of these to those, and those dispositions in turn oppose these, so that these too suffer great pain from those. From the two together the soul suffers two great pains. These dispositions acquired from the actions of ignorance are in truth followed by great pain in the

rational part of the soul. The rational part is unaware of their pain only because it is occupied with what the senses bring to it. When it is alone, without the senses, it becomes aware of the pain that follows these dispositions, and it frees them from matter and sets them apart from the senses and from everything that reaches them from outside.[3] A grieving person, when the senses bring him something to occupy him, is not pained by what grieves him and is not aware of it. But when he is alone, without the senses, the pain comes back to him. Likewise, a sick person in pain, when he is busy with things, either feels the pain of his illness less or is not aware of it at all. But when he is alone, without the things that occupy him, he becomes aware of the pain, or the pain comes back to him. In the same way, as long as the rational part is occupied with what the senses bring it, it is not aware of the pain of the bad dispositions joined to it. But when it is entirely alone, without the senses, it becomes aware of the pain, the pain of these dispositions becomes manifest to it, and it remains in great pain for all eternity. If others of its rank from that city join it, the pain of each of them increases through the other. For since those who join one another are without end, the increases of their pain through all time to come are without end. This is the misery that is the contrary of happiness.

32.3 As for the people of the errant cities, the one who led them astray and turned them from happiness for the sake of some aim of the people of ignorance, while himself knowing happiness, belongs among the people of the wicked cities. So he alone is miserable, not the people of the city. The people of the city themselves perish and dissolve, just as the people of ignorance do. As for the people of the changed cities, the one who changed things for them and turned them aside is alone miserable, if he belongs among the people of the wicked cities. The others perish and dissolve, like the people of ignorance. So too with everyone who turns from happiness through oversight and error.

3 The text reads "the virtuous city," but what is described (virtuous opinions joined to vicious actions) matches the wicked city.

Then there are those people of the virtuous city who are compelled and coerced into the actions of ignorance. Someone coerced into doing something is pained by what he does. So his persisting in what he is forced to do does not earn him a disposition of the soul contrary to the virtuous dispositions, one that would muddy that state for him and reduce his standing to that of the people of the wicked cities. That is why the actions he is forced into do not harm him. This befalls a virtuous person only when the one who has power over him is one of the people of the cities opposed to the virtuous city, and he is compelled to live in the dwellings of its opponents.

WHAT ALL CITIZENS MUST KNOW

Citizens learn the same truths, some by demonstration and most through images suited to each nation.

33.1 The things held in common that all the people of the virtuous city ought to know are these. First, knowledge of the First Cause and of everything predicated of Him. Then, of the things separate from matter, and of what is predicated of each of them by way of the attributes and rank proper to it, down through the separate beings to the Active Intellect, and of the action of each of them. Then, of the heavenly substances and of what is predicated of each of them. Then, of the natural bodies beneath them: how they come to be and pass away, and that what happens among them happens with precision and perfection, providence, justice and wisdom, without neglect, deficiency or injustice of any kind whatever. Then, of the coming-to-be of the human being: how the faculties of the soul arise, and how the Active Intellect emanates light upon them so that the first intelligibles, will and choice are attained. Then, of the first ruler and how revelation comes about. Then, of the rulers who should succeed him when at some time he is not present. Then, of the virtuous city, its people and the happiness their souls attain, and of the cities opposed to it and what their souls come to after

death, some to happiness and some to non-existence. Then, of the virtuous nations and the nations opposed to them.

33.2 These things are known in one of two ways. Either they are imprinted on people's souls as they actually exist, or they are imprinted on them by analogy and symbolization, that is, images that imitate them come to be in their souls. The sages of the virtuous city know these things through demonstrations and their own insight. Those who come next after the sages know them as they actually exist, through the insight of the sages, following them, assenting to them and trusting them. The rest know them through images that imitate them, because their minds have no disposition, whether by nature or by habit, to understand them as they actually exist. Both are kinds of knowledge, but the sage's is without doubt the more excellent. Of those who know them through images that imitate them, some know them through images close to them, some through images a little more remote, some through images more remote than that, and some through images very remote. These things are imitated for each nation and for the people of each city through the images most familiar to them, in order of familiarity. What is familiar may differ from nation to nation, either for the most part or in some respects. So these things are imitated for each nation by means of things other than those by which they are imitated for another. That is why there can be virtuous nations and virtuous cities whose religions differ, while all of them pursue one and the same happiness and one and the same goals.

OBJECTIONS TO THE IMAGES

Images can be attacked; the guidance seekers rise toward truth, while the ill-intentioned and confused reject it.

33.3 When these common things are known through their demonstrations, there can be no room at all in them for objection in argument, whether by way of sophistry or on the part of someone who understands them badly. In that case what the objector attacks is not the truth of the matter itself but the false-

hood he has understood about it. But when they are known through images that imitate them, some images offer fewer points open to objection and some more, some more evident points of objection and some more hidden ones. It is quite possible that among those who know those things through imitating images there will be some who notice the points of objection in those images and balk at them. These are of several kinds. One kind are those who seek guidance. Whenever something seems false to one of these, he is raised to another image, closer to the truth, that does not have that point of objection. If he is satisfied with it, he is left there. If that too seems false to him, he is raised to another rank, and if he is satisfied with it, he is left there. Whenever an image at some rank seems false to him, he is raised above it. If all the images seem false to him, he has the capacity to grasp the truth, and he is placed in the rank of those who follow the sages on authority. If he is not content with that and longs for wisdom, then, if that is within his capacity, he learns it. Another kind are those who have some aims of ignorance, such as honor, affluence or pleasure in wealth, and who see that the laws of the virtuous city forbid them. Such a person sets about the opinions of the virtuous city intending to discredit them all, whether they are images of the truth or what is presented to him is the truth itself. The images he discredits in two ways: by the points of objection they contain, and by sophistry and deception. The truth itself he discredits by sophistry and deception. All this is so that nothing may stand in the way of his ignorant and base aim. These ought not to be made parts of the virtuous city. Yet another kind find all the images false because of the points of objection they contain. And since they are also slow of understanding, they mistake even the points of truth in the images, so that they find false even what contains no point of objection at all. When they are raised to the level of the truth so that they may know it, their poor understanding leads them astray from it, so that they imagine the truth otherwise than it is. They then suppose that what they have conceived is what has been claimed to be the truth. When that seems false to

them, they suppose that what has proved false is the truth that is claimed to be the truth, not what they themselves understood. As a result it seems to them that there is no truth at all. Whoever is thought to have been guided to the truth is, in their eyes, deluded, and whoever is said to guide others to the truth is a deceiver and a fraud, seeking rulership or something else by what he says. Some of these are driven by this into perplexity. Others of these glimpse that the truth exists, as one glimpses a thing from afar or as a person imagines something in sleep, but they are kept from grasping it for reasons they see as beyond their reach. So they set about discrediting what they have grasped, no longer counting it as truth, and then they know, or think, that they have grasped the truth.

The Opinions of the Ignorant Cities

The false views from which the ignorant and errant cities grow: that nature is war of all against all, that justice is the victory of the strong, that piety is a ruse; the bonds of kinship and nation; the ascetics and the sceptics.

في آراء أهل المدن الجاهلة والضالة

34.1 The ignorant and errant cities arise only when the religion is built on certain ancient, corrupt opinions. One of these is that some people said: we see that the beings we observe are contraries, each seeking to destroy the other. We see that each of them, once it exists, is given along with its existence four things. First, something by which it preserves its existence from destruction. Second, something by which it repels from itself the action of its contrary and guards itself against its contrary. Third, something by which it destroys its contrary and makes out of it a body like itself in species. Fourth, something by which it is able to use all other things for what benefits it in its best existence and in the continuance of its existence. Many of them have been given something by which to subdue whatever resists them. Every contrary has been placed in this relation to every other contrary and to everything else, so that it seems to us that each of them alone was intended, or that the best existence was to be secured for it alone and not for others. That is why it has been given whatever it can use to destroy anything harmful or useless to it, and whatever it can use to make use of what benefits it in its best existence. For we see many animals spring upon many others, seeking to ruin and destroy them without gaining any evident benefit from doing so, as if each had been made by nature so

that nothing else in the world should exist but itself, or as if the existence of everything else were harmful to it. That is, it treats the existence of another as harmful to it even if nothing else comes from that other beyond the mere fact that it exists. Then each of them, if it does not aim at that, seeks to enslave others for its own benefit. Every species has been placed in this relation to every other species, and in many of them every individual has been placed in this relation to every other individual of its own species. Then these beings were made to overpower one another and fight one another. The one that most subdues the others has the most perfect existence. The victor always either destroys some of the others, because it is in its nature that the existence of that thing is a deficiency and a harm to its own existence, or else makes use of some and enslaves them, because it sees that thing as existing for its sake. One also sees things occurring without order and the ranks of beings not preserved, and one sees that what comes to each being in its existence comes without its having deserved it, and that it exists not for itself. This, and things like it, is what appears in the beings we observe and know. Then some people said: this state is the nature of beings, this is their innate disposition. What natural bodies do by their natures is what animals that choose should do by their choices and wills, and what those that deliberate should do by their deliberation. So they held that cities should be in a state of mutual conquest and strife, with no ranks or order within them, and no desert reserved for one person rather than another on account of honor or anything else. Each person should keep every good for himself alone and seek to overpower others for every good he can gain. And the human being who most subdues all who oppose him is the happiest.

OPINIONS OF THE IGNORANT CITIES

Some infer from nature's strife that human beings should live like wild beasts, conquering one another.

Then many opinions arose from these in the cities, among the opinions of ignorance. Some held that there is no affinity and no bond, either by nature or by will. Each person, in their view, should diminish every other, and each should shun every other. No two should be bound together except out of necessity, nor unite except out of need, and when they do come together for some purpose, one should be the conqueror and the other the conquered. If something coming from outside compels them to come together and unite, this should last only as long as the need, and only while what comes from outside compels them to it. Once it is gone, they should shun one another and part. This is the malady of wild beasts among human opinions.

34.2 Others saw that a solitary individual cannot provide everything he needs unless he has helpers and assistants, each supplying him with some part of what he needs, and so they came to favor association. Some of them held that this should come about by force. The one who needs helpers should subjugate a group of people and enslave them, then use them to subjugate others and enslave them as well. His helper should not be his equal but someone he has subjugated. For example, the strongest of them in body and weapons subjugates one man. Once that man has been subjugated, he uses him to subjugate another, or a small band, and with those he subjugates still others, until he has gathered helpers arranged in ranks. Once they are gathered, he makes them into instruments and uses them for whatever his desire dictates.

WHAT BINDS PEOPLE TOGETHER

Others locate the social bond in descent, marriage, a common founder, oaths, language or place.

34.3 Others held that there is such a thing as a bond, mutual love and concord, but they disagreed about what creates the bond. Some held that common descent from a single father is the bond. Through it come association and concord, mutual love and mutual support, so that people may overcome others and resist being overcome by them. For difference and mutual aversion come from difference of fathers. Sharing a closer and more particular ancestor produces a stronger bond, and sharing a more general one a weaker bond. In the end descent becomes so general and remote that the bond is cut off altogether and turns into aversion, except when a necessity comes from outside, such as an evil that befalls them and that they can repel only if many groups join together. Others held that the bond lies in sharing in procreation: the male children of this group beget offspring from the female children of that group, and the male children of that group from the female children of this one. That is intermarriage. Some held that the bond lies in sharing the first ruler, who first gathered them together and governed them, so that through him they prevailed and won some good among the goods of the ignorant. Others held that the bond lies in oaths, alliances and pacts about what each person pledges of himself: that he will not turn away from the rest or abandon them, and that they will be as one hand in overcoming others and in fending off others' attempts to overcome them. Still others held that the bond lies in similarity of character and natural traits and in a common language and tongue, and that difference comes from difference in these. This holds for every nation. So its members should love one another and be averse to everyone else, for nations differ from one another only in these three things. Others held that the bond lies in sharing a household, and then in sharing places of residence. The closest bond is sharing a house-

hold, then sharing a street, then sharing a quarter. That is why people show solicitude for a neighbor, for the neighbor is the one who shares the street and the quarter. Then comes sharing a city, and then sharing the region in which the city lies. There are also things believed to create a partial bond among a small group, among a few people, or between two. Among them are long acquaintance; sharing food that is eaten and drink that is drunk; sharing crafts; and sharing an evil that befalls them, especially when the evil is of one kind and they meet, for then each is a consolation to the other. Others are sharing some pleasure, and sharing places where no one can be sure he will not need the other, as with companions on a journey.

JUSTICE AS DOMINATION

Groups should fight for goods; justice is the victor's rule, and ordinary justice comes from fear.

35.1 They said: once groups have become distinguished from one another by one of these bonds, whether tribe from tribe, city from city, confederacy from confederacy or nation from nation, they are like individuals each distinguished from every other. For there is no difference between each individual being distinguished from every other and one group being distinguished from another. So after that they should strive to overcome one another and fall upon one another. The things over which they contend are safety, honor, wealth, pleasures and everything that leads to these. Each group should seek to strip the other of everything it has of these things and take it for itself, and every individual stands in the same relation to every other. So the group that overcomes the other in these respects is the one that triumphs; it is the one to be envied, and the happy one. These things are what is natural, whether in the nature of each human being or in the nature of each group, and they follow the natures of natural beings. And what is natural is just. Justice, then, is overcoming: justice consists in subduing whichever of them one comes upon. The vanquished is overpowered either in his bod-

ily safety, so that he perishes and is destroyed and the victor alone remains in existence, or in his honor, so that he remains humbled and enslaved. In that case the victorious group enslaves him, and he does whatever is most useful to the victor for obtaining the good it has won and keeping it for good. So the victor's enslaving of the vanquished is also part of justice, and the vanquished's doing what is most useful to the victor is also justice. All this is natural justice. It is virtue, and these actions are the virtuous actions. When the victorious group has obtained the goods, the one who did most toward winning those goods should be given more of them, and the one who did less should be given less. If the goods they won are honor, the one who did most is given more honor; if they are wealth, he is given more wealth; and likewise with the rest. This too, in their view, is natural justice.

35.2 They said: as for everything else that is called justice, such as justice in buying and selling, returning deposits, not seizing others' property and not doing injustice, and the like, whoever practices it does so in the first place out of fear and weakness, and under a necessity that comes from outside. Suppose there are two parties, say two individuals or two groups, each equal in strength to the other, and they take turns overpowering each other. This goes on between them for a long time. Each tastes the bitterness of both conditions and comes to a state he cannot endure. Then they come together and agree on fair terms. Each leaves the other some share of what they had been contending over, so that each keeps his mark of ownership on his share. Each makes it a condition on the other that he will not try to take away what is in his hands except on certain terms, and they agree on these terms. From this arise the conditions laid down for buying and selling, a rough parity in honors, then mutual assistance, and other things of that kind. This happens only when each is weak in relation to the other and each fears the other. As long as they stand toward each other in this state, they should share. But whenever one becomes stronger than the other, he should break the agreement and seek domination.

Alternatively, something may come upon the two from outside that cannot be repelled except by cooperating and abandoning their contest, so they cooperate for as long as that lasts. Or each of them may have set his mind on something he wishes to win and see that he cannot reach it without the other's help and partnership. Then they abandon their contest for the time being and help one another. When equilibrium has come about between the parties for these reasons, and a long time has passed in that state, those who grow up in it without knowing how it began think that justice is what exists now. They do not know that it is fear and weakness, and so they are deceived in what they practice of it. Whoever practices these things is either weak, or afraid that someone else will do to him the very thing he himself feels a longing to do.

PIETY AS A RUSE

Religious devotion is described as a trick for winning goods by stealth instead of force.

36.1 As for piety, it consists in saying that a god governs the world and that spiritual beings are governors watching over all actions. It also consists in the practice of glorifying the god, in prayers, praises and hallowings. Further, it holds that if a person does these things, gives up many of the goods people long for in this life and persists in this, he is compensated for it and rewarded with great goods that he will attain after his death. If he holds fast to none of these practices but takes the goods during his life, he is punished for it after death with great evils that will befall him in the next life.[1] For all these are kinds of ruse and trickery, used against some people and for the benefit of others. They are ruses and snares for anyone who cannot win these goods by assault and in the open. They are a scheme for one who lacks the power to seize these goods openly and to attack with his own hands and weapons, without cunning and

1 Arabic *khushūʿ*: humility, submissive devotion; here the outward show of religious piety.

without help. He uses them to frighten and subdue others, so that they will give up all or some of these goods, and those who cannot take them openly or win them by force may obtain them. For the one who holds fast to these practices is thought not to covet those goods, and people think well of him. So they trust him and do not guard against him, fear him or suspect him. His aim stays hidden, and his way of life is described as divine. His dress and appearance are those of a man who wants none of these goods for himself. This becomes the reason he is honored and revered and looked to for every other good. Souls submit to him and love him, so they do not object when he indulges his desire in everything. Rather, the ugly things he does seem fine to everyone. In this way he comes to win from all of them honors, positions of rule, wealth and pleasures, and to attain the good. So those practices were devised only for the sake of these goods. The hunting of wild animals is sometimes done by open force and sometimes by stealth and trickery. In the same way, these goods are sometimes won by pursuing them openly and sometimes by stealth. One stalks them by making people believe, outwardly, that one's aim is something other than one's real aim, so that no one guards against one, fears one or opposes one, and one attains the goods easily. Consider the one who holds fast to these practices and persists in them. If he does so only to reach the thing for whose sake they were devised, that is, outward compliance with them in order to win one or all of those goods, then people envy him. He grows ever greater in their eyes for certainty, wisdom, learning and knowledge, and he is honored and praised. But if he does it for its own sake, and not to obtain these goods through it, people regard him as duped and deceived, wretched and foolish, devoid of sense, ignorant of his own interest, contemptible and of no account, and blameworthy. Yet many people make a show of praising him, in mockery. Some encourage him for their own sake, so that he will not compete with them for any of the goods but will leave them alone, and the goods will be left in greater abundance for them and for others. Some praise his way and his doctrine out of fear

that someone who does not follow his way would strip them of what they have. Still others praise and envy him because they too are deceived, just as he is. These, then, and others like them are the opinions of the ignorant, which have taken root in the souls of many people from the things observed in existing beings.

KEEPING THE GOODS WON

Opinions on preserving and increasing wealth by conquest, by trade, or by dividing the people.

36.2 When they have obtained the goods they won, these must be preserved, kept permanently, replenished and increased, for if this is not done with them they run out. Some of them held that they should always, all of them together, seek to overcome others, and that whenever they overcome one group they should move on to another. Others held that they should replenish the goods both from among themselves and from others, preserving and managing them: from among themselves through buying and selling, exchange and the like, and from others through conquest. Others held that the goods should be increased in both ways together. Still others held that this should be done by dividing themselves into two parts. One part increases the goods and replenishes them from among themselves by transactions, and the other part wages conquest on others. So they form two groups, each devoted to one thing: one to conquest, the other to voluntary transactions. Some of them held that the group engaged in transactions should be their women and the group engaged in conquest their men. When any of the men became too weak for conquest, he was put into the transactions, and anyone fit for neither was treated as surplus. Others held that the group engaged in transactions should be a different people, those whom they conquer and enslave. These would then be the ones charged with this work: preserving the goods that the victors win, replenishing them and increasing them.

36.3 Others said: the contest for domination among beings takes place only between different species. Among things that fall under one species, the species is their bond, and for its sake they should live at peace with one another. For human beings, humanity is the bond, so they should live at peace through their humanity. Then they should contend with other species for whatever they can benefit from among them and leave alone what they cannot benefit from. Whatever they cannot benefit from and is harmful, they overpower in its very existence; whatever is not harmful, they leave alone. They said: if that is so, then the goods that people are to acquire from one another should come through voluntary transactions. The goods that are to be acquired and obtained from the other species should come through conquest, since those species have no rational speech with which to conduct voluntary transactions. They said: this is what is natural for man. The man who seeks domination is not natural insofar as he seeks domination. Therefore, since there is bound to be some nation or group that departs from what is natural for man and seeks to wrest from the other groups the goods they possess, the natural nation or group is compelled to have some of its people devoted to two tasks. One is repelling such people if they come seeking to overpower it. The other is wresting back its rights from them if they have seized them. So each group comes to have two powers: a power by which it fights and defends itself, and a power by which it conducts transactions. It does not have the power to defend itself because it does that by its own will, but because it is compelled to do so by what comes upon it from outside. These people are the opposite of those others. Those others hold that peace comes about only through something that comes from outside, whereas these hold that contest comes about only through something that comes from outside. From this arises the opinion held by the peaceable cities.

THE IGNORANT CITIES SUMMED UP

The kinds of ignorant city and the peaceable cities are distinguished by their aims and their attitude to conquest.

37.1 Among the ignorant cities are the city of necessity, the "exchange" city, the base city, the timocratic city and the democratic city. In the cities other than the democratic city, the inhabitants aim at a single kind of end. The democratic city has many aims, for in it the aims of all the cities have come together. The contest and defense to which the peaceable cities are compelled lie either with all of them together or with one particular group. In the second case the people of the city form two groups: one that has the power to fight and defend, and one that does not. Through these things they keep permanently the goods they have. This group among the people of ignorance is sound of soul. The first group is evil of soul, for it regards contest as the good. Contest takes two forms, open and stealthy. Whoever among them can act openly does so; whoever cannot uses fraud and cheating, hypocrisy, deception and sophistry.[2]

ABOLISHING THIS EXISTENCE

Some hold that present existence is unnatural and must be abolished to reach true perfection.

37.2 Others believed that there is a happiness and perfection that man attains after his death, in the other life. They also believed that there are truly virtuous virtues and actions that he performs in order to attain happiness after death. They reflected and found that what they observe in natural beings could not be denied or rejected. They thought that if they granted that all of it is natural, just as observed, this would entail what the people of ignorance believed. So they chose to say that the natural beings observed in this state have another existence besides the exist-

2 Arabic *al-mubaddala,* which in this list stands for the city of wealth or "exchange" (*al-baddāla*).

ence observed now. On this view, the existence they have now is not natural to them but is contrary to that other existence, which is their natural existence. One should therefore aim deliberately at abolishing this existence and work to do so, in order to attain that existence which is the natural perfection. For this existence is the obstacle to perfection, and when it is abolished, perfection is attained once it is gone. Others hold that beings already have their existence now. But other things have become joined and mingled with them, which corrupted them, hindered them from their activities and made many of them other than their true form. So, for example, what is not a man is thought to be a man, and what is a man is thought not to be a man. What is a man's action is thought not to be his action, and what is not his action is thought to be his. As a result, man at this time does not do what it is his nature to do, and does what it is not his nature to do. He takes many things to be true when they are not, and many things to be impossible when they are not. On both views alike they hold that this observed existence should be abolished so that that other existence may be attained. For man is one of the natural beings, and the existence he now has is not his natural existence. His natural existence is a different one. What he has now is contrary to that existence and hinders him from it, and the existence man has today is something unnatural.

37.3 Some held that the joining of the soul to the body is not natural, and that man is the soul. The body's being joined to the soul corrupts it and alters its activities, and vices arise from the soul only because of its association with the body. Its perfection and virtue lie in being freed from the body. In its happiness it needs no body, and to attain happiness it needs neither a body nor the things external to the body, such as wealth, neighbors, friends and fellow citizens. It is bodily existence that makes political associations and all other external things necessary. So they held that this bodily existence should be cast off. Others held that the body is natural to man, and that it is the affections of the soul that are not natural to him. On their view, the complete virtue by which happiness is attained is the abolishing and

killing of these affections. Some held this of all the affections, such as anger, appetite and the like. They saw that these are the causes of preferring the things that are presumed goods: honor, wealth and pleasures. They also saw that the preference for domination comes only from anger and the irascible faculty, and that difference and mutual aversion come from this. So they held that all the affections should be abolished. Some held this of appetite and anger and what is akin to them, and held that virtue and perfection lie in abolishing these two. And some held it of other affections, such as jealousy, avarice and the like. For this reason some held that what gives natural existence is different from what gives the existence we now have. They also held that the cause that produced appetite, anger and the other affections of the soul is contrary to the cause that gave the rational part. So some of them, such as Empedocles, attributed this to the contrariety of agents. Others, such as Parmenides in his exoteric opinions, and other natural philosophers, attributed it to the contrariety of matters. Besides these views, there is to the same effect what is reported from many of the ancients: "Die by will and you will live by nature." For they hold that there are two deaths, natural death and voluntary death. By voluntary death they mean the abolition of the affections of the soul, appetite and anger. By natural death they mean the separation of the soul from the body. By natural life they mean perfection and happiness. This follows the view of those who held that the affections of the soul, appetite and anger, are in man by constraint.[3] The views of the ancients that we have mentioned are corrupt. Other views branched off from them, and from these views religions spread in many of the errant cities.

3 Empedocles (fifth century BC) explained the world through two contrary forces, Love and Strife. Parmenides (fifth century BC), in the "opinion" part of his poem, explained it through two contrary principles, light and night.

NOTHING HAS A FIXED NATURE

Others argue that things have no defined substances, so anything might be otherwise; this destroys philosophy.

37.4 Others observed the conditions of natural beings that we described first: that they exist in different and contrary ways, that they exist at one time and not at another, and the rest of what we said. From this they concluded that the beings now sensed or thought have no defined substances. None of them, they held, has a nature proper to it such that its substance would be that nature alone and nothing else. Rather, the substance of each of them is an infinite number of things. Take man, for example. What is understood by this word is something whose substance is not defined. Its substance, and what is understood by it, are infinitely many things. It is just that what we have now sensed of its substance is this sensible thing, and what we have thought of it is what we claim to think of it today. Yet it may be something other than this intelligible and this sensible. So it is with everything as it now is. Its substance is not only what is understood from its name. It is this and also something else that we have not sensed or thought. Had that other thing been put in place of what now exists, we would have sensed or thought it; but what has come to exist is this. Someone might not say that the nature understood from each word is something other than what is now thought, namely infinitely many other things. He might say instead that it is this, and that it may also be something other than this that we have not thought. That makes no difference, for what is admissible and possible, when supposed to exist, entails no impossibility. So too with everything that we consider to admit of no alternative, or to have no possible alternative: it may be otherwise. The existence of nine does not follow necessarily from multiplying, say, three three times; that is not its substance. What results from that multiplication could be some other number, or any of the other, non-numerical beings, whatever it happens to be, or

something else that we have not sensed or thought. Indeed, there may be infinitely many sensibles and intelligibles that have not yet been sensed or thought, or that have not yet come to exist so as to be sensed or thought. So too with everything that follows from something else. It does not follow because the substance of that thing necessitated it, but because it happened so. An agent outside that thing brought the other into being in its presence, or at the time when that thing came to be, or in one of its states. So every being that now exists has come to be as it is either by chance or because an agent from outside brought it into existence. What is understood by the word "man" could have turned out instead to be something other than what we think today. But that agent willed to make this intelligible, from among the things it was able to make. So we have come to sense and understand it in this way alone. This is akin to the opinion of those who hold that, for anything we think today, its contrary and contradictory may be the truth. It is only that we happen to have fixed most firmly in our minds that what is true and correct is what we now see. On this view, what is understood by the word "man" may be something other than what is understood by it today, and indeed infinitely many things, on the assumption that each of those is the nature of this understood essence. If those things, together with what is thought today, are one thing in number, then what is thought today is not one thing in number, and what is thought from the word "man" is nothing other than what is thought today. But if they are not one in number but many, with different definitions, then the name "man" is said of them equivocally. If, in addition, they can appear in existence at the same time, they resemble the things of which the word *ʿayn* is said today, and there would also be infinitely many things in number at once. If they cannot exist together but succeed one another, then they are contraries, or opposites in general. And if they are opposites, whether infinite or finite in number, it follows that everything we consider to admit of no alternative or no contradictory may also have its contradictory, contrary or opposite in general be true, either instead of it or

together with its contrary. From this it follows that no statement whatever holds true, that everything said holds true, and that nothing in existence is impossible at all.[4] For suppose the nature of some thing may be other than what is understood from its word today. It may be the nature of something whose identity we do not know, something that could come into existence and be sensed or thought and become understood, but that we do not think today. Then, for that thing whose identity we do not now know, its contrary or its opposite in general may also be possible, so that what is impossible for us may possibly not be impossible. By this opinion and those akin to it, philosophy is abolished, and impossible things are imprinted on souls as though they were true. For this view makes it possible for all things to have opposite existences in their substance, and infinitely many existences in their substances and accidents, and it makes nothing impossible at all.

4 *ʿAyn* is the stock example of an equivocal word in Arabic: it means "eye," "spring," "essence" and much else.